GUIDE TO THE FO4 PYGMIES FILE

[According to the Outline of World Cultures, the FO4 Pygmies cultural unit includes general data on the Pygmies of Central Africa as a whole, and specific data on the Pygmy tribes of Zaire, including the Bambuti (Mbuti) of the Ituri Forest. Pygmy groups are scattered throughout equatorial Africa, especially in the area of the Gabon and the Ubangi, as well as in Zaire. In Zaire there are three main groups of Pygmies, the Tswa in the West, the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika, and the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest. According to Turnbull, only the Mbuti are true Pygmies, that is, under 150 cm. in height, and relatively unmixed with neighboring peoples. The other groups are referred to as "Pygmoids," being highly intermixed with other peoples and very acculturated. Consequently, the FO4 Pygmies file contains only specific data on the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri Forest.

The Mbuti are located at approximately 20° - 30° East longitude and over several degrees both north and south of the equator. Their territory is a primary rain forest. The Mbuti have been divided into three groups, which according to Turnbull, have very little sociological significance. The groups do, however, each have distinctly different languages (which correspond to the languages spoken by neighboring villagers), are territorially distinct, and practice different hunting techniques. The Aka live in the North, speak the Mangbetu language which is of the Sudanic family, and they hunt primarily with spears. The Aka have not been extensively studied. The Efe are in the East; they speak the Lese language of the Sudanic family and they are archers. The Efe were studied by Schebesta. The Sua are in the

South, speak the Bira language of the Bantu branch of the Benue-Congo family, and they hunt with nets. The Sua were studied by Putnam and Turnbull, the authors represented in this file. Therefore, most of the data in this file refers to the Sua net hunters only.

In spite of the considerable differences between the three groups of Mbuti, they have a strong sense of ethnic unity. Even though the language differences are considerable, "... any Pygmy from any area in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other Pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken." (2: Turnbull, p. 23).

Turnbull states that since there has never been an official census of the population it is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the total Mbuti population. From discussion with missionaries and administrators and from his own experience, Turnbull guessed that the population was approximately 40,000.

The Mbuti were hunters and gatherers who live in small nomadic bands of from three families up. Each band was attached in a kind of symbiotic trade relationship to a neighboring Negro agricultural village. The Mbuti traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship and no apparent mechanisms of social control.

There are four sources in the FO4 Pygmies file. Numbers 1-3 are all by Turnbull and are based on fieldwork done among the Epulu band of net hunters during the 1950's. 1: Turnbull is based primarily on secondary sources and he compares data from the Epulu net hunters with data from Schebesta who studied archers and whose major work on the Mbuti was published in 1938. 2: Turnbull is on cultural factors contributing to cohesiveness of Mbuti bands and their independence of village control. 3: Turnbull is a narrative of the band's reaction to the death of one of its members, and of rites and attitudes related to coming of age and marriage. 4: Putnam is on the same band of net hunters which Turnbull studied. It gives sketchy information on a number of topics. As pointed out earlier, the data in this file are based on fieldwork done on one band (the Epulu) of the Sua group of the Mbuti.

There are a number of special marking decisions for the FO4 Pygmies file. 648 and/or 177 are used for the relationship between the Mbuti bands and the villagers in general terms; 439 has been used for economic aspects of the relationship; 571 and 578 were used for the relationship on an interpersonal plane; and 571 and 608 were used for the kpara relationship between individual Mbuti and villagers. For the Mbuti conceptualization of the "forest" as a spiritual entity, a personified benevolent force, 778 was used. Discussion of Mbuti kinship in general was marked for 602 when the author was speaking of kin relations within the band as such. 613 or 614 were used in more limited cases, when the author explicitly applied village lineage terms and expectations to the loose and vague Mbuti kinship relations. The life force, pepo, was marked for 761 or 778. Keti, the disembodied spirits of humans and animals, was marked for 776 or 769. Boru, the human or animal body inhabited by pepo was marked for 778, 761, or 826. The personality of the individual composed of a

particular boru and pepo which dies with the individual, called roho, was marked for 828 or 778. Satani (Shaitani), malevolent and dangerous spirits, were marked for 776, 769, or 775. The rather nebulous concept of a Godhead, a spiritual being who is the source of spiritual force, was marked for 776 or 778. Megbe, the vital force emanating from the totem and immanent, to different degress, in all human beings, was marked for 778 or 761. The Molimo mourning ceremony was marked for 765 or 534; as an association, it was marked for 575. The file was processed in 1970-1972.]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p.147-A]

114 derstandable, more valuable, and more usable.

121 An examination of all the available source material indicates very clearly the necessity for immediately establishing a limited study of well-defined groups, uninfluenced by any theoretical preoccupations with questions of sociological unity, anteriority, or origin. The term "Pygmy" leads far too easily to meaningless generalization. It may well prove that even the [101] term "Mbuti," by which is understood the Pygmy population of the Ituri Forest, is too broad. The breakdown in this survey between the different economic groups of Mbuti is only a tentative investigation to discover significant similarities and differences.

114 In view of the existence of Schebesta's (1938, 128 1941, 1948, 1950) major work, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," with its special reference to archers, and my own field work and recent and forthcoming publications on the net hunters, the survey here has been kept to reasonable dimensions and does not pretend to give a complete picture. The accounts of Schebesta and Putnam are presented with as little speculation as possible. It will be readily seen that there is insufficient information, almost throughout, for any effective analysis to be made. But certain problems arise, and in the conclusions some attempt is made to outline these further, particularly the nature of the Pygmy-villager relationship.

[P.147-C]

particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 182

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P Z 101 • 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P Z 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P 148-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

SOURCE MATERIAL

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

114 175 177 ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING THINGS about a survey of ancient and early sources concerning the African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from the time these people first entered the recorded scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge of them decreased steadily until the late nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact. They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta, 1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth [101] Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of representatives of conquered nations, among which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the northernmost Pygmies are still known today. Yet, until the turn of the present century, the modern Western world believed the Pygmy to be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing Pygmies along the Nile.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 150-A]

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.
177 The material provided by these nineteenth-
century explorers is valuable, however, for an
114 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
175 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley
101 (1879, 1890), made little more than passing reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally acknowledged as being the first to establish beyond a doubt that there was indeed a race of such people in central Africa and to give us some real information about them, particularly concerning the association of the Aka (northernmost) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to throw in some of the many "red herrings" that have distracted even the most recent anthropologists from a strictly scientific study of the people, leading them into the speculative realms of origin, connection between Pygmies and the Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of originality of Pygmy culture.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 Others, such as Casati (1891), Le Roy (1897),
Burrows (1898), Johnston (1884, 1902, 1903,
•101 1905, 1908), David (1904a, 1904b), Hutereau
175 (1924), Powell-Cotton (1907), and Czekanow-
181 ski (1922), to mention only a very few, give further details that are of interest but cover such a wide area as to make it impossible to gather any but the most superficial notion of a generalized "African Pygmy." When these sources provide us with factual observations, the facts are often not untainted with imagination. When they go beyond facts, additional "red herrings" are cast up, such as the silent trade between Pygmies and villagers, the lawlessness of Pygmy society, the Pygmies' complete lack of religion, and their ferocity and cannibalism. To add fuel to the fire, equally imaginative interpretations show them as having reciprocal and open trade relationships with the villagers, as living an ordered life according to their "natural instincts" for law and order, as following a monotheistic mystical religion, and as living a gentle and peaceful existence. According to this material, the "Pygmies" do have their own language and they do not, their way of life is totally different from that of their villager neighbors and it is a direct copy of villager life, they live in the heart of the forest and they live on the edge of the villages. These are just some of the contradictions that make it

[P. 150-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p.150-C]

impossible to form any single coherent picture. 114 101 181 175

When Schmidt wrote "Die Stellung der Pygmäen-völker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschen" in 1910, all these contradictions were his source material. Pygmies existed, but they still had tails and were flying about from treetop to treetop, or else they were crawling on their bellies like snakes to enter their diminutive houses. Quatrefages (1887) and Le Roy (1897) had, at the end of the nineteenth century, attempted to draw together what was known about Pygmies all over the world, but Schmidt's study is the first work of real importance. He confines himself mostly to the African Pygmies and Bushmen and pursues two lines of thought: first, the relationship of both to Asiatic Pygmies; and second, the place of the Pygmy, both racially and anthropologically, in the evolution of the human race. Was the Pygmy the original inhabitant of the equatorial forests of Africa, or was he a degeneration of present Bantu stock—a throwback? These "red herrings" are still being diligently pursued, while the Pygmies and their social structure have gone unstudied by any anthropologist except with reference to these problems.

with reference to these problems. The one contemporary work of any real note, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," is the result of research undertaken by Schebesta (1938, 1941, 1948, 1950), who was undoubtedly strongly influenced by the Schmidt school of thought, and was preoccupied with the problems of the origin and cultural unity of the Pygmies and of their racial and anthropological separateness from the villagers. 114 101

The problem of the relationship between the African and the Asian Pygmies, opened by Quatrefages in 1887, was followed up by Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), Nippold (1936, 1937), Gusinde (1942), and Schebesta (1938, 1952). The problem itself does not concern us here, except in so far as preoccupation with it in these sources affects our evaluation of them and explains their tendency to generalize in terms of "Pygmy" or "Bambuti" culture and society.

We must ask ourselves what use can be made of all this material in a serious study of the African Pygmies, particularly as there is such a dearth of reliable contemporary material. At first sight we seem to be in possession of an abundant supply of raw material, even if we limit ourselves to the Pygmies of central 114

[P. 150 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 [101] If we were not dogged by this notion of the "Pygmies" as one people, supported by their undoubted racial homogeneity and territorial contiguity, we would certainly think we were dealing with a number of totally different social systems, if not different peoples.

The more unreliable and imaginative sources have already been rejected, and we must accept the remaining information as given, however much it contradicts itself. The only alternative is to reject this material *in toto*, and there is certainly no justification for so doing other than the convenience of avoiding the contradictions. It seems preferable to accept the contradictions without trying to unify the facts. That is to say, a thorough summary of these early sources indicates that we are by no means dealing with a single people, even within as limited an area as the Ituri Forest or, indeed, one section of it. This consideration has affected the format of the present work and its limitation to a specific section of the African Pygmies. Reference to facts to be found in the early sources are made only when it is certain that they apply to the particular Pygmies under discussion. This method seems to be the only valid way of utilizing the material. It reduces the bulk of ethnographic evidence considerably, as it is seldom made clear exactly which group of Pygmies is

114 101 128

[P 151-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 151-C]

under discussion, and the material nowhere deals with any one specific group fully. [114 01 28]

Having spent some time examining a large body of literature, one is naturally loath to make so little use of it, but this demonstration of the need for detached localized studies rather than generalized studies concerned with or dominated by the notion of racial and cultural unity is in itself no small contribution. The extent to which one must localize sociological studies among the Ituri is as yet unknown, but some indication will appear in the following work.

It might be added that Schebesta, who made an exhaustive study of these same sources, also found himself unable to make a great deal of use of them. He (1948, 295) criticizes Hutereau, whom he regards as being one of the most important sources, for generalizing from one group to another (though Hutereau was mainly concerned with the Aka). He regards the others as even less reliable, and most of his references to them are accompanied by cautions as to their trustworthiness.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

128

Having decided, for the purpose of the present survey, to reject the historical sources for the most part, we must determine the extent to which the survey will be limited and then give a brief account and evaluation of the contemporary sources from which it will be drawn.

It must be emphasized that we are not attempting to summarize all available material on the "Pygmies" in general. Ethnography itself can have meaning only when we know to what people our facts belong and when the facts are sufficiently comprehensive to appear in a system of relationships. We see above, in the review of historical sources, that facts that would otherwise be of considerable value are useless to us because with few exceptions we cannot relate them to any one specific group of people. Further, the facts are so few and so isolated that we have no way of relating them to one another in any kind of system. When we come to contemporary sources we are not much better off. We must first decide not to include Pygmoids, such as the Twa and Tswa, because of the very obvious sociological differences and the feeling that we should make the present survey as detailed and as apposite as possible. Once we have limited ourselves to true Pygmies, we find we

101 • 128

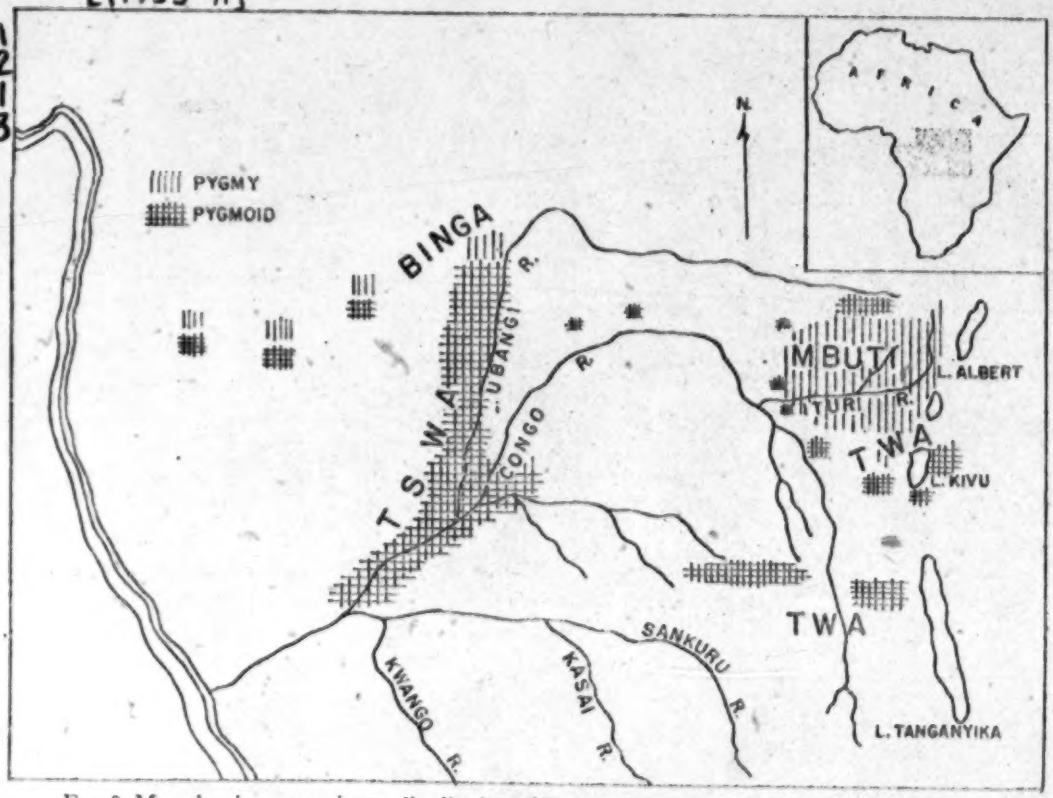
[P. 151-D] [TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 152-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have a concentrated body of Mbuti Pygmies in 101*
the Ituri Forest and some apparently scattered 128
Pygmy groups farther west and through the
forests of equatorial Africa (Figs. 1–2). Of the
latter, unfortunately, too little is known for in-
clusion here.

For the Ituri Mbuti one of our main sources 101
is the four-volume work by Schebesta (1938, 114
[P.152-B] 127

[P. 153-A]



FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
101
102
131
133

J. Turnbull E-4.S (1951-1955) 1965

FIG. 2. Map showing approximate distribution of Pygmy and Pygmoid groups in central Africa.

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114
[127]

1941, 1948, 1950). Schebesta divides the Mbuti (whom he calls "Bambuti") into three major groups: Aka in the north, Sua in the south, and Efe in the east (Fig. 3). His first trip to the Ituri was spent in an over-all coverage of the forest, during which he culled facts from all these groups but necessarily at a superficial level. Realizing this and desiring to make a more profound study, he returned and concentrated on the Efe in the triangle bounded by the roads joining Mambasa, Irumu, and Beni (Fig. 3). The bulk of his work concerns these Efe, who hunt primarily with bow and arrows, and as it is the only group of which he has detailed knowledge it is the only group that we present from his work with any degree of fullness. His references to the Kango in the west, the Aka, and the Sua, are too few to form a systematic account of these societies as such, and, as already mentioned, we see little value in isolated, unsystematic ethnographic data.

[P. 153-B]

There is, however, another source on the Ituri Pygmies (mostly unpublished) in the form of the field notes of an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam, who first went to the Ituri in 1928 and was resident there until his death at the end of 1953. His material is concerned with the Sua who, unlike the Efe, are net hunters. With this material are also the notes of his widow, Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who lived in the Ituri for more than eight years, until 1954; and, finally, my own field notes covering my first two visits to the same area (Epulu District) in 1951 and 1954. I combine this material as a single source, indicating its exact origin in the text, partly because, in the main, it covers one definite area, and even one definite hunting band, and partly because both Anne Putnam and myself benefited by the immense knowledge of Patrick Putnam, without necessarily being in complete agreement.

Apart from these two main sources, and a

114 127 [101] 127 128 127

[P. 153-C]

[P.154-A]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

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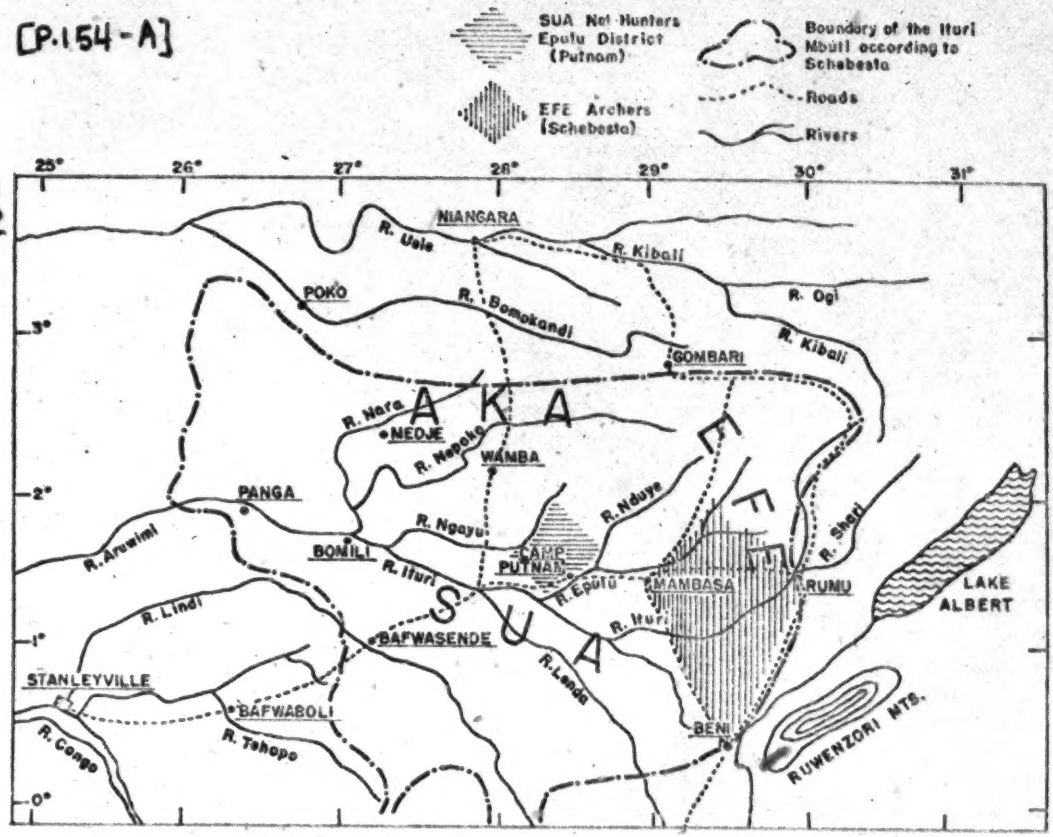

FIG. 3. Map showing distribution of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, Oriental Province, the Congo.

127 number of articles published in various anthropological journals, there is nothing that we can draw upon for the present work. We have, then, •101 two distinct groups—Schebesta's Efe Mbuti and Putnam's Epulu (Sua) Mbuti, archers and net hunters, respectively.

101 A word should be said about classification. 197 Schebesta's division of the Ituri Mbuti into Aka, Efe, and Sua is a linguistic classification and, at that, a division not according to Mbuti languages but to the villager linguistic groups—Mangbetu, Lese, and Bira, respectively. It thus corresponds to tribal groupings of villagers and does not seem to be particularly significant for the purposes of sociological analysis. (Schebesta is more concerned with problems of racial and cultural purity, and believes the Efe language to be of Pygmy origin; consequently, he considered the Efe Pygmies to be racially and culturally the purest.

[P. 154-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 197
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1952, 16). This admission, I think, is sufficient to indicate one of Schebesta's weaknesses, his obsession with this notion of cultural unity. To set out to establish a unity of social structure among a virtually unknown people scattered through thousands of square miles of forest is hardly commendable as scientific procedure. It [101] results, as one might expect, in his loose usage throughout his works of the terms "Bambuti" and "Pygmy," thus always implying that there are no significant differences between the Mbuti of one part of the forest and those of another, or between Mbuti who utilize one form of hunt and those who follow another. Further, Schebesta is constantly concerned with differentiating the Pygmies from the villagers. He looks for original traits in Pygmy culture that will evidence their separateness from the villager as well as their unity among themselves. (Any similarities he then ascribes to assimilation.) Nowhere do we find Schebesta interested in a society as such; it must be related to his own problems of cultural unity and distinctness of race. He himself (1947, 181, footnote 1) writes, "The object of my explorations was to

[P.155-B]

[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into three linguistic groups is another result of his preoccupation with the problem of the separateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture is the purest, being least affected by contact with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

114 177 101 114 177 [194]

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
128 taining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
621

[1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage
[192] of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-B]

[P. 158-C]

the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a rela- 101
tively large one and shows some interesting 131
tendencies toward fission. It did not always 621
move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part of the band would be several days' journey off in the forest, while the rest remained at the village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam 000
frequently visited the hunting band at its various camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam was more or less entirely confined by his illness to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's 197
Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as their camp language. They also use a great many KiLese words, however, and the local Bira affirm that they frequently cannot understand what they call "KiMbuti," though they recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

With regard to their "purity," it is difficult to say much, particularly as it seems more satisfactory to study them for what they are without reference to their supposed origin. They stand to the villager, however, in the general, apparent client-patron relationship found among most Mbuti throughout the Ituri, though this varies in detail from one area to another. It would seem that they are a great deal less closely attached to their village patrons than the archers described by Schebesta, and spend far less time in the vicinity of the village. At the same time they themselves, and the villagers, report other bands whose association with village settlements is still less regular. The material to hand, however, does reveal some new facts concerning this relationship, and, although interpretation of these facts can be made only with regard to this particular band (the disadvantage of such a small-scale study), at least it is more certain for that specific instance and may indicate similar possibilities elsewhere.

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177

[P. 158-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 159-A]

ORIENTATION

LOCATION

101 114 THE PYGMY POPULATION of the world is divided into two main groups, Asiatic and African, commonly known as Negritos and Negrillos, respectively. These terms originated in what is probably the first serious attempt to study the Pygmies as a whole (Quatrefages, 1887), and the relationship between these two groups has been an issue ever since. It does not concern us here, as our study is confined to the African Pygmies, but reference to this wider issue may be found in Quatrefages (1887), Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), and Gusinde (1942).

TRIBAL GROUPINGS

121 101 We are concerned essentially with an ethnographic study of known Pygmy groups in Africa, but here again the field is generally considered in terms far too broad to be practical.

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

[141] [144] [184]

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

[P. 159-C]

forest to the east. Their southern limit is 131
bounded by a line from the Ruwenzori, through Beni to Bafwasende. The western boundary runs north from Bafwasende to Panga and to the confluence of the Bomokandi and Uele. (See Fig. 3.) Apart from the Lindi and Ituri rivers, Schebesta says that Pygmies also inhabit the areas near the Epulu, Ngayu, Nepoko, and Poko rivers. Putnam makes no attempt to delimit Mbuti territory, but his notes show that he traveled throughout the area described by Schebesta, with the possible exception of the extreme south, and found Mbuti everywhere, away from the major rivers as well as along their banks.

Schebesta makes the threefold division al- 197
ready mentioned, of Twa, Tswa, and Mbuti, 101.
and further subdivides the Ituri Mbuti into [619]
three major groups: the Aka to the north; Sua to the south; and Efe to the east (Fig. 3). These are linguistic groups, speaking dialects of Mangbetu, Bira, and Lese, respectively.

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101.
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P 159-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [p.160-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with [613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a [602] grandfather's name is another indication of the lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them- [614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little [103] social significance. Place names are used fre- [101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are [832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 Putnam material is drawn not from a single coherent account, but from a number of isolated manuscript notes and from the written observations of Anne Putnam, put together by myself in the light of my own partial knowledge at the time of writing, of the particular Pygmies of whom the Putnams write.

128 The survey must be taken as a survey of source material and not as an ethnographic description of two types of Mbuti society. Though I have tried to draw from the material as much description as possible, obvious gaps are revealed, particularly in our knowledge of the social structure of the Mbuti. We have virtually no information, for instance, on the kinship, legal, or political systems of either group. Undoubtedly, the social structure is simple, but it is all the more regrettable that we do not have any detailed description of it. Our ethnographic description, in so far as it is such, gives an account of various institutions but with no hint as to their interrelationship. The account itself is never sufficiently detailed to permit speculation with any accuracy. In one sense it is virgin ground for the field worker, but not completely so. The survey reveals that
128 the Mbuti should be studied with regard to
• 101 their economic classification as archers and net
[P.273-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.273-C]

hunters rather than as Efe, Aka, or Sua—the linguistic division made by Schebesta which does not correspond to any sociological division. It may well emerge that there is a better classification, according to structural principles rather than purely economic differences, but at the moment this cannot be seen.

The survey also reveals a strange contrast between an apparently simple social structure and primitive material culture and a highly developed artistic sense. It seems worth while for the future field worker to pay particular attention to myth and mime, noting all the surrounding circumstances and not only the subject of representation. Similarly music is of obvious social importance and should be fully treated, with special attention to the social context. We might in this way gain some insight into the Mbuti system of values, which not only would be of significance itself but would immeasurably help our understanding of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

no villager boys present. But even more obvious, and ever manifesting itself, is the difference between the two people in their attitude to the forest. In the legends as told by the Mbuti we see something of the Mbuti attitude to the forest as the provider of all that is good and bad, as the source of the essentially good life of the Mbuti people. The forest is a place to be trusted (witness the *molimo* invocation to the God of the Forest) and loved. The villagers, on the other hand, fear the forest and people it with malevolent spirits. In their fear of the forest, there is necessarily an element of fear of the Mbuti, whom they recognize as its original inhabitants, as forest people. It is perhaps worth mentioning that Possoz (1954, 257) claims that the term "*Batwa*," derived from "*Batoa*," was originally applied by the Bantu-speaking tribes to the Pygmies, denoting that the latter were of older stock, closer to the ancestors and so worthy of veneration. The more recent term "*Batswa*," however, means "those in the course of disappearing." It would be difficult to prove or disprove such etymological deductions, but there is other evidence that the villager inhabitants of the Ituri Forest do not entirely lack respect for the Mbuti. There

P 178 181 Z 176 186 P Z [101] • Z [829] Z 186 829

[p. 274-D]

It would seem advisable to begin by working 121
in the communities already covered in the survey, checking and verifying the known information and filling in the numerous gaps. It should be possible by an eastward extension of the study of the Epulu net hunters to reach the point where they come in contact with a westward extension of the archers in the southeast of the area. The Pygmies ("Aka") in the north, [101] •
of whom little is known at present, should certainly be included in the study, in so far as they can be fruitfully compared with the net hunters and archers. We should then at least know whether or not we are justified in using the term "Mbuti" to include all the Ituri Pygmies as a single cultural entity. It may prove that we are no more justified in studying them together on account of their outward physical similarity than we would be in regarding the Dinka and the Nuer as a single people simply because they both have long legs.

It seems unnecessary even to consider the question of origin or of "purity." We are interested in the situation as it is. We can consider the past only in so far as we know it with certainty (which is not very far), or in so far as it plays a part in the beliefs, attitudes, or values of the people we are studying, in which case it is

[P 275-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

12 study as a comparative base from which the study of the Mbuti as a
[101] whole may be more speedily and accurately advanced. It is also believed that although the bulk of the study involves a single hunting band, much of the basic structure uncovered applies to other Mbuti bands. The major limitation, however, is that we are here concerned primarily with one band rather than with the Mbuti as a whole, yet this was an inevitable necessity.

Other limitations arise from the lack of monographs on comparable groups of forest nomads, from my consequent reluctance to generalize too far from so narrow a base, and from the difficulty of presenting the principles of organization of a society that does not possess the formal institutions found in larger and more sedentary societies. Nonetheless, such principles plainly must exist, and while our general objective is to outline the form and structure of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers of the Ituri Forest in the northeast Congo (Leopoldville), we also have the more particular objective of searching for the elusive principles that integrate each apparently autonomous Mbuti band, giving it an identity of its own by which it recognizes itself and its integral but diffuse relationship with other bands. For it is in light of these principles that we must try to understand the effective but problematical relationship that pertains between any Mbuti band and the village cultivators who are its neighbors.

12 Another limitation derives from the lack of reference material on
114 the Mbuti, which necessitated the gathering of ethnographic minutiae in the field and their presentation here, adding considerably to the bulk despite vigorous sifting. However, without a firm ethnographic base no analysis would be possible, so the provision of such a base is considered a prime prerequisite.

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular analysis, though this is not to deny their possible value in other fields. My own subsequent account of the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1961) was in no way intended as an academic study, nor is it suited for use as such, though it served a useful purpose in helping the field worker detach himself from the subject of his study, enabling him to examine it more critically.

[197] In my examination of other sources (1956) it was suggested that subsequent field work might discover a more meaningful division of the Ituri Mbuti than the linguistic division made by Schebesta, as

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 In paying special attention to this relationship it was felt that the otherwise intangible value-system of the Mbuti would be more clearly revealed, leading to an understanding of the ritual relationship that appeared to exist between the Mbuti and the forest, as implied in the accounts of other observers and in my own prior experience, but nowhere made explicit.

EXECUTION

114 101 131 Field work was undertaken between the summer of 1957 and the late winter of 1958, entering the then Belgian Congo by driving through from the West Coast, collecting as many local accounts of pygmy or pygmoid hunters and gatherers along the way as possible, for future reference. Such accounts were gathered in Dahomey, Nigeria (particularly towards the east), the Cameroons, Gabon, and throughout the Congo, but few hunting bands were encountered until well towards the Ubangi River (see Map 1). It was decided not to spend time trying to make contact, except on the far side of the Ubangi, where contact was relatively easy, and where there were also some Binga pygmies from the west bank of the river.

114 131 [144] From the Ubangi over to the Ituri it was quite obvious that, as elsewhere, true hunting bands only existed where there was substantial primary forest, and that elsewhere not only was the hunting and gathering economy defunct, but there had been so much intermarriage that one could not truly speak of a pygmy physical type any more than one could speak of a pygmy culture.

Leaving aside the forested area south of the Congo River, which I did not cover but for which pygmoid groups are reported, I found relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) as well as in the forested regions around the Ubangi River. But by far the heaviest concentration is [101] in the Ituri Forest, where all the pygmies recognize their unity in the name Mbuti, and where both the physical and the cultural integrity of the hunters and gatherers seems to have been best preserved.

121 There was no question that this was the right area for the major bulk of the field work, but there was some question as to which band to select for the intensive study. I eventually decided on the Epulu

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one. 121

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism: 121 123

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps. [609]

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized. 114 121

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations. 101 114 131

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans. 114 131 122

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

[P. 16]

CHAPTER 2

Orientation

THE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

101 144 The Mbuti pygmies form the largest single group of pygmy hunters and gatherers in Africa, and are probably also the purest in both the biological and cultural senses. Throughout the equatorial rain forest other similar groups exist, but while some of them (notably in the Gabon and in the Ubangi area) appear to be comparable with the Mbuti, the majority, like the Twa and the Tswa of the Kivu and central Congo districts (see Map 3), have at one time or another intermarried with Negro tribes of cultivators, losing many of the true pygmy physical characteristics and at the same time losing a great deal of their original hunting and gathering culture.

181 Far more important, from the structural point of view, is the altered relationship between all these pygmoids and the world they live in, for as we shall see, the structure of Mbuti society pivots around a powerful forest-oriented system of values. This value system to a large extent overrides economic considerations in determining the relationship between the Mbuti and their village neighbors, whereas among the pygmoids the economic factor appears to be dominant, and the consequent dependency of the pygmoids upon the villagers in other respects is also greater.

*[179]

*179 178 This is in no way to say that the structure to be found among the Mbuti is representative of an original pygmy hunting and gathering structure; in fact probably far from it, for the repercussions of the invasion of the forest by the village cultivators have been enormous. But the response of the Mbuti, for whatever reason, has been different from that of the Twa and the Tswa and it is of much greater structural interest and significance, incidentally throwing light on the whole process of acculturation. At the same time, however, the peculiar structural development of the Mbuti does enable us to observe a

[1] [see page 318 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tion between villages is due only in part to rivalry for territory. It is also due to suspicion of witchcraft and sorcery, a suspicion that seems to increase as the distance of separation decreases. This, of course, can also be interpreted as an expression of territorial friction, but it is conceived in personal rather than territorial terms, and is accompanied by a general dislike and mistrust of strangers.

Nor must we lose sight of the fact that whereas the Mbuti, even with their nomadism, in which hunting camps are shifted every month, have a strong sense of basic territorial permanence, the villagers have none, and this gives rise to further instability. To mention only one example, it is believed among the Bira that the dead should be buried according to a prescribed ritual, and that the grave should be cared for in a prescribed manner. The burial is always carried out but it is a constant source of conflict having to care for a grave that may be some miles away. Every time a village moves the villagers have to face the fact that they are abandoning their dead, to some extent, and they are unpleasantly reminded of the uncertainty of their own future. We do not know what the original burial practice was before the Bira moved into the forest; undoubtedly changes have been made, but they have not adequately met the new situation.

It is only in light of the relationship between each of these peoples and the environment in which they live that we can understand the relationship between the people themselves. It is in part ignorance of this factor that has led to the gross misunderstanding of Mbuti/Villager relationship, and indeed of Mbuti society itself. Before considering either the Mbuti or their relationship with the villagers, however, a certain amount of further ground-clearing is necessary.

MBUTI, BAMBUTI, BAMBUTI

A certain amount of confusion concerning the Mbuti arises out of conflicting terminology, some of it totally inapplicable or lacking in significance. First we have to be clear why we group together, under any one name, all the pygmy hunters of the Ituri Forest, even though they speak different languages and use different hunting techniques.

Racially, they are clearly one people, quite distinct from any of the surrounding Negro tribes. They form a strongly, visibly distinct unit. Culturally, they are equally distinguished from their neighbors as a unit, being hunters and gatherers, and not cultivators, with a consequently totally distinct social structure. Differences in hunting techniques do not affect the basic structural unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

niques do not affect the basic structural unity. The fact that the 101
Mbuti fall into different linguistic groups is no more than accidental, 197
and is of recent historic origin. The linguistic division is that propounded by Schebesta (1938, pp. 24–26). In effect he uses the terms Aka, Efe and Sua to refer to those pygmies who were in territories invaded and settled by the Ngbetu/Zande, the Lesé, and the Forest Bira respectively; these pygmies apparently adopted the languages of the newcomers to their respective areas and they have maintained some kind of relationship with their Negro neighbors ever since.

The question of language is by no means settled yet, and it may be 197
that either KiLesé or KiBira may in fact prove to be a language of 174
pygmy origin adopted by the Negro invaders. At the moment there is no significant evidence available to this effect, and given a situation where small isolated hunting bands (of an absolute maximum of thirty nuclear families and a possible minimum of three) are brought sharply into contact with larger, more permanent, technologically more advanced peoples with a tribal system, we can only assume the likelihood that the pygmies adopted the languages of the newcomers, losing most of their own.

In this case the linguistic division suggested by Schebesta most 197
certainly only refers to a post-contact situation and does not neces- 114
sarily point to any indigenous difference between these three groups of Ituri hunters and gatherers. The fact that, very approximately, the linguistic boundaries also correspond to the boundaries between pygmy hunters who emphasize the spear, the bow and arrow, and the net may be no more than a mark of acculturation with the three distinct Negro groups; on the other hand it may point to some earlier distinction, but in any case is of much more significance in any contemporary study of social structure.

In dismissing the linguistic differences as any indication of internal 197
differentiation it is worth pointing out that any pygmy from any area 101
in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken. This is one small pointer toward an earlier linguistic unity among all Ituri pygmies, as is the fact that they all seem to recognize themselves by the term Mbuti. One hears this term far more frequently than any other when pygmies are distinguishing themselves from villagers, in all parts of the forest. Even in distinguishing them-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

197 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be
101 used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Ne-
144 gro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, neces-
128 sary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

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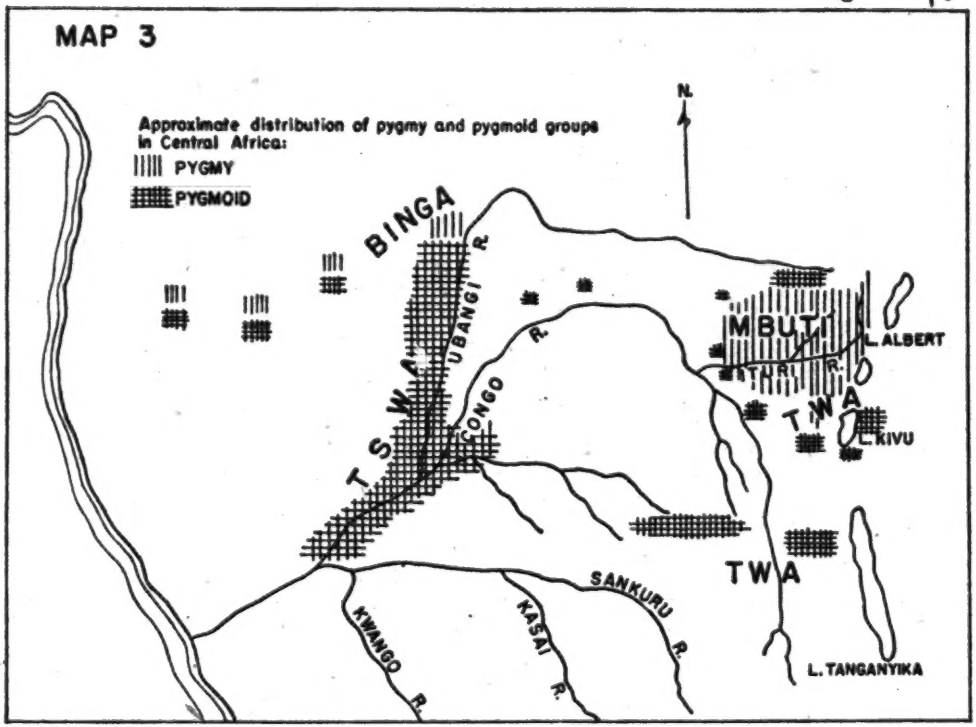

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 ●
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

MAP 5

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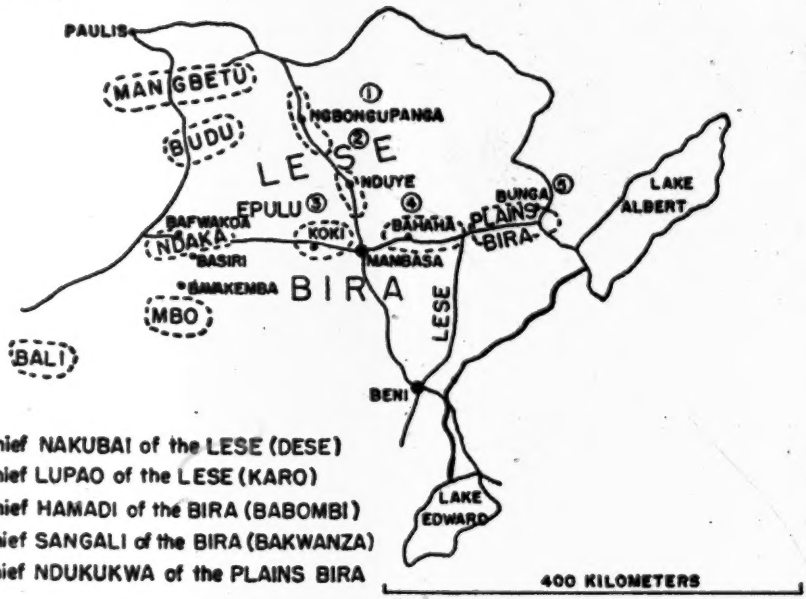
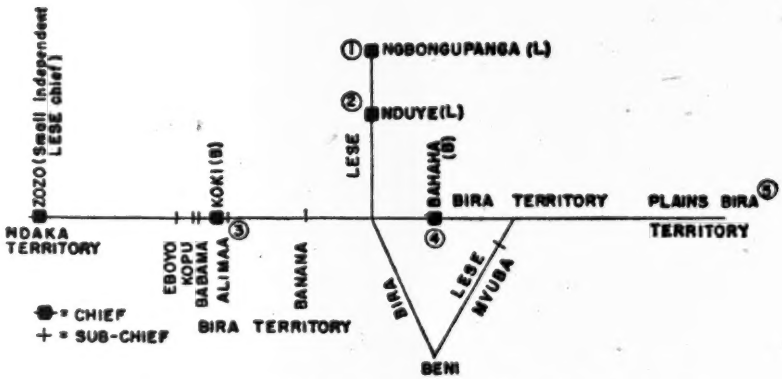


① Chief NAKUBAI of the LESE (DESE)
② Chief LUPAO of the LESE (KARO)
③ Chief HAMADI of the BIRA (BABOMBI)
④ Chief SANGALI of the BIRA (BAKWANZA)
⑤ Chief NDUKUKWA of the PLAINS BIRA



Village tribes and location of tribal Chiefs in the Ituri.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101 •
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 177
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [161]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [174]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Sche- [177]
besta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three [411]
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

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Although between themselves the pygmies have little division of labor, in another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

P
Z
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433
[481]

This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy spends all of his time hunting, the Negro only a portion of his. The pygmy depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

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[101]

Throughout the pygmy country, the pygmies can be classified either as net hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

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[621]

Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

[P. 328-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.152-A]

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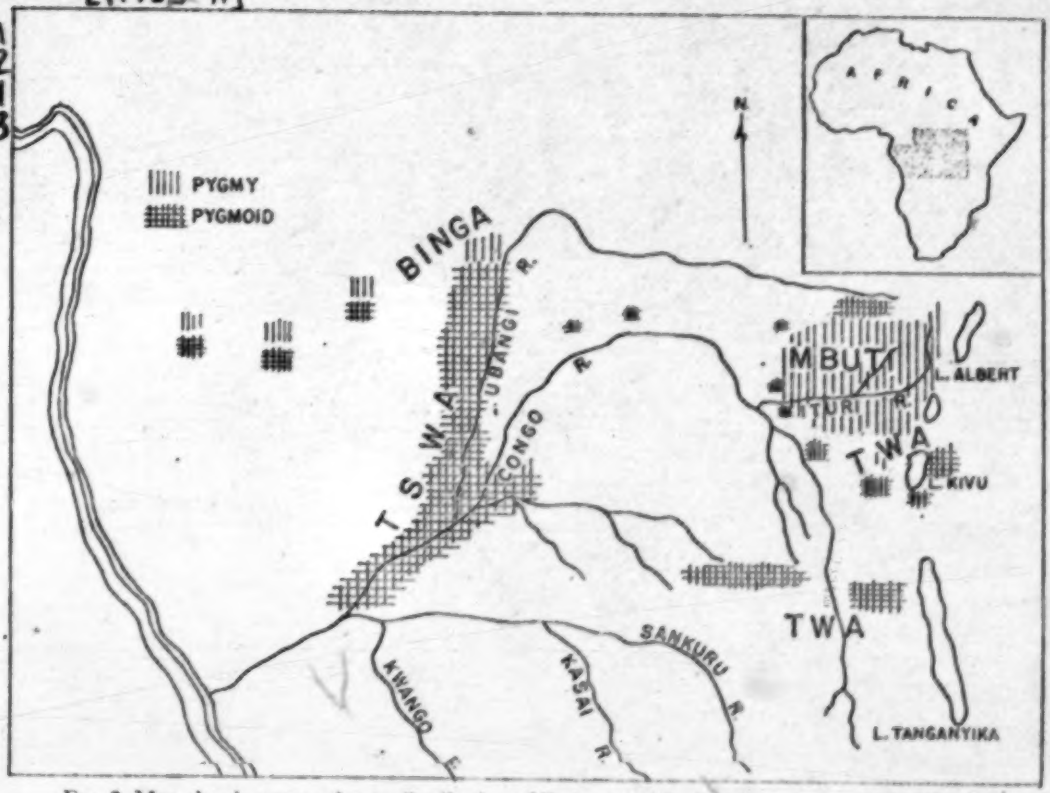
Fig. 1. Map showing extent of personal knowledge of Pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* or through personal contact made during the author's 1957–1958 field trip, not covering the central and southern Congo. Circles indicate accounts of Pygmy or Pygmoid hunting bands: crosses, actual contact.

[P. 153-A]



1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04 Mbuti 101 •102 131 133

FIG. 2. Map showing approximate distribution of Pygmy and Pygmoid groups in central Africa.

[P.154-A]

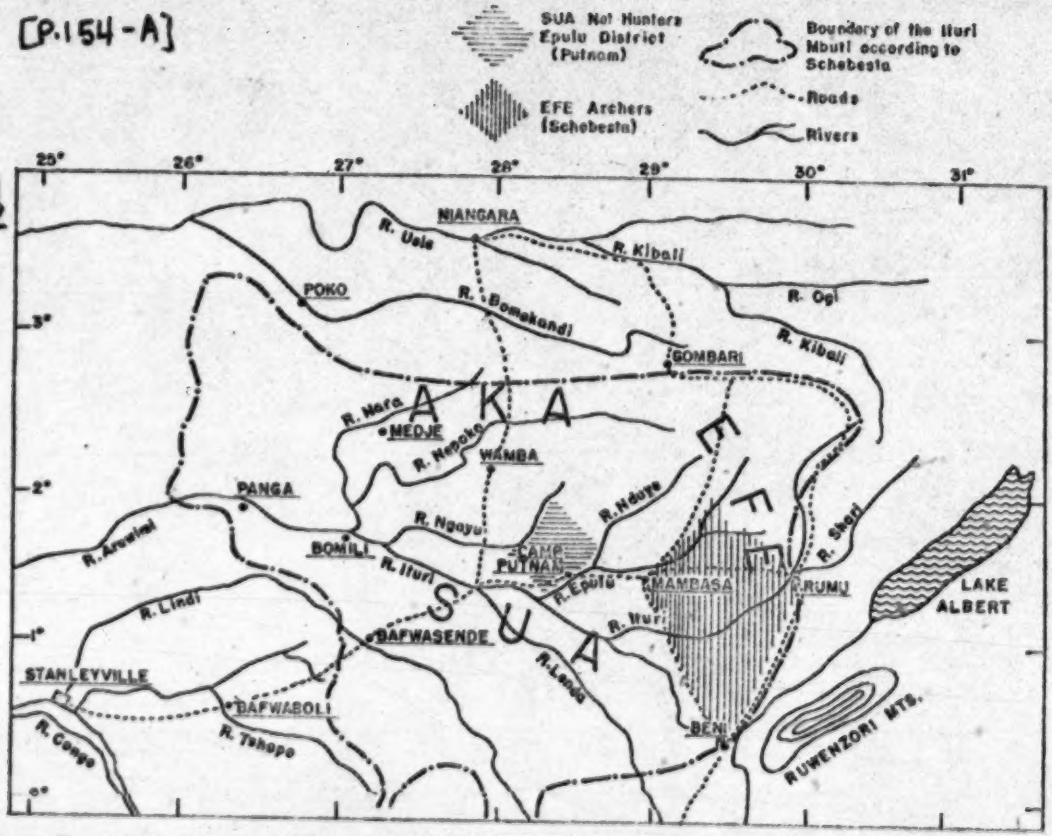


FIG. 3. Map showing distribution of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, Oriental Province, the Congo.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 102
114
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133

MAP I

Extent of personal knowledge of pygmy groups according to accounts heard in situ and personal contact made during 1957/8 field trip (not covering central and southern Congo)

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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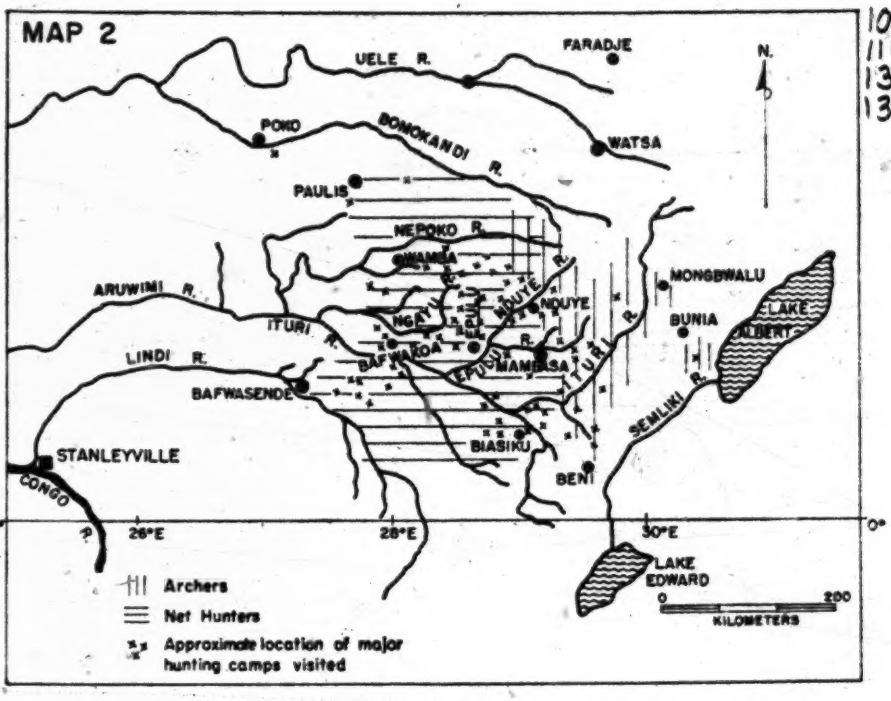

Approximate location of hunting bands visited in the Ituri.

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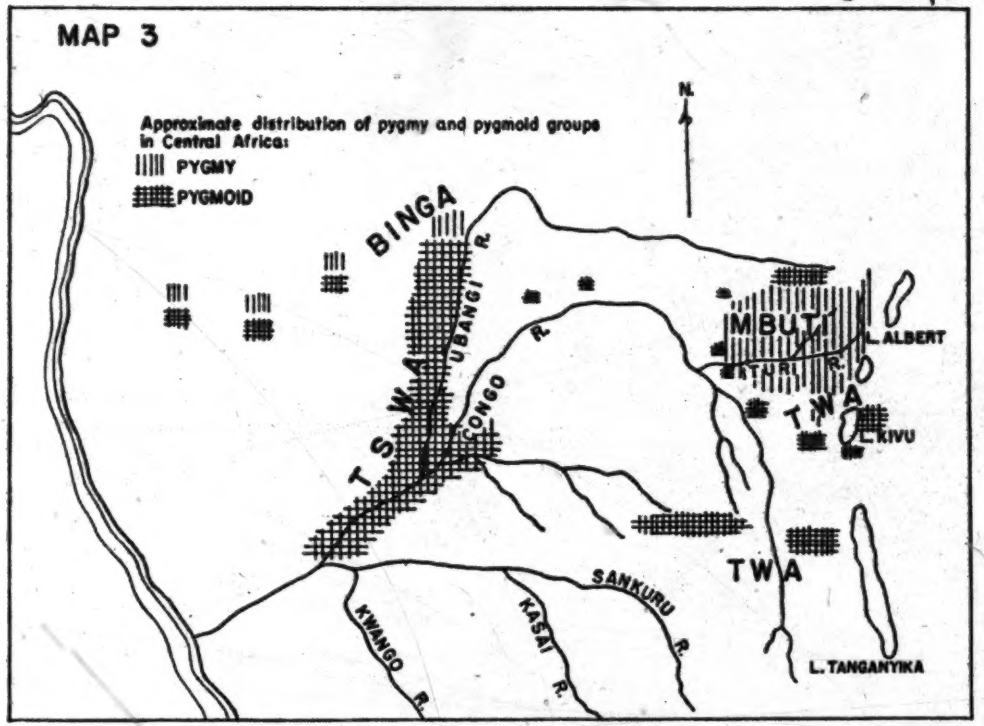

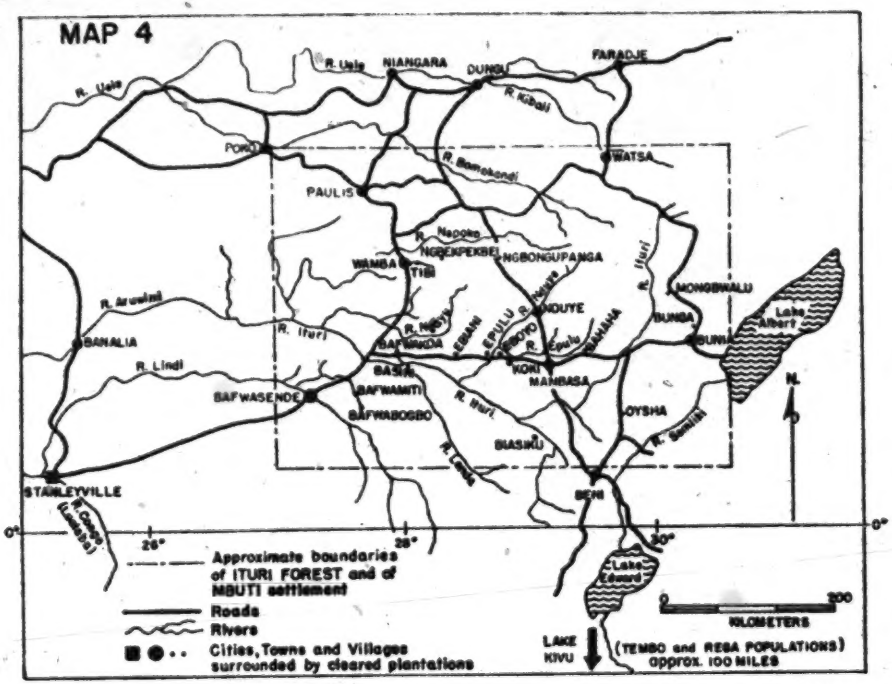

Boundaries of Ituri Forest and of Mbuti settlement.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

MAP 5

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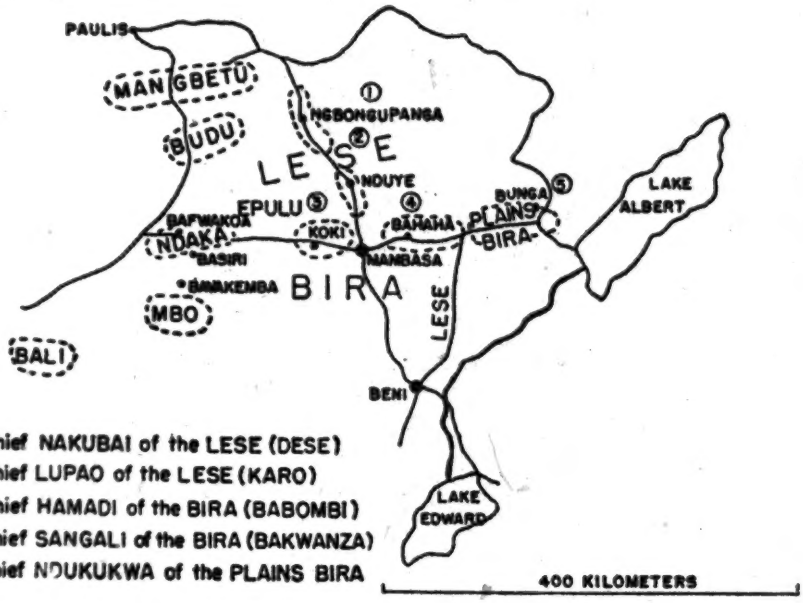
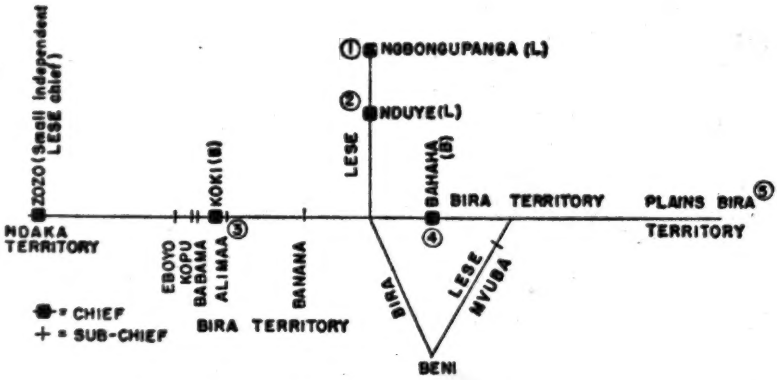
102

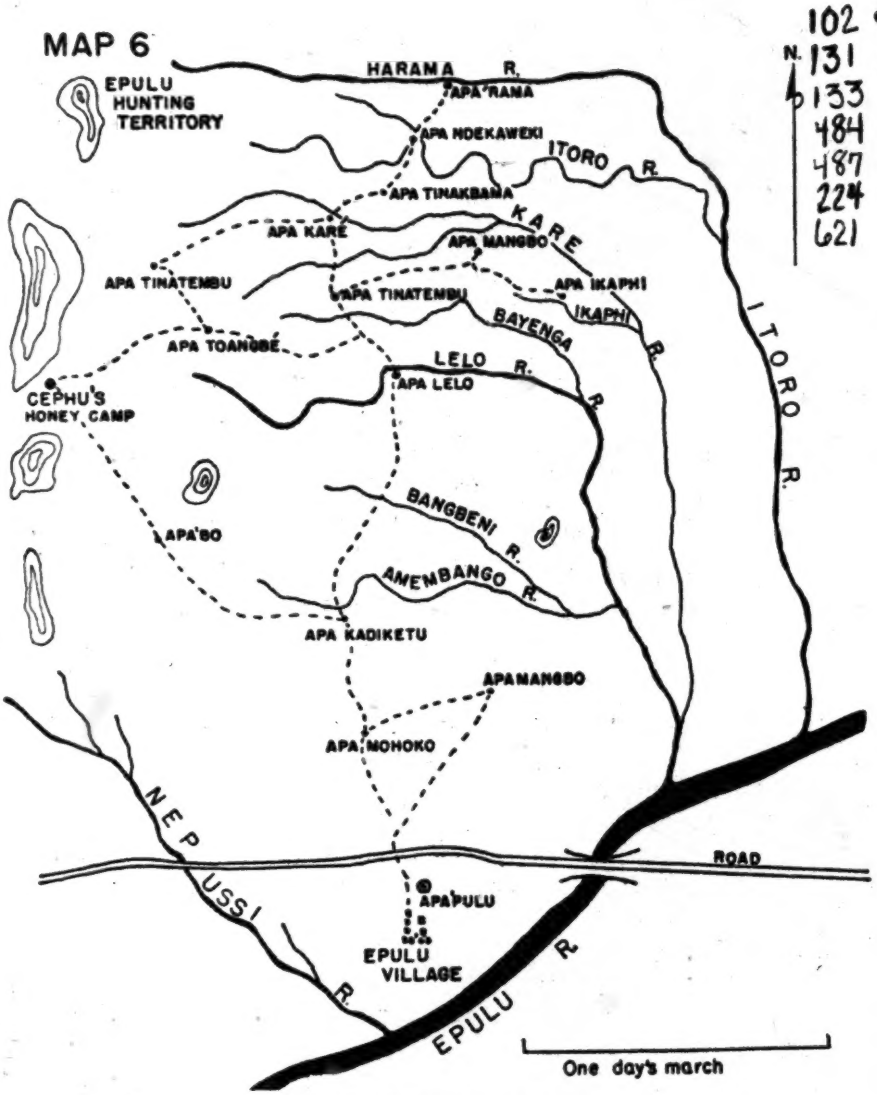


① Chief NAKUBAI of the LESE (DESE)
② Chief LUPAO of the LESE (KARO)
③ Chief HAMADI of the BIRA (BABOMBI)
④ Chief SANGALI of the BIRA (BAKWANZA)
⑤ Chief NDUKUKWA of the PLAINS BIRA



Village tribes and location of tribal Chiefs in the Ituri.

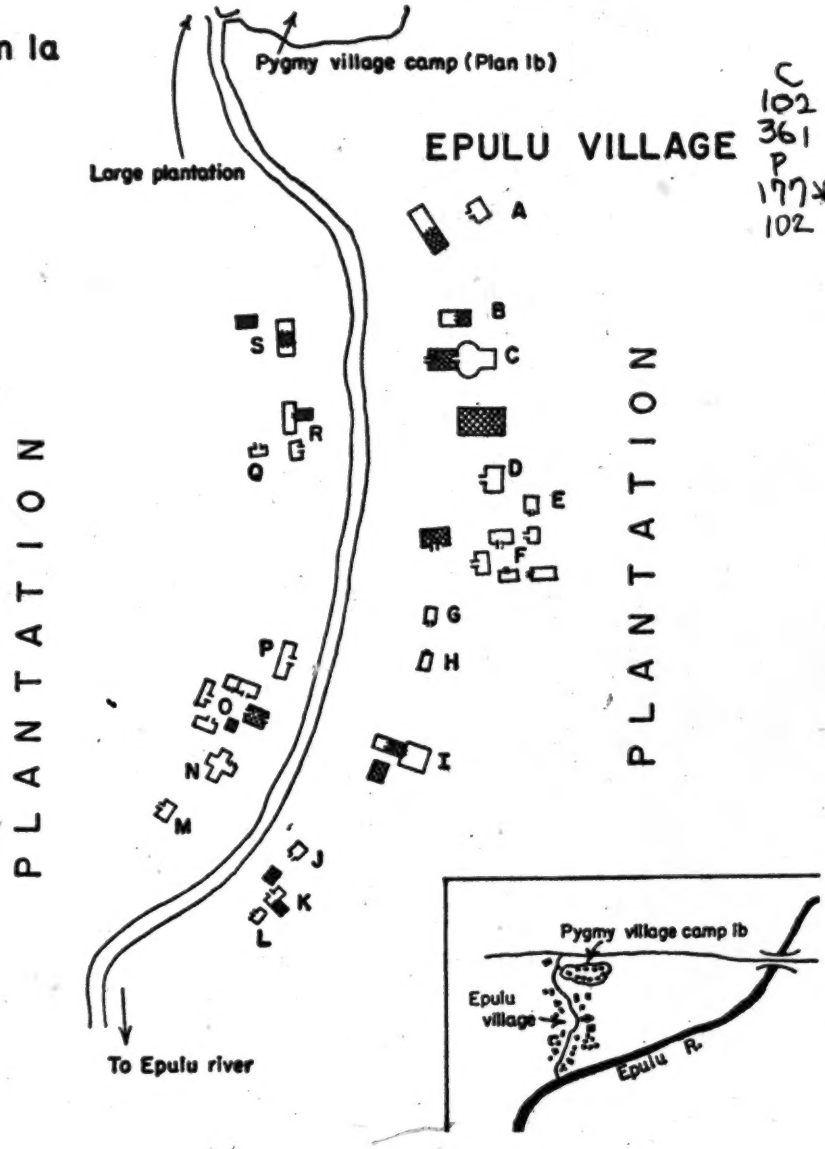
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan Ia



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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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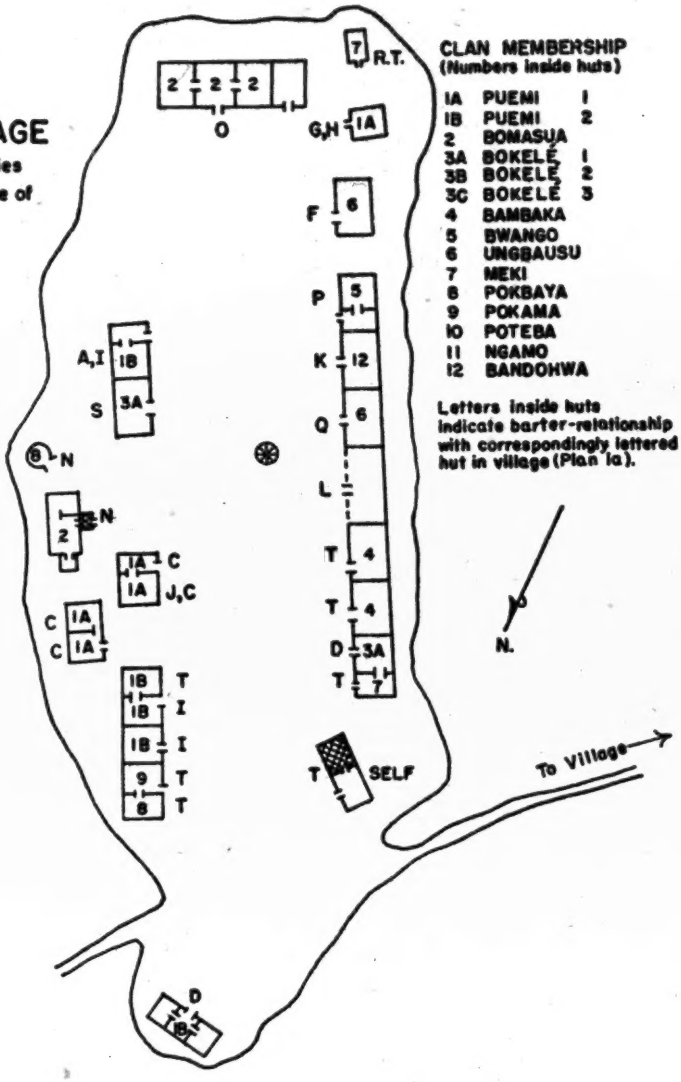
Plan Ib

EPULU VILLAGE

Camp of Pygmies
(About twice scale of Plan Ia)



CLAN MEMBERSHIP
(Numbers inside huts)

1A	PUEMI	1
1B	PUEMI	2
2	BOMASUA	
3A	BOKELE	1
3B	BOKELE	2
3C	BOKELE	3
4	BAMBAKA	
5	BWANGO	
6	UNGBAUSU	
7	MEKI	
8	POKBAYA	
9	POKAMA	
10	POTEBA	
11	NGAMO	
12	BANDOHWA	

Letters inside huts indicate barter-relationship with correspondingly lettered hut in village (Plan Ia).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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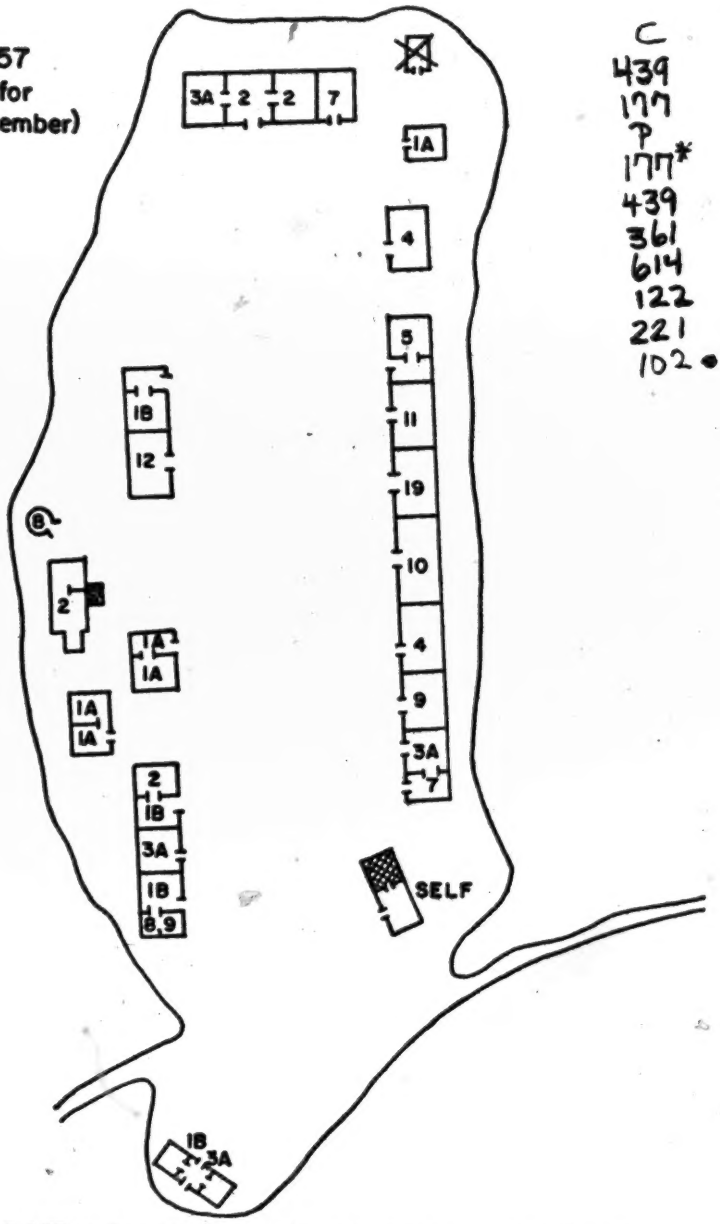

PLAN 2a–d *Village camp of Epulu Mbuti, October 1957–March 1958.*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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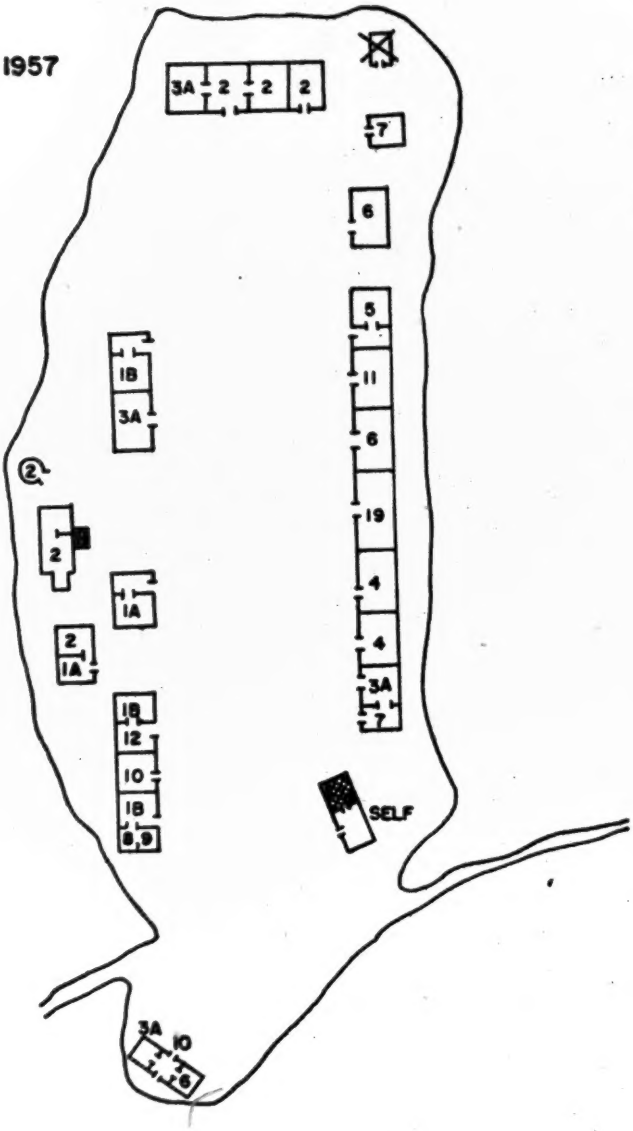
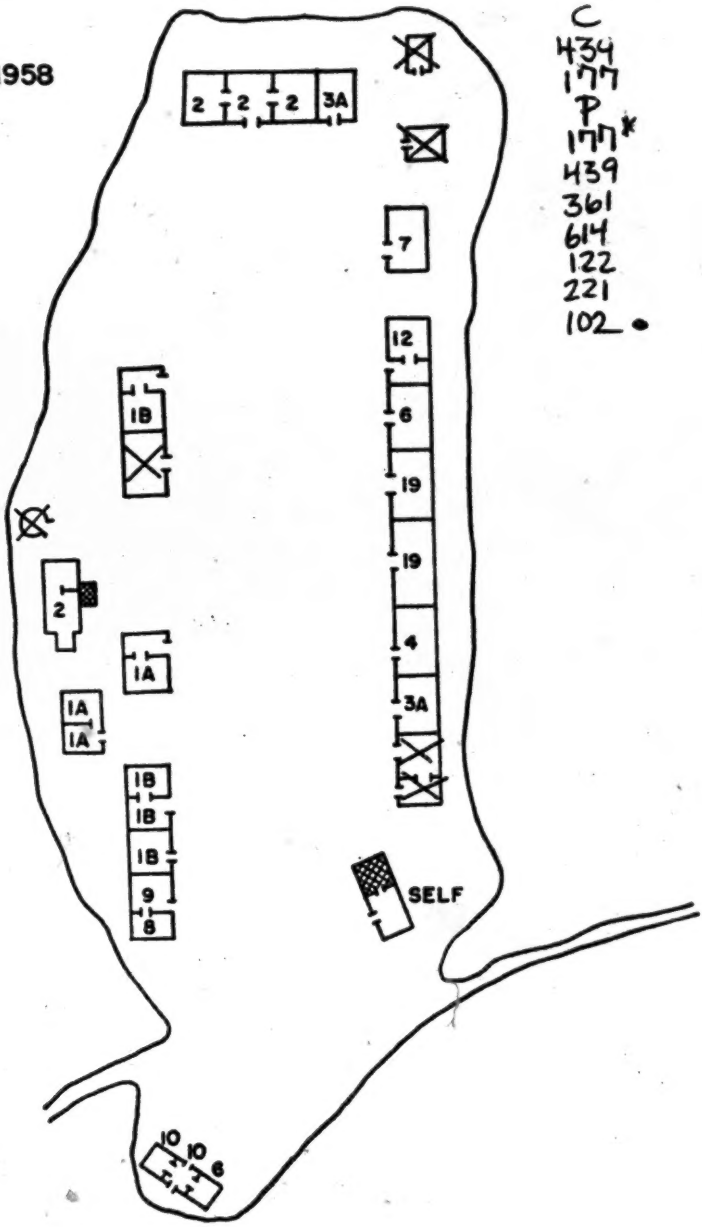
Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958



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2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

338

WAYWARD SERVANTS

C
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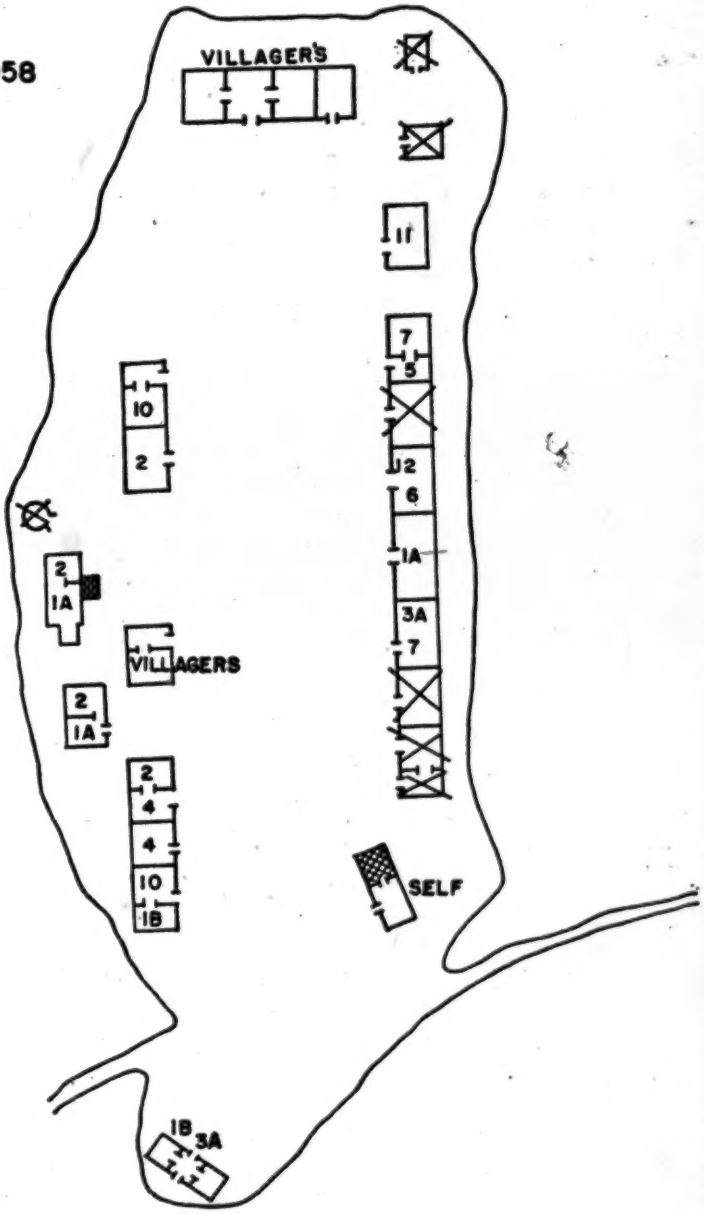
• 102

Plan 2d
MARCH 1958



3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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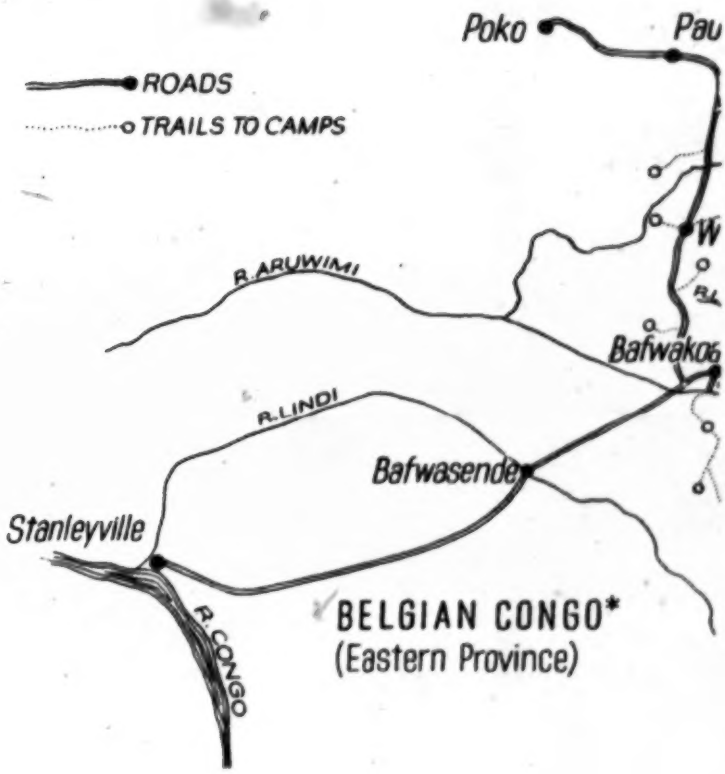

MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

*Now Republic of the Congo
[P. 10-B]

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Area of Map 2
[P. 10-C]

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103
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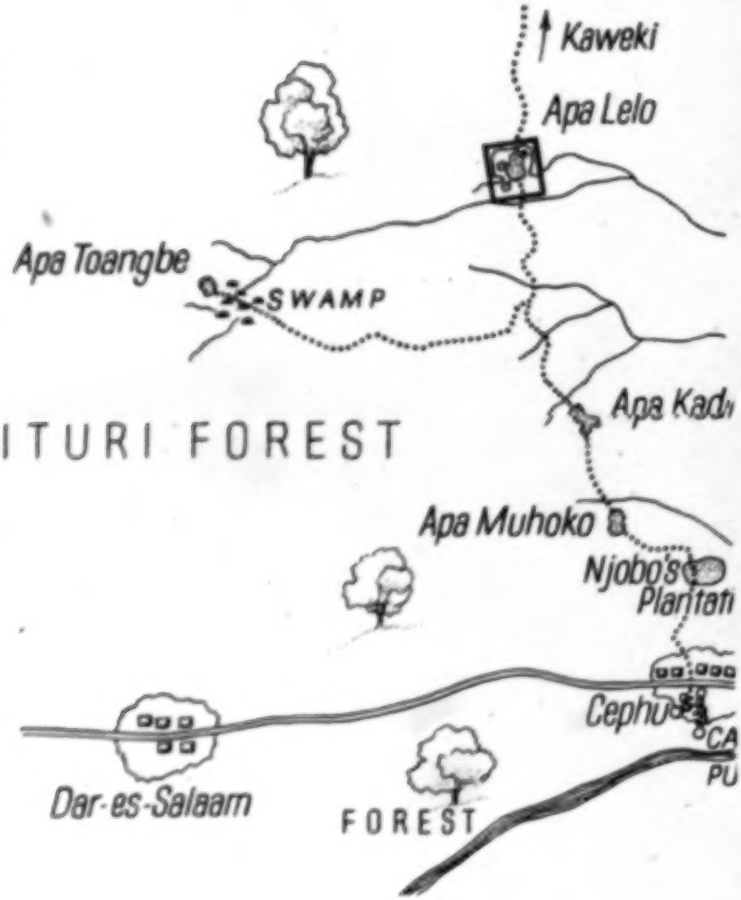
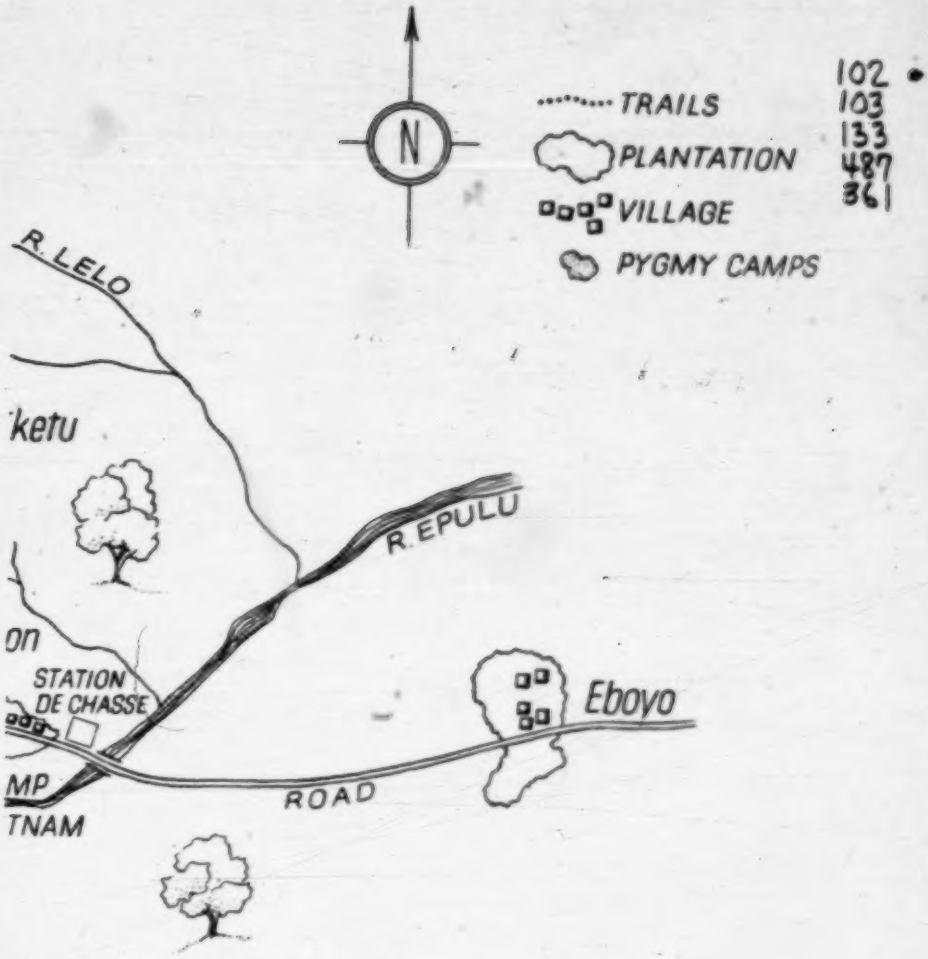


MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Area of Map 3

[P. 10-E]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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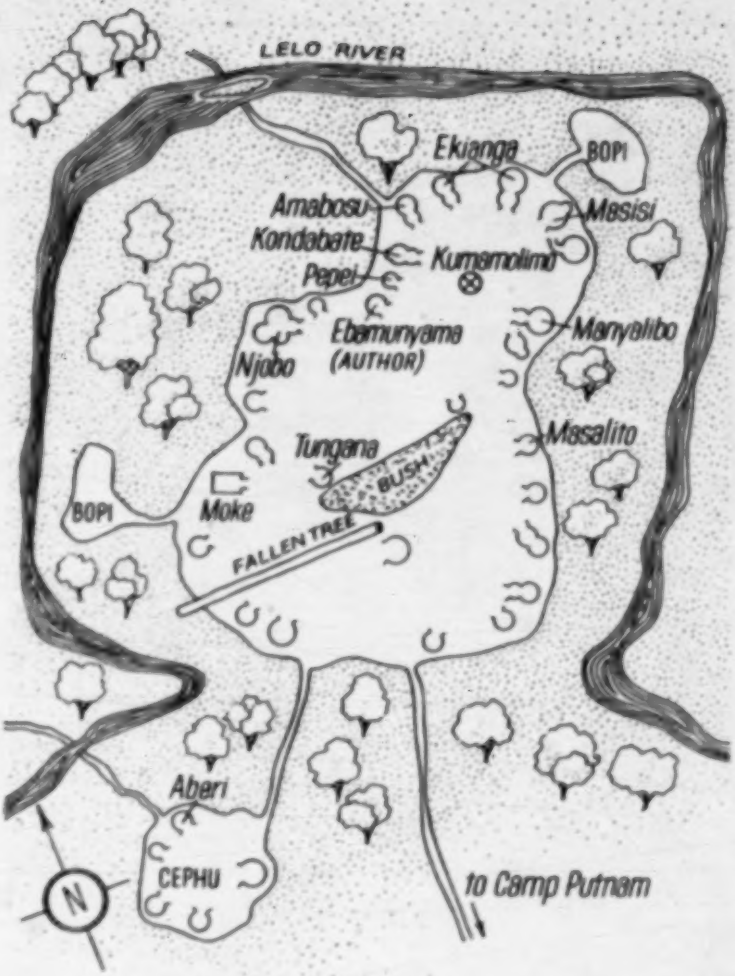

MAP 3: Apa Lelo
[P. 10-F]

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with [613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a [602] grandfather's name is another indication of the lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them- [614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little [103] social significance. Place names are used fre- [101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached them- selves to a net-hunting band, so completely are [832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P. 246-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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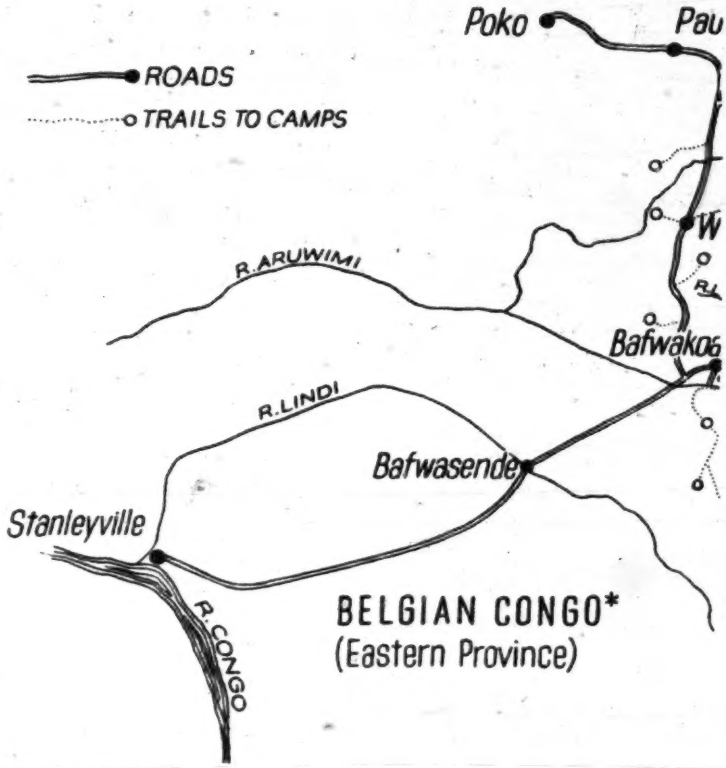

MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

*Now Republic of the Congo
[P.10-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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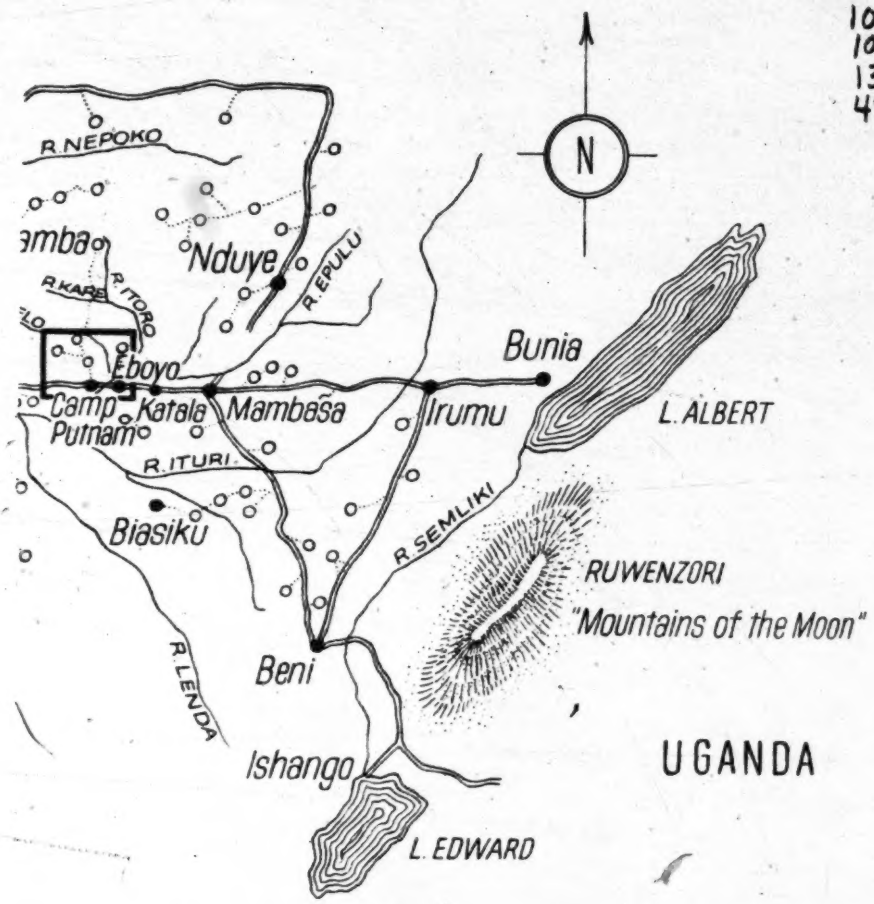

Area of Map 2

[P. 10-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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• 103
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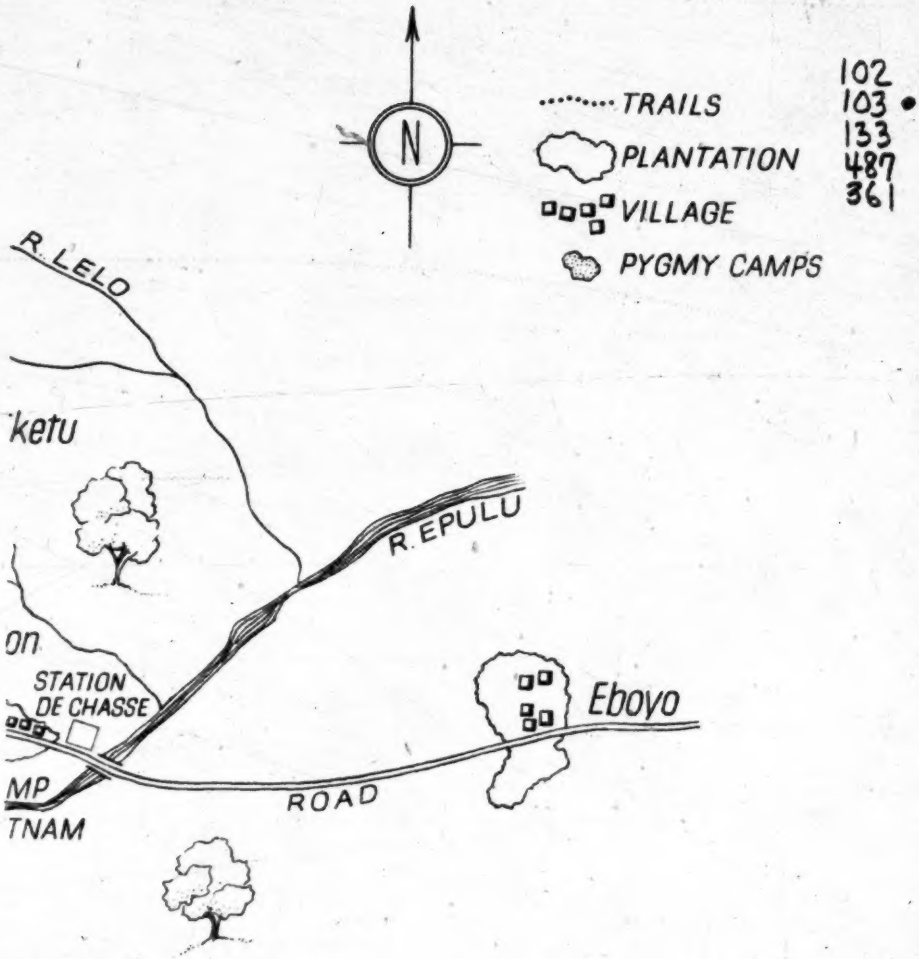
MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Area of Map 3

[P. 10-E]

this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

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In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tic or racial differential. It might be well to define how certain other terms are used.

CAMP: This term distinguishes the settlement of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There may be hunting camps, those situated in the forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

BAND: This refers to the total Mbuti hunting population, regardless of kinship, that recognizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. The band may occupy a single camp or split into several camps within the same territory.

VILLAGE: The settlement of the Bantu and Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the forest. Such a village is likely to have a much more clear-cut kinship composition and political identity than an Mbuti band.

VILLAGER: This term, unless otherwise stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cultivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that

[P.147-D]

the basis of the relationship is the fact that these tribes are village cultivators and not forest hunters.

LINEAGE: We adhere to the definition and usage suggested in "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" (1954, 88–89). The definition is given as follows: "A lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person through a determinate number of generations."

CLAN: Similarly, we use this term as suggested in "Notes and Queries" (1954, 89–90) whereby clan members may trace their unilineal relationship through one line or the other, i.e., we do not use it in the sense of a matriclan as opposed to a gens. Further, we here regard the lineage as a subdivision of the clan, lineage members being able to trace their membership to a known ancestor. A number of such lineages hold themselves to be related by the common descent of the lineage ancestors from a remote, possibly fictional or totemic ancestor.

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original sur-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 • 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P 2 101 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P 2 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P. 148-B]

[P.363]

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This is a glossary of terms used by Epulu Mbuti, as cited in the text. Owing to the frequency with which the Mbuti mingle words originating from different local languages, while most of the words given here are of Bira origin, some derive from KiNgwana. Further, owing to the Mbuti habit of dropping or adding vowels or consonants for the sake of euphony, and to their ambivalent attitude toward prefixes, I give the words as used in speech without attempting to reduce them to roots, except where there is no doubt. Thus "*bo'o*" in Mbuti usage I give as the KiBira original, "*bobo*"; where in doubt I suggest a possible derivation such as "*ekimi*" from "*kimia*" (KG). Wherever the derivation is apparently from KiNgwana, I insert (KG).

[193]

akami: noise (from *kami:* to cry?).
angbe: a tree and the wood from the tree, important for honey.
angbelu: medicine for honey season (from *lu-* to talk, call?).
anjo: hunting medicine.
anza: good.
apua'i: friend, sibling.
bamiki ba ndura: children of the forest.
batu ba ndura: people of the forest.
batu banji: people of the village.
bekbekbe'i: very (much).
bera'i: melody (solo).
bo: good.
bobo: empty.
boki: honey.
bokbu: all.
bonga: good (in a fuller sense than *bo*).
bongisa: to make good, to rejoice.
bopi: children's playground.
boru: the "house" (*endu*) of the soul; i.e., the body.
bulé: (KG) empty, worthless, troublesome.
chahwa: youth(s).
chanja: (KG) to make light incisions in the skin, for tattoo or for insertion of medicines.
chawi: (KG) witch.
che'i: fear.
ehoko: banana.
ekimi: (ref. *kimia* [KG]) quiet.
ekokomea: erotic dance for *molimo* and for honey season.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 104 *ekonga:* spear.
ekondi: love.
elima: premarital festival in which girls and boys both take part, signaled by a girl's first menstruation.
ema: mother.
endu: house, hut, room.
epa: father.
esumba: (KG) ritual originally associated with elephant-hunting for Arab slavers, sometimes used interchangeably with the word *molimo*.
furahisa: (KG) to rejoice, make festive.
ganga: to mend, bind together, cure; hence *mganga* or *muganga*, doctor.
imia'i: chorus, refrain.
isa: fire.
ishumbwa: another form of *esumba* (KG), possibly of slightly different significance to the Ngwana, not to the Mbuti.
itaba: edible forest root.
kali: girl, woman.
kalisia: a name sometimes used for the godhead (forest).
kami: to cry, which is defined as making a noise (*akami* or *kelelé* [KG]).
karé: brotherhood in the *nkumbi* initiation.
kelelé: (KG) noise.
keti: a forest spirit, neither good nor bad to the Mbuti, but evil to the Bira.
kidi: come, arrive.
kimia: (KG) quiet (ref. *imia'i*, chorus, and association of song with the value of *ekimi*).
kiyana: (KG) youth(s).
kobi(a): fear, be wary or cautious, but more often used as:
kobi: to keep very quiet.
kobinengo: silence.
kondi: to love, have affection for.
kuma: hearth.
kuya: hunting net.
langé toro: sleep; lit., "to lie sleep."
le: eat.
leahwa: food.
lendu: an antelope.
lozi: (KG) sorcerer.
lufu: say, talk, call.
lukembi: (KG) musical instrument, an idiophone better known as *sanza* in Swahili.
madé: wooden whistle.
madé: lesser (as in *molimo ma*
mangbo: great.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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mangesé: elder.
mavi: (KG) excrement.
mbafu: (KG) stupidity.
mboko: buffalo.
mboloko: small antelope.
mbongu: elephant.
miki: child.
moko: brother.
molimo: men's religious association, a festival of crisis among both the Mbuti and the Bira, and also associated with a musical instrument among both, but otherwise quite distinct.
mongongo: phrynium leaves used for roofing (ref. *makongo* [KG]).
mota: hard, difficult, dangerous.
mukira: hunt, hunter (also in KG).
mungu: (KG) God.
nanji: village.
ndandama: stupidity.
ndasi: too much.
ndura: forest.
nengo: very.
ngbengbe: wooden clappers used in honey season.
nguvu: (KG) difficult, hard, heavy.
njelani: vine used for making baskets.
nkumbi: initiation of the Bira for boys.
nkusa: vine used in making twine and nets.
nyama: animal.
oki: hear.
oni: see.
pati: take to oneself, cover oneself, become.
pepo: vital essence, vital breath, life force of the forest.
pika: to come, bring.
piki: whistle of wood.
pisa: give, pass over, put.
ponisa: (KG) punish.
roho: individual self, personality (with different connotations when used by Bira or Ngwana).
satani: (KG, also *shaitani, saitani*) spirit, ghost, evil if used by villagers, or by Mbuti if referring to village "satani."
segbe: wooden whistle (as for *piki, madé*) for magical use.
shamba: (KG, also *samba*) plantation.
sinana: bad.
sindula: water chevrotain.
sondu: a large antelope.

songé: moon.
suba: within.
s'uti: sound.
tata: grandparent.
teré: the godhead, primarily in its judicial, authoritative aspect (ref. morning *molimo* cries of "*e teré*": "it is *teré*").
tiko: plantation.
toré: as for *teré*.
wendi: to hunt.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Glossary

BaBira The Negro village tribe with which the Epulu Pygmies have most contact. As is characteristic of Bantu peoples, *Ba* is a plural prefix, the tribal name being *Bira*. The singular prefix is *Mu*, and the prefix indicating the language of the people is *Ki*. Thus a *Mu*Bira speaks the *Ki*Bira language, as do all the *Ba*Bira villagers. 104 •

Bakpara The term by which the Negroes refer to the relationship to the Pygmies; best translated "Masters."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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BaLese — The major village tribe to the east and northeast of the Epulu district.

BaMbuti — General term for all Pygmies of the Ituri Forest.

BaNgwana — An Islamic tribe scattered throughout the area. Their unsavory reputation, acquired in the days when they aided and abetted the slave-traders, has continued right up to the present day. KiNgwana has become the lingua franca of the entire area.

Banja — A pair of short sticks, split into many strands at one end and clapped together on a log as rhythmic accompaniment to certain songs of the Pygmies, particularly the *molimo* songs.

Bantu — General term for all tribes speaking a certain type of language, characterized by the use of prefixes, as indicated under BaBira, above, etc. The Bantu peoples extend throughout eastern, southern, and central Africa.

Baraza — The meeting place of a family or village. Sometimes a large veranda built onto a house; more often a separate building consisting of a roof supported by poles, but with no walls.

Dawa — "Medicine"; may refer to effective herbs or equally to magical incantations or spells.

[551] [123] **Eramunyama** — Literally, "His Father Killed an Animal"; the name which the Pygmies gave to me, being their condensation of the story that I told to explain my name, "Turnbull." (A borderland Scot saved the king's life by leaping on the back of a bull and turning it away from the king by twisting its

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[551]

neck. The family was rewarded with the title "Turner of the Bull," and with a crest of a bull with a broken neck.)

Elima The festival celebrating the puberty of girls.

Fito A young straight sapling, up to twelve feet in length, used in the construction of house frames, also as whips during certain ceremonies.

Itaba A sweet root found only in the forest, considered a delicacy by the Pygmies.

Kangay The gardenia fruit, used by Pygmies to extract a black juice used for staining the body or for drawing patterns on bark cloth.

Kenge An antelope, sometimes an okapi; such names are occasionally, but not often, given to children, as in the case of my helper and friend.

Kumamolimo "The heart of the *molimo*"—the central meeting place of the men's religious organization.

Lendu A forest antelope, the size of a large dog, with sharp-pointed horns.

Liko A brew made by the Pygmies of forest berries, herbs, and cola nut.

Machetti A large-bladed knife used for cutting fito, etc.

Mangese The Pygmy term, also used by some BaBira, for the elders. As used by Pygmies it can also refer to a youngster, if he has shown himself to be a "Great One" by some spectacular hunting achievement, say killing a buffalo or an elephant single-handed.

● 104 **Mboloko** — The smallest forest antelope, barely the size of a rabbit.

Molimo — The name given by the BaMbuti to the ritual performed at times of great crisis, and consisting primarily of songs sung nightly by the men. It is also the name given to the musical instrument, a long trumpet, usually of wood, that plays an important part in the ritual.

Mongongo — A large heart-shaped leaf, sometimes nearly two feet across, used for thatching the roofs of huts by both the Pygmies and the villagers. They are laid like tiles, the upper row overlapping the lower.

Ndura — As used by the BaBira, this means the forest; as used by the Pygmies, it means the entire world. When Kenge saw the plain beyond the forest, with barely a tree in view, he referred to it as "ndura."

Ngbengbe — Two short sticks, stripped of bark and clapped together to give a hollow ringing tone. Used for rhythmic accompaniment to the honey songs of the Pygmies. Possibly in imitation of the sound of a honey ax chopping to get at the hive.

Nkula — Both the nut and the red wood of the nkula tree. The wood is scraped to give a red powder which makes a stain when mixed with water. Used for both body and bark-cloth decoration.

Nkusa — The vine from which the Pygmies make twine for their hunting nets.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

GLOSSARY

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NYAMA Any animal; also used as a term of abuse.

OKAPI A forest animal, related to the giraffe, found only in this area.

PANDA A gambling game played with beans which are thrown on the ground by two players. The skill consists in estimating at a glance how many beans have to be added to those on the ground to make up a multiple of four.

SINDULA The water chevrotain, an aquatic antelope which is particularly vicious when trapped. It is considered the best eating in the forest.

SONDU A large forest antelope.

TIPPU TIP (also Tibbu Tib, etc.) Notorious slave-trader of the nineteenth century. From his headquarters on Zanzibar he sent out caravans through eastern and central Africa, using tribes such as the Ba-Ngwana to round up slaves and ivory.

[p.288 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[128] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[184] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
• 185 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges
[181] that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
177 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tion between villages is due only in part to rivalry for territory. It is also due to suspicion of witchcraft and sorcery, a suspicion that seems to increase as the distance of separation decreases. This, of course, can also be interpreted as an expression of territorial friction, but it is conceived in personal rather than territorial terms, and is accompanied by a general dislike and mistrust of strangers.

Nor must we lose sight of the fact that whereas the Mbuti, even with their nomadism, in which hunting camps are shifted every month, have a strong sense of basic territorial permanence, the villagers have none, and this gives rise to further instability. To mention only one example, it is believed among the Bira that the dead should be buried according to a prescribed ritual, and that the grave should be cared for in a prescribed manner. The burial is always carried out but it is a constant source of conflict having to care for a grave that may be some miles away. Every time a village moves the villagers have to face the fact that they are abandoning their dead, to some extent, and they are unpleasantly reminded of the uncertainty of their own future. We do not know what the original burial practice was before the Bira moved into the forest; undoubtedly changes have been made, but they have not adequately met the new situation.

It is only in light of the relationship between each of these peoples and the environment in which they live that we can understand the relationship between the people themselves. It is in part ignorance of this factor that has led to the gross misunderstanding of Mbuti/Villager relationship, and indeed of Mbuti society itself. Before considering either the Mbuti or their relationship with the villagers, however, a certain amount of further ground-clearing is necessary.

MBUTI, BAMBUTI, BAMBUTI

A certain amount of confusion concerning the Mbuti arises out of conflicting terminology, some of it totally inapplicable or lacking in significance. First we have to be clear why we group together, under any one name, all the pygmy hunters of the Ituri Forest, even though they speak different languages and use different hunting techniques.

Racially, they are clearly one people, quite distinct from any of the surrounding Negro tribes. They form a strongly, visibly distinct unit. Culturally, they are equally distinguished from their neighbors as a unit, being hunters and gatherers, and not cultivators, with a consequently totally distinct social structure. Differences in hunting techniques do not affect the basic structural unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 563 ing the Mbuti, are not only trying to subject the Mbuti to the authority of village supernatural sanctions but are also trying to assimilate from the Mbuti some of the spiritual power they believe to reside in the forest.

P *177 • 105 621 648 The ultimate nature of the relationship between the two people cannot be determined until further studies have been made of similar situations from both the Mbuti point of view and, a major need at the moment, from the village point of view. For now, it seems sufficiently clear that the general nature of the relationship is one of opposition, and that Mbuti society, in response to the demands of the situation or by fortuitous chance, meets it with an organization based upon the C [621] very antithesis of village organization. Against political centralization it offers complete decentralization and diffusion of authority. Against a sedentary, patrilineal, patrilocal village it matches the nomadic, nonlineal, territorial band. The vertical village kinship system is countered by a horizontal age-level system. Village values are directly opposed by forest values. And within itself Mbuti society uses these same principles, in a state of almost perpetual flux, to maintain a P C [181] cohesion fully as powerful as that found among the villagers. Instead of looking to the more conventional structural principles for the source of unity of Mbuti society, we have had to look rather to values, and it is in terms of values that the over-all society, of Mbuti and villagers, has its ultimate being and significance.

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 197 [161]
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [174]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [177]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Schebesta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184] [411]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 105 177 initiation camp, I could not accept this point of view at all. Yet it was one shared by others, some of whom had lived in the area for years.

114 177 The explanation was simple enough, and it was not that either one of us was right and the other wrong. Whereas Father Schebesta had always had to work through Negroes, and largely in Negro villages, I had been fortunate in being able to make direct contact with the Pygmies, and in fact had spent most of my time with them away from Negro influence. Other Europeans had also only seen the Pygmies either in Negro villages or on Negro plantations. But I had seen enough of them both in the forest and in the village to know that they were completely different people in the two sets of circumstances. All that we knew of them to date had been based on observations made either in the villages or in the presence of Negroes.

114 Whereas my first visit to the Ituri Forest, in 1951, had been made mainly out of curiosity, I had seen enough to make me want to return to this area for more intensive study. An ideal location was provided by a strange establishment set up on the banks of the Epulu River back in the nineteen-twenties by an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam.* He had gone there to do his field work but had liked the place and the people so much that he decided to stay. He built himself a huge mud mansion, and gradually a village grew up around him and became known as "Camp Putnam." The Pygmies treated it just as they treated any other Bantu village (the main Negro tribes nearby were the BaBira and BaNdaka, with a few Moslem BaNgwana), and used to visit it to trade their meat for plantation products. This was where I first met them.

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* Patrick Putnam first went to the Belgian Congo in 1927 to do field work for Harvard University. Apart from one or two brief return visits to the United States he remained there until his death at the end of 1953. At Camp Putnam he established a dispensary and a leper colony, turning his home into a guest house to help pay the expenses of his hospital work.

4: Putnam E-5 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 105 The foregoing selection is largely self-explanatory. The common notion that the pygmy of the forest leads a simple life is true only in a special sense. He has his band, his kinfolk elsewhere, his relationship with his hosts, his membership in an initiation grade. He has separate relationships with the members of his band, his clanmates outside, his hosts, and his classmates in the initiation school. Every pygmy is a specialist—at hunting—and some, the elephant hunters, are super-specialists. The key to all this is *trade* and an ethnic division of labor between pygmies and hosts.

000 One thing that struck me forcibly while I edited this material was the paucity of "religious" phenomena in pygmy culture. If you remember that ritual is al-

[P. 341-C]

1: Turnbull, Colin M. The Mbuti Pygmies: an ethnographic survey. American Museum of Natural History, Anthropological Papers 50 (1965): 139-282. New York, American Museum of Natural History, 1965.

13 plates; 53 text figures; bibliography.

HRAF Copy. /HRAF pagination pp. 139-309, including end plates./

[This study is inferior to Turnbull's two other major publications on the Mbuti, mainly because it is based on secondary source material of questionable validity. Presented as a thesis in 1956, this publication is supplemented and revised with the benefit of Turnbull's 1957-58 field experience. In one major respect it is a valuable addition to Turnbull's existing corpus of work: it offers extensive comparison of net-hunters, on whom Turnbull has concentrated, with the archer Mbuti, Schebesta's prime source. Useful research questions are raised which subsequent first-hand material has partially answered.

Due to technical difficulties in reproducing for the files the large double columned pages of the original book, it has been necessary to quarter each of these pages in order to reduce them to a size adaptable to the 5" x 8" file page format. Text figures and plates were also reduced in size to fit the file-sized pages.]

Field date: 1951, 1954-1955
Analysts: Adolph Hoehling, marker
John Beierle, checker

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 4, 5
Processed in 1971-1972

2: Turnbull, Colin M. Wayward servants; the two worlds of the African Pygmies. Garden City, N.Y., The Natural History Press, 1965.

14, 391 p.; 11 tables; 6 maps; 11 plans; 42 photographs; 3 appendices; glossary; bibliography; index.

Yale: Nkd83 B28 965T. DLC card no.: 65-17265.

[On the basis of an extensive and close association with a band of the Epulu net-hunters, Colin Turnbull examines the cultural factors contributing to the cohesiveness of the Mbuti bands and their independence of villager control. The author rests the weight of his proof on examination of the puberty initiation and death rituals as practiced in the band. It is his strong conclusion that the Mbuti Pygmies are quite self-reliant and have a value system which distinctly separates them from the neighboring villagers.]

Field Dates: 1951, 1957, 1958
Analysts: Adolph Hoehling, marker
John Beierle, checker

Evaluation: Ethnologist - 5
Processed in 1970-1971

3: Turnbull, Colin M. The forest people. Foreword by Harry L. Shapiro. Third printing. New York, Simon and Schuster, 1962.

Pp. 2, 295; 12 photographs; 3 maps; glossary; index; biographical note.

HRAF copy. DLC card no. 61-12850.

[In a style which is more dramatic narrative than scholarly, Colin Turnbull singles out a few events in order to present a general picture of an Epulu net-hunting band of Mbuti Pygmies. Extensive sections portray the band's reaction to the death of one of its members in a Congolese native village, which includei flight to a forest camp and a prolonged molimo mourning ceremony. Another large part is taken up with narrative of rites and attitudes related to coming-of-age and marriage. The theme running throughout these activities is a preference and reverence for forest life in contrast with the sedentary, cleared-plantation settlements of the Congo natives.]

Field dates: 1951, 1957, 1958
Analyst: Adolph Hoehling, marker
John Beierle, checker

Evaluation: Ethnologist-5
Processed in 1970-1971

4: Putnam, Patrick. The Pygmies of the Ituri Forest. In, Carleton S. Coon, ed., A Reader in General Anthropology. New York, Henry Holt and Company, 1948: 322-342.

Personal copy of T. O'Leary.

[This is a broad impressionistic survey of primarily net-hunting Mbuti. Putnam stressed a few topics and missed quite a few others: relations of Pygmies with Congolese villagers, Pygmy locomotion and hunting technique are described in adequate detail, but kinship and community structure information is sketchy and lacking in the light of Turnbull's material. There is a good account of the ritual involved in the division of game catch.]

Field date: No date
Analysts: Adolph Hoehling, marker
John Beierle, checker

Evaluation: Ethnologist -- 5
Processed in 1971

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175 By Aristotle's time the Western world was evidently still more inclined to treat the Pygmies as legend, because Aristotle himself has to state categorically that their existence is no fable, as some men believe, but the truth, and that they live in the land "from which flows the Nile." *

Mosaics in Pompeii show that, whether the Pygmies were believed to be fable or not, the makers of the mosaics in fact knew just how they lived, even the kinds of huts they built in the forest. But from then until the turn of the present century, our knowledge of the Pygmies decreased to the point where they were thought of as mythical creatures, semi-human, flying about in tree tops, dangling by their tails, and with the power of making themselves invisible. The cartographer who drew the thirteenth-century Mappa Mundi, preserved in Hereford Cathedral, England, located the Pygmies accurately enough, but his representations show them as subhuman monsters.

Evidently there was still some question as to their reality up to the seventeenth century, because the English anatomist Edward Tyson felt obliged to publish a treatise on "The Anatomy of a Pygmie compared with that of a Monkey, an Ape, and a Man." He had obtained from Africa the necessary skeletons, on which he based his conclusion that the so-called "pygmie" was, quite definitely, not human. The "pygmie" skeleton was preserved until recently in a London museum, and it was easy to see how Tyson arrived at so firm a conclusion. The skeleton was that of a chimpanzee.

Portuguese explorers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were responsible for many of the more extravagant accounts. It may well be that they actually did see Pygmies near the west coast of Africa, or they may have seen chimpanzees and mistaken them for Pygmies. But it is curious that they should have thought of the Pygmies as being able to make themselves invisible, and also as having the power, small as they were, to kill elephants.

[113] * Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* (tr. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson), viii, 2.

which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest, and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing: the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-79.

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776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 172 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *shetani*." [192] The word *shetani* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

789 821 **Weather magic.**—One class of weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta[9] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[13] [9] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933. p. 243.

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INTRODUCTION

[P.145-A]

•114 12 THE PRESENT SURVEY was originally written as a thesis for the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford University and submitted in 1956 for the degree of Bachelor of Letters (B. Litt.). It is difficult, having just completed for publication a monograph based on my own field work, to undertake the publication of a thesis written in student days, dealing with the same area but based on the work of others. It inevitably leads to self-conflict, for the new self does not always agree with the old. Further, the survey does not claim to be comprehensive. It is presented, however, as a first step in the gathering together of the earlier literature that can be best relied upon for information concerning the social structure of the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo. It has two major objectives.

121 127 One, and the most important, is to set down in English a straightforward description of such ethnographic facts as are known about the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, based on the published and unpublished material available up to 1956, with the addition of a few references up to 1960. For the Putnam material I am most indebted to Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who made available all the notes left by her late husband, Patrick Tracy Lowell Putnam.

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121 The other objective is an evaluation of the selected material, a consideration of the problems it raises, and an attempt to resolve some of the more evident contradictions.

114 12 Further reasons for publication of this survey, despite subsequent intensive field research, are, first, that my later field work (1957–1958) was concentrated primarily on making a detailed study of a single hunting band, so there is still no general structural study of the Ituri Pygmies. Also, the results of my more recent study will be better understood in the light of this survey, from which it drew its inspiration.

114 Second, despite the extreme importance of the Mbuti, one of the few remaining hunting and gathering peoples in the world, virtually all the published scientific material is in German, Dutch, or French, with the exception of Schebesta's three early travel books: "Among Congo Pygmies" (1933), "My Pygmy and Negro Hosts" (1936a), and "Revisiting my Pygmy Hosts" (1937). The only original work in English dealing with the Mbuti, up to 1961 in fact,

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was Patrick Putnam's article in "Reader in Anthropology" (1948). For the reader of English, then, some guidance is necessary. 114

Third, the bulk of the available material is unsatisfactory and requires careful sifting if proper use is to be made of it. Fuller details are given in the section on Source Material (p. 149). Such a preliminary sifting has been attempted in this survey, drawing on my own limited field experience of 1951 and 1954.

Fourth, Schebesta's work in particular, our main source, is, for methodological reasons given in the course of the survey, unsatisfactory for certain types of analysis. This is an evaluation rather than a criticism, for Schebesta's objectives were definite and different from those of contemporary social anthropologists, and he presented his material accordingly. In his presentations it is sometimes difficult to be sure exactly which group of Mbuti he is discussing because he regards them all as a single cultural, sociological entity.[1] This does not by any means totally negate the value of his work, which should be consulted by any student of the area, but certain cautions are essential.

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tain cautions are essential. In the present survey I have tried to make Schebesta's material more useful for analytical purposes by culling such information as can be taken specifically to refer to one or another *particular* group of Mbuti. The bulk of such pinpointed information in Schebesta's writings refers to the Efe archers of the southeastern Ituri. This group can then be contrasted with the other major group, the Sua net hunters, for which we have additional sources. 114 128

The result is inevitably somewhat disjointed and full of lamentable gaps. There is also the tiresome necessity of continually specifying "according to Schebesta, . . ." "Schebesta says, . . ." "in Schebesta's account, . . ." and I

[1] Such an approach is at least better than that of Guénde, whom we must abandon altogether as a possible ethnographic source because he (1955, 12) holds that all African Pygmies and Pygmoids from the Gabon to Rwanda, and whom he groups together under the single unfortunate term "Twides," *are essentially the same in their mode of living and cultural organization.* It is difficult to see much similarity, I find, between his "Twides" in the Great Lakes region, whom he describes as sedentary grassland potters, and his Ituri "Twides" who are nomadic forest hunters and gatherers.

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114 122 that unless so leaving out such references wherever it seemed plain that the whole passage referred to that one authority. The impression of inadequacy is heightened by the fact that almost the entire bulk of the material available is general and descriptive rather than specific and analytical. In trying to sift that which falls properly into the latter category, then, we necessarily must abandon the continuity and sense that existed in the original works. It is therefore not to be expected that the present survey will in any way offer a coherent ethnography of the Mbuti.

121 114 (127) Fifth, in the course of the survey (pp. 194-201) I make similar use of the unpublished notes of Patrick and Anne Putnam and expand their account of the net hunters with a limited amount of material from my own field notes dating from 1961 and 1954-1955. My own interest during those two first visits to the Ituri were other than strictly anthropological but concerned certain aspects of social organization. As I was working in the same area as the Putnams, the material is valid and useful for the rounding out of their observations. In

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this way the survey points up the major differences and similarities between the two Mbuti groups (the archers and the net hunters) and opens the way both for more intensive limited studies and for comparative work.

Sixth and last, a survey such as this seems necessary in order to clear the ground of the confusion of contradictions and uncertainties in our present sources. The diversity of opinion, in itself important, proved to be of the utmost significance for my own later field work. Although it is somewhat begging the question, it might be said that only by accepting the contradictions as fact, then seeking a structural means of resolving those contradictions, can we begin to approach the truth of the situation. The survey, in this way, may be taken to point the direction in which further field work is needed. This is as true now, since my own field trip of 1957–1958, as it was then. That trip, concerned mainly with a localized band of net hunters, confirmed much of the general thesis of the present survey concerning the differences between archers and net hunters. However, detailed studies of other bands, both archer and net hunter, are vitally needed if we are to arrive at an understanding of the nature of Mbuti society as a whole and of its relationship with villager society.

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The latter problem, that of the relationship between the two neighboring peoples, is of the greatest importance and has been subject to the greatest misunderstanding. It should be emphasized that the opinions cited here, including my own, are opinions and are to be accepted only as such. It should also be realized that the situation is by no means static. Not only has the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers been changing even during the years since I have known them, but so, in all probability, has the internal structure of Mbuti society. It is quite possible that such change has long been a characteristic of the area, and it is almost certain that the Mbuti-villager relationship has never been static, which may account for some of the diversity of opinion, and a general historical perspective undoubtedly helps us to evaluate the rather sketchy material at our disposal. 121 121 178

We have, for instance, a steady regression in factual knowledge of the area from the time of our earliest Egyptian sources right up to the beginning of the present century, at the turn of which our ignorance of the African Pygmies was just about complete, even to disbelief in their 114.

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very existence. It is not surprising that the reports of the late nineteenth-century explorers in central Africa should have excited the imagination of sociologists, and particularly of Schmidt (1910). The material available to him was most unsatisfactory. It dwelt mainly on the bizarre, stressed the physical appearance of the Pygmies, the peculiarities of their mode of life, and generally exaggerated normalities into abnormalities with lively imagination. Schmidt was well aware of all this but was nonetheless fascinated by the obvious differences between these people and their taller villager neighbors. His work, and that of his followers, including Schebesta, are colored by this initial interest. 114

There was a belief that the distinct physical appearance of the Pgymies connoted not only separateness from other races but also unity amongst themselves and anteriority; that is, that the Pygmy races of the world were basically one, anterior to, and "purer" than other races. Here, then, it was thought, one should look for the roots of man's religious belief; this is the second major supposition that determines the nature and format of the work of this school. If we bear this in mind, the work of Schebesta, who was responsible for the first and only complete over-all field survey of the area, is more un-

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114 derstandable, more valuable, and more usable.

121 An examination of all the available source material indicates very clearly the necessity for immediately establishing a limited study of well-defined groups, uninfluenced by any theoretical preoccupations with questions of sociological unity, anteriority, or origin. The term "Pygmy" leads far too easily to meaningless generalization. It may well prove that even the [101] term "Mbuti," by which is understood the Pygmy population of the Ituri Forest, is too broad. The breakdown in this survey between the different economic groups of Mbuti is only a tentative investigation to discover significant similarities and differences.

114 In view of the existence of Schebesta's (1938, 122 1941, 1948, 1950) major work, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," with its special reference to archers, and my own field work and recent and forthcoming publications on the net hunters, the survey here has been kept to reasonable dimensions and does not pretend to give a complete picture. The accounts of Schebesta and Putnam are presented with as little speculation as possible. It will be readily seen that there is insufficient information, almost throughout, for any effective analysis to be made. But certain problems arise, and in the conclusions some attempt is made to outline these further, particularly the nature of the Pygmy-villager relationship.

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particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 182

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

SOURCE MATERIAL

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

•114 175 177 One of the most striking things about a survey of ancient and early sources concerning the African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from the time these people first entered the recorded scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge of them decreased steadily until the late nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact. They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta, 1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth [101] Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of representatives of conquered nations, among which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the northernmost Pygmies are still known today. Yet, until the turn of the present century, the modern Western world believed the Pygmy to be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing Pygmies along the Nile.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Herodotus (1866, vol. 2, sect. 32) in the fifth century B.C. reports an expedition of Nasamonians to discover the source of the Nile. They cross a vast desert and, while resting at an oasis, are captured by diminutive men, "under the middle height."

Homer (1864, vol. 3, 3–7) introduces an element of myth when he talks of fighting between the cranes and the "Pygmaean race" to the south, but Aristotle (1910, vol. 8, sect. 2) sees fit, for some reason, to assert quite categorically that Pygmies do in fact live in the land "from which flows the Nile"; he adds that they live in caves.

An isolated reference in the sixth century comes from the Emperor Justinian's ambassador who, on his way to Ethiopia, on an island off the east African coast, came across a tribe of Pygmies speaking an unknown language (unknown even to local inhabitants). That is about the last reference to Pygmies as human beings for some 10 centuries. In the fourteenth century the cartographer who drew up the Hereford Mappa Mundi still placed the Pygmies near the

[P 149-B]

[P.149-C]

source of the Nile, although in his secondary role as theologian he depicted them as monsters, with their faces in their breasts or their heads below their shoulders. He labels them as troglodytes. 114 175 177

Battel (1625, vol. 2, 983) refers to the existence of a nation of dwarfs and places them in the land of the Yobbi, north of the Sette River. He calls them "Dongo," and it is in this area where Du Chaillu (1867, 1890) discovered the "Obongo" Pygmies in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other seventeenth-century reports by Portuguese explorers describe what seem to be relatively pure Pygmy races who apparently brought ivory down to the west coast traders. Unfortunately, these explorers had vivid imaginations and interspersed their descriptions with most unlikely information, such as the power of these little people to become invisible, the only explanation they could

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and for how the Pygmies could kill elephant. In this way belief in the existence of real Pygmy races in Africa was only further discredited; so much so that an anatomist named Tyson obtained a skeleton of one of these fabulous beings and, after careful examination, wrote a treatise (Tyson, 1699) showing that it was quite clear that "Pygmies" were, in fact, not human beings but apes. He had good grounds for this assertion, because the skeleton he examined, and which survived until recently at the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, England, was that of a chimpanzee. He rounds off his discourse in the following general terms: "The most diligent enquiries of late into all parts of the inhabited world could never discover any such puny diminutive race of mankind." His explanation of the "fables" was that travelers had mistaken apes for men (Windle, 1894).

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth there seems to have been a complete silence. Then follows a succession of explorers, travelers, administrators, and anthropologists who finally established the fact that Pygmies did exist and were, indeed, human. But that, and their approximate distribution, is about all they do tell us. Well into the twentieth century we get fanciful adventurers seriously observing

[p 149-D]

[P. 150-A]

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.
177 The material provided by these nineteenth-
century explorers is valuable, however, for an
114 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
175 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley
101 (1879, 1890), made little more than passing reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally acknowledged as being the first to establish beyond a doubt that there was indeed a race of such people in central Africa and to give us some real information about them, particularly concerning the association of the Aka (northernmost) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to throw in some of the many "red herrings" that have distracted even the most recent anthropologists from a strictly scientific study of the people, leading them into the speculative realms of origin, connection between Pygmies and the Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of originality of Pygmy culture.

•114 Others, such as Casati (1891), Le Roy (1897),
101 Burrows (1898), Johnston (1884, 1902, 1903,
175 1905, 1908), David (1904a, 1904b), Hutereau
181 (1924), Powell-Cotton (1907), and Czekanowski (1922), to mention only a very few, give further details that are of interest but cover such a wide area as to make it impossible to gather any but the most superficial notion of a generalized "African Pygmy." When these sources provide us with factual observations, the facts are often not untainted with imagination. When they go beyond facts, additional "red herrings" are cast up, such as the silent trade between Pygmies and villagers, the lawlessness of Pygmy society, the Pygmies' complete lack of religion, and their ferocity and cannibalism. To add fuel to the fire, equally imaginative interpretations show them as having reciprocal and open trade relationships with the villagers, as living an ordered life according to their "natural instincts" for law and order, as following a monotheistic mystical religion, and as living a gentle and peaceful existence. According to this material, the "Pygmies" do have their own language and they do not, their way of life is totally different from that of their villager neighbors and it is a direct copy of villager life, they live in the heart of the forest and they live on the edge of the villages. These are just some of the contradictions that make it

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1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.150-C]

impossible to form any single coherent picture. 114 101 181 175

When Schmidt wrote "Die Stellung der Pygmäen-völker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschen" in 1910, all these contradictions were his source material. Pygmies existed, but they still had tails and were flying about from treetop to treetop, or else they were crawling on their bellies like snakes to enter their diminutive houses. Quatrefages (1887) and Le Roy (1897) had, at the end of the nineteenth century, attempted to draw together what was known about Pygmies all over the world, but Schmidt's study is the first work of real importance. He confines himself mostly to the African Pygmies and Bushmen and pursues two lines of thought: first, the relationship of both to Asiatic Pygmies; and second, the place of the Pygmy, both racially and anthropologically, in the evolution of the human race. Was the Pygmy the original inhabitant of the equatorial forests of Africa, or was he a degeneration of present Bantu stock—a throwback? These "red herrings" are still being diligently pursued, while the Pygmies and their social structure have gone unstudied by any anthropologist except with reference to these problems.

with reference to these problems. The one contemporary work of any real note, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," is the result of research undertaken by Schebesta (1938, 1941, 1948, 1950), who was undoubtedly strongly influenced by the Schmidt school of thought, and was preoccupied with the problems of the origin and cultural unity of the Pygmies and of their racial and anthropological separateness from the villagers. 114 • 101

The problem of the relationship between the African and the Asian Pygmies, opened by Quatrefages in 1887, was followed up by Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), Nippold (1936, 1937), Gusinde (1942), and Schebesta (1938, 1952). The problem itself does not concern us here, except in so far as preoccupation with it in these sources affects our evaluation of them and explains their tendency to generalize in terms of "Pygmy" or "Bambuti" culture and society.

We must ask ourselves what use can be made of all this material in a serious study of the African Pygmies, particularly as there is such a dearth of reliable contemporary material. At first sight we seem to be in possession of an abundant supply of raw material, even if we limit ourselves to the Pygmies of central 114

[P. 150 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 151-A]

114 Africa. Until the early twentieth century there are some 30 sources that seem to contain reliable information concerning not only the Ituri Pygmies but those of equatorial Africa and the central Congo area. In each of these sources we are given information as to the alleged origin of these particular Pygmies, tribal groupings and distribution, migrations, and other data. We also get fairly full and reliable information as to economic activities, particularly various hunting techniques. Technology is moderately well dealt with; social and political life is presented in a series of categorical but conflicting assertions; and religious life is frequently mentioned, but usually in such vague terms that the information is useless.

From a consideration of the material as a whole, one thing emerges: while certain points of correspondence, mainly technological, can be found throughout, superficially evidencing some uniformity of culture, the contradictions of evidence found within any one area are far more striking. These contradictions are present in all fields—social, economic, political, and religious.

114 [101] If we were not dogged by this notion of the "Pygmies" as one people, supported by their undoubted racial homogeneity and territorial contiguity, we would certainly think we were dealing with a number of totally different social systems, if not different peoples.

The more unreliable and imaginative sources have already been rejected, and we must accept the remaining information as given, however much it contradicts itself. The only alternative is to reject this material *in toto*, and there is certainly no justification for so doing other than the convenience of avoiding the contradictions. It seems preferable to accept the contradictions without trying to unify the facts. That is to say, a thorough summary of these early sources indicates that we are by no means dealing with a single people, even within as limited an area as the Ituri Forest or, indeed, one section of it. This consideration has affected the format of the present work and its limitation to a specific section of the African Pygmies. Reference to facts to be found in the early sources are made only when it is certain that they apply to the particular Pygmies under discussion. This method seems to be the only valid way of utilizing the material. It reduces the bulk of ethnographic evidence considerably, as it is seldom made clear exactly which group of Pygmies is

114 101 128

[P 151 - B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 151-C]

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under discussion, and the material nowhere deals with any one specific group fully.

Having spent some time examining a large body of literature, one is naturally loath to make so little use of it, but this demonstration of the need for detached localized studies rather than generalized studies concerned with or dominated by the notion of racial and cultural unity is in itself no small contribution. The extent to which one must localize sociological studies among the Ituri is as yet unknown, but some indication will appear in the following work.

It might be added that Schebesta, who made an exhaustive study of these same sources, also found himself unable to make a great deal of use of them. He (1948, 295) criticizes Hutereau, whom he regards as being one of the most important sources, for generalizing from one group to another (though Hutereau was mainly concerned with the Aka). He regards the others as even less reliable, and most of his references to them are accompanied by cautions as to their trustworthiness.

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.152-A]

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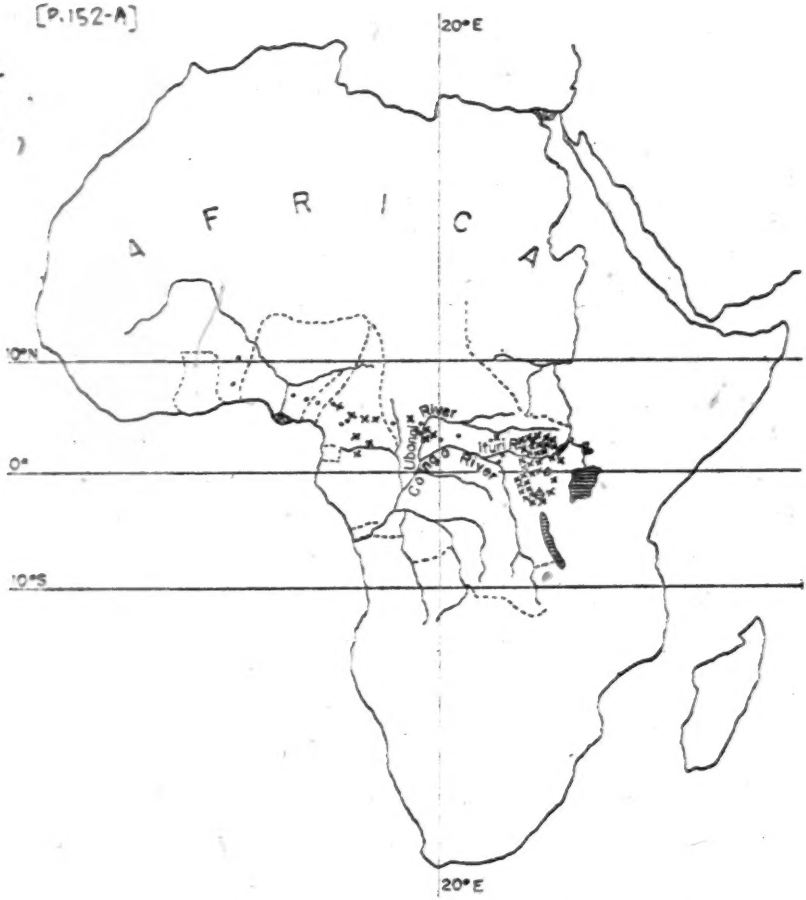

FIG. 1. Map showing extent of personal knowledge of Pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* or through personal contact made during the author's 1957–1958 field trip, not covering the central and southern Congo. Circles indicate accounts of Pygmy or Pygmoid hunting bands; crosses, actual contact.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have a concentrated body of Mbuti Pygmies in 101
the Ituri Forest and some apparently scattered 128
Pygmy groups farther west and through the forests of equatorial Africa (Figs. 1–2). Of the latter, unfortunately, too little is known for inclusion here.

For the Ituri Mbuti one of our main sources 101
is the four-volume work by Schebesta (1938, 114.
[P. 152-B] 127

101 114 [127]

1941, 1948, 1950). Schebesta divides the Mbuti (whom he calls "Bambuti") into three major groups: Aka in the north, Sua in the south, and Efe in the east (Fig. 3). His first trip to the Ituri was spent in an over-all coverage of the forest, during which he culled facts from all these groups but necessarily at a superficial level. Realizing this and desiring to make a more profound study, he returned and concentrated on the Efe in the triangle bounded by the roads joining Mambasa, Irumu, and Beni (Fig. 3). The bulk of his work concerns these Efe, who hunt primarily with bow and arrows, and as it is the only group of which he has detailed knowledge it is the only group that we present from his work with any degree of fullness. His references to the Kango in the west, the Aka, and the Sua, are too few to form a systematic account of these societies as such, and, as already mentioned, we see little value in isolated, unsystematic ethnographic data.

[P. 153 - B]

: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

There is, however, another source on the Ituri Pygmies (mostly unpublished) in the form of the field notes of an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam, who first went to the Ituri in 1928 and was resident there until his death at the end of 1953. His material is concerned with the Sua who, unlike the Efe, are net hunters. With this material are also the notes of his widow, Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who lived in the Ituri for more than eight years, until 1954; and, finally, my own field notes covering my first two visits to the same area (Epulu District) in 1951 and 1954. I combine this material as a single source, indicating its exact origin in the text, partly because, in the main, it covers one definite area, and even one definite hunting band, and partly because both Anne Putnam and myself benefited by the immense knowledge of Patrick Putnam, without necessarily being in complete agreement.

Apart from these two main sources, and a

114 127 [101] 127 128 127

[P. 153-C]

[P.155-A]
127 related to either of these economic groups of
128 Mbuti—archers or net hunters. When sources cannot be related to our detailed study of these two types, we omit them, unless there is some special reason for their inclusion.

128 Now, before the survey itself, it is necessary
• 114 to evaluate briefly our two main sources, as certain deficiencies in each should be understood. The more properly critical section follows the survey; here such criticism as is presented is offered so that we can estimate the true nature and value of the facts presented by each source.

Schebesta

114 Schebesta, as a follower of Schmidt, is concerned with the over-all problem of "the pygmy races of the world" and their interrelationship. He began his study among the Semang Negritos in 1924. Then in 1929 he undertook the first of three trips to Africa on which he based his work "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri." The first trip, lasting a year and a half, was spent traveling through the Ituri "*sur des pistes caravanières . . . dans toutes les directions*" (Schebesta, 1952, 16) in order to get an all-over picture of all the Mbuti and to "*établir leur unité de race et de structure sociale*" (Schebesta,

114 1952, 16). This admission, I think, is sufficient to indicate one of Schebesta's weaknesses, his obsession with this notion of cultural unity. To set out to establish a unity of social structure among a virtually unknown people scattered through thousands of square miles of forest is hardly commendable as scientific procedure. It [101] results, as one might expect, in his loose usage throughout his works of the terms "Bambuti" and "Pygmy," thus always implying that there are no significant differences between the Mbuti of one part of the forest and those of another, or between Mbuti who utilize one form of hunt and those who follow another. Further, Schebesta is constantly concerned with differentiating the Pygmies from the villagers. He looks for original traits in Pygmy culture that will evidence their separateness from the villager as well as their unity among themselves. (Any similarities he then ascribes to assimilation.) Nowhere do we find Schebesta interested in a society as such; it must be related to his own problems of cultural unity and distinctness of race. He himself (1947, 181, footnote 1) writes, "The object of my explorations was to

[P. 155-B]

[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114.

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into three linguistic groups is another result of his preoccupation with the problem of the separateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture is the purest, being least affected by contact with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

114 97 101 114 177 [194]

1. [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

But there is a further and even more important criticism to be made of Schebesta's work,[1] especially his field-work technique. His first trip was avowedly to make an all-over survey and to map the delimitations of Pygmy territory in the Ituri. He can then be excused the superficiality of his observations on social structure as published (Schebesta, 1933) in an English version and a German edition (Schebesta, 1932). He himself recognized the need for a more detailed and localized study, and his second trip, in 1934, was undertaken with this object in view. In his account of this trip (Schebesta, 1936b, 1937) in another work designed for the general public but nonetheless revealing, he tells quite plainly how he sets about making this study. The only way to get to know Pygmy life thoroughly, Schebesta (1937, 30) says is to live right in a Pygmy camp: " . . . the urgent problems to be solved forthwith, and as often as it was necessary to seek a new camp, were: a. Where would I find pygmies *in sufficient numbers;* b. Where would *I* find a suitable camping ground; c. What would I do to win the confidence of *my little hosts?* [italics mine]."

Evidently then the camps in which Sche-

[1] "*Relever ce qui est propre aux pygmées, tel fut le but de mes explorations.*"

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[P. 155-D]

[P.156-A]

114 besta worked are quite artificial, in that they grew up around him on a site of his own choosing. Further, he relies on neighboring villagers to send in "their" Pygmies to create "sufficient numbers." There is no certainty that the members of any of these camps even come from the same hunting band. He certainly gives us no comprehensive genealogies throughout his entire work, so we really have no idea of even the kind of kin groups he is dealing with. Further, while he moves about within a limited area, he combines all his material in such a way that, again, we lose sight of any particular society and find ourselves dealing only with an abstract model of "Efe" society.

One further criticism should be made of Schebesta's field-work technique, which considerably decreases its value from the point of view of the anthropologist. He not only establishes and works in the artificial camps already mentioned, but even within those camps he seems to have been unable to establish the kind of relationships needed for efficient anthropological documentation. This fact does not emerge in his academic writings but is evident throughout his writings for the more general

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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114 public. He interferes in matters of magico-religious importance with an insensitivity that is not likely to encourage confidence. To give a few examples from "Among Congo Pygmies" (Schebesta, 1933): He enters an old woman's hut, sees a charm lying concealed among the leaves, so seizes it and beats a retreat despite her protests. It is not surprising that "I barely managed to get out into the open with my spoil before all the women of the camp surrounded me with loud wails" (Schebesta, 1933, 77). Again he seems surprised that there should be some trouble because he went around the camp taking hair clippings (Schebesta, 1933, 229), and he quite proudly tells how he planned to rob a grave by building his hut over it (Schebesta, 1933, 222). It is hardly probable that this kind of attitude would have inspired the trust and confidence necessary to secure reliable information.

Schebesta also, not content with having a camp built to suit his convenience, is unwilling to let camp life go its normal (Pygmy) way. In "Revisiting my Pygmy Hosts" (Schebesta, 1937, 211–212), he is obliged to put an end to non-stop gambling by confiscating "not only the beans, but even arrows." He is also unable

[P.156-B]

[P. 156-C]

to allow quarrels to run their natural course: 114.
When his night's rest is disturbed by matrimonial disagreements he "snatches up his gun" to restore peace and quiet (Schebesta, 1933, 96). Sometimes his methods are even cruder: a fight starts over a hen he had accepted without payment, though he intended to pay later. So Schebesta enters the dispute, and "my rattan cudgel crashed among the brown bodies" (Schebesta, 1933, 113). When a villager is reluctant to allow him to stay in his village, Schebesta calmly describes half-choking him with his bare hands (Schebesta, 1933, 118), and when there is trouble in one of his camps on yet another occasion, we find the most basic rules of good field work again being somewhat overlooked (Schebesta, 1933, 89): "At last I deemed it discreet to step forward in the interests of peace and come to his aid. My well meant advice was, however, utterly disregarded; in fact the women became more bloodthirsty and more voluble. At last I lost my temper and charged into the howling mob, knocking them in all directions. I even had to threaten to give one of the amazons a good hiding. This ended the squabble and a sullen silence fell upon the panting mob."

Finally, there is reason to suspect that some 114
of the facts presented with the certainty of an eyewitness account are actually the result either of only casual observation or even of information given by single informants. When dealing with totemism, Schebesta (1937, 143) states that Pygmies do not eat from a vessel that has touched their totem; he then reveals that this statement was based on information from a single informant, which even Schebesta himself thought to be unreliable. In "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri" (Schebesta, 1948, 475), when dealing with the *nkumbi* initiation, he admits: "*Ich habe persönlich nur Ausschnitte vom* Nkumbi *gesehen*"—that he has seen only parts of the *nkumbi* and those only among the Ngwana at Bafwasende, the Byeru, Bali, and the Forest Bira. "These fleeting glimpses ["*Diese nur flüchtigen Einblicke*"; Schebesta, 1948, 475], however, sufficed to confirm to me the information I had gathered from negroes and Bambuti."

Boelaert (1936a) makes the same criticism, as does Costermans (1938). Among others, Ivor Evans (1937, vi, 15, 16, 50, 153, 177) has similar criticisms of Schebesta's field work in Malaya.

[P. 156-D]

[P.157-A]
114 All this amounts not to a criticism of Schebesta's work as such, but rather to an evaluation of it from the point of view of a social anthropologist. In his work, as in his presentation of the facts, Schebesta was motivated by quite other considerations than those of a social anthropologist, and accordingly we must use his material with care. His facts we can accept with some caution, bearing in mind the remarks just quoted. His theories we cannot accept at all, unless it is with the greatest reserve, in view of the motivation of his work and his admitted preconceived notions as to the racial and cultural autonomy of the Pygmies.

Putnam

We must also exercise caution with regard to the Putnam material. All that is published is an article dictated by Patrick Putnam to Carleton S. Coon, who published a condensed version of it (Patrick Putnam, 1948). I myself met Putnam during my first visit to the Congo in 1951.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 He died just before my return visit in 1954, but later I had an opportunity of spending a summer working on all his personal papers. These, for the most part, consisted of manuscript notes written during his first years in the Ituri Forest, from 1928 onward. They cover northern and eastern stretches of the forest, as well as the central (Epulu) district which came to be his home. The notes were materially in bad condition, having been attacked by both damp and termites. Intrinsically their worth is not so great as might have been hoped, though there are valuable references to conversations with old Pygmies whose memories reached back another generation, giving some historical perspective. More valuable are his notes on the Mbuti relationship with villagers, and notes on these tribes themselves, particularly the Mamvu, Mboli, Bali, Rumbi, and Mangbetu.

Isolated notes and jottings concerning the particular hunting band in whose area Putnam made his permanent headquarters, near the junction of the Epulu and Nduye rivers, prove to be of particular value in giving some idea of the composition of this band over two decades, changes in leadership, and other matters. Also useful in this respect are medical notes which he kept of all the Pygmies he treated and on which he wrote down such kinship information as he could elicit.

Unfortunately, the bulk of Putnam's notes,

[P. 157-B]

[P. 157-C]

with more detailed and systematic studies of the various hunting bands known to him, were lost when his canoe overturned. He would not be persuaded to write again but cooperated with his wife, Anne Putnam, and helped her to systematize her own observations during her eight years in the Epulu District. During his latter years he was crippled, and trained Anne Putnam to observe as an anthropologist. Some of these observations appear in a book compiled from her letters and some of her notes (Anne Putnam, 1954). Although Anne Putnam makes no claim to being an anthropologist, she became an acute and accurate observer and, under her husband's guidance, took some particularly valuable notes regarding the activities of the women's religious association, the initiation of Pygmy boys, marriage customs and ceremonies, and certain activities of the men's religious association. In addition she translated and wrote down some 200 legends as told to her by four members of the hunting group. Her notes also cover other aspects of the social, economic, and political life of this same band, but in less

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detail. All her work has the indisputable advantage of being a factual record of personal observation of a single hunting band over a period of eight consecutive years. That she is not an anthropologist is to a great extent mitigated by the fact that her record confines itself to her observations, and by the training she received from her husband. Nonetheless this factor should be taken into consideration, particularly as her previous training was as an artist. This accounts in part for the detailed and accurate descriptions of what she saw, but it also accounts for her sometimes highly imaginative presentation of the facts. For instance, when she hears the *molimo* horn at night, she (1954, 84) writes: "Where the Esamba roamed, there went death. Its eerie, lowing voice was the voice of evil." In fact this, as well as being a statement of her own interpretation of the *molimo*, is also an accurate picture of the villager interpretation. It is also significant that she uses specifically village terms, such as "Esamba" (for the more correct *lusumba* or *esumba*). Living as she did among the villagers as well as among the Pygmies, Mrs. Putnam was influenced by many of their notions and not infrequently used the villagers as informants, though she always states when the latter is the case. We must then assume that

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[P. 157-D]

[P.158-A]

114 some of the "facts" she observes, she presents much as the local villagers would.

114 128 With regard to my own early material, which I add to our sources on the Epulu net hunters, I must also add a caution. My first trip, in 1951, lasting about four months, was primarily concerned with the music of the Mbuti. I was, during almost the entire time, among this same hunting band at the Epulu. My second trip, in 1954, took me through west and equatorial Africa and the Ubangi district of the Congo, so I was able to see Pygmies other than those of the Ituri, but again I concentrated most of my time at the Epulu. I use my own field notes mainly to fill in gaps in the Putnam material and to add two detailed sections on initiation and the men's religious association, here called

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
128 taining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
621

[1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage
[192] of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 159-A]

ORIENTATION

LOCATION

101 THE PYGMY POPULATION of the world is di-
• 114 vided into two main groups, Asiatic and African, commonly known as Negritos and Negrillos, respectively. These terms originated in what is probably the first serious attempt to study the Pygmies as a whole (Quatrefages, 1887), and the relationship between these two groups has been an issue ever since. It does not concern us here, as our study is confined to the African Pygmies, but reference to this wider issue may be found in Quatrefages (1887), Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), and Gusinde (1942).

TRIBAL GROUPINGS

121
101 We are concerned essentially with an ethnographic study of known Pygmy groups in Africa, but here again the field is generally considered in terms far too broad to be practical.

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114.
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P. 159-D]

[P.160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
• 114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

[P. 161-A]
162 slight excess of females in the composition of the population. He gives the following figures, evidently from a population of 411 adults.

	Children Per Cent	Adults Per Cent	Total Per Cent
Male	48.0	48.9	48.4
Female	52.0	51.1	51.6

[165] Infant mortality (32.7 per cent)
Average age 27–30
9 widowers among 201 men
9 widows among 210 women
14 polygamous families (3.1 per cent)

16 Demographic data for the Sua net hunters is
[114] not available. Putnam kept detailed medical records for all members of the band for a decade, but many of these have been lost in the course of shipment to the United States, and the few that are available do not provide a
[184] representative picture. From such data as are available, there does not seem, however, to be any significant difference between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 161-C]

but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the proportion of Negro blood passed to the Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), however, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare. 563 582 [144]

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the question of Pygmy language. Some take the view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira. 197 114

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The Aka speak a Mangbetu dialect. Costermans (1937), who agrees with Putnam that the original Pygmy language has disappeared, even in the heart of the forest, states that everywhere the Pygmies use the language of the village population with which they live in symbiosis, though they retain their own accent. The Mamvu-Lese group, he says, are no exception to this rule. 197 114

Most Mbuti are polyglots, though Schebesta claims that the archers among whom he worked spoke only Efe, a fact that he takes to be additional evidence of the Pygmaean origin of this tongue, despite its obvious connection with KiLese. The Epulu Mbuti speak KiBira, KiLese, and KiNgwana. KiBira is used mainly as the camp language but in a dialectal form rendering it almost unintelligible to the Bira villagers. Whatever language the Mbuti are speaking there are certain similarities about the form it assumes, noticeably in the use of a hiatus (the "faucal gasp" noticed by Johnston, 1902, 1904, 532; see also Costermans, 1937) and of a curious singsong intonation. But for the present the question of originality in Mbuti language is still open, and we can state with certainty only that the Ituri Pygmies speak dialectal forms of the same Sudanic and semi-Bantu languages spoken by their village neighbors. 19

[P. 161 - D]

[P.163-B]

cons" were not infrequently discussed around the campfires; the decision, however, was generally in favor of maintaining the *status quo.* 178

PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

128 14

Physical anthropology is not treated here, partly because it is a highly specialized field and partly because, again, there is not sufficient material. The work of Schebesta (1938), Jadin (1936), and Gusinde (1948) is notable but still has produced no conclusive results other than to point out the undoubted genetic difference between the Mbuti and their village neighbors. [114].

There is no published study of nutrition among the Mbuti, and nothing in the existing anthropological studies from which one can draw any conclusions on this subject. 146 114

182 *trice.*" Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes
114 that the forest environment induces fear, suspi-
[15] cion, and guile, and limits the intellectual
[181] horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in
[184] agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change
825 with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." [P.164-B]

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and
237 vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of fire itself is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light.
[373] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry
[416] firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows
[114] (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped
[P.169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

[ARCHERS]

with metal points. Schebesta believes that a 411
number of different poisons are used, apart from
the poison described in detail by Parke (1891).
The poisoned arrows are used against tree- [224]
dwelling animals, particularly monkeys, and
hardly ever against antelopes or larger game.
Schebesta contradicts, in the light of his own [114]
experience, Stanley's (1890) assertion that
Mbuti hunt buffalo and elephant with poisoned
arrows.

Mbuti use of antidotes is not known to 278
Schebesta (1941, 65).

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting 224

Schebesta (1941, 86 ff.) describes the various hunting techniques used throughout the Ituri. The Efe among whom he did his most detailed work are primarily archers. They do not know the net hunt and seldom practice the communal beat (Efe: *begbe*). Schebesta (1941, 86) ranks the ambush as most important. This method of hunting is used by the older men no longer able to track game successfully. They lie in wait and imitate the call of the game, attracting it until it is within range of their iron-tipped arrows.

The daily hunt, however, is the track hunt

[P.169-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 171-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the trading is carried out. He says that there is,
[613] however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[ARCHERS]

553 Schebesta reports that the child is not named for some weeks after birth. To name a boy is the father's prerogative or that of the oldest male members of his lineage; to name a girl is the right of the mother or her oldest relatives. There is no uniform custom, except that naming is primarily the privilege of the parents.

844 It is a Pygmy custom to fasten the umbilical
846 cord to the child's elbow and later to bury it in some swamp. Schebesta found no evidence of
[114] the truth of Johnston's statement (1902, 1904, 539) that Pygmy women sever the umbilical
847 cord with their teeth. Abortion is known to the Pygmies, but plays no part in marital life.

Twins

845 The birth of twins, among the archers, seems
847 to be considered abnormal and inauspicious. Schebesta frequently heard that following the birth of twins one had died. He was told by an elder that, when twins are born, the elders are immediately informed, and they advise that if both infants are strong and healthy they be allowed to live, otherwise the weaker of the two should be killed. The mother herself smothers the infant by covering its nose and mouth with her hand. The body is immediately buried in the house, which is promptly abandoned.

[P. 178-B]

182 (D)

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[1]

P 764

P [765] [535] [114]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *karé* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

P M 764 179

P M [608]

[1] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P. 182 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

[ARCHERS]

The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own. P Z 575 ? Z [MX]

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings. P Z 575 114 [562]

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some- P Z 575 347 534

[P. 183-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

P 575 [p. 184-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

None of the foregoing material is much concerned with leadership, and, indeed, it has been scarcely necessary to mention it. Some of the early sources, such as Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Geil (1905), and Lang (1919) assert the existence of hereditary chieftainship; others (Johnston, 1902, 1904; Christy, 1924) deny this just as emphatically. Stuhlmann (1894), referring to bands of Mbuti living near the Manyema, states that the leader of each band is the ablest hunter and that he controls the wanderings of his band. Whether or not he has any other jurisdiction is not known. 622 114.

Schebesta flatly denies the existence of hereditary chieftainship anywhere among the Mbuti, except among those most acculturated. He also denies the existence of charismatic 622 [077]

[1] Antelope cries are imitated in this way.

[P 184-D]

[ARCHERS]

622 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
629 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages.
[171] Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[114] [1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and confusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship constitution of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and as descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[P. 185-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system."

P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

P Z 439 177 571 [114]

P Z [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against 613
antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards 689
find that they receive no share when game from 626
the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does
not share any of her gathering products with
others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and [685]
above all those suspected of sorcery, who are [754]
considered the worst types of antisocials, are
punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp,
and left to die if they are not executed by some
means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta [114]
cites neither examples in detail nor enough
cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He
seems, however, to be generally in accord with
what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, ex-
cept with regard to the position and authority
of the elder and the alleged "system" of law
and punishment.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge 802

There is little information on division of time
and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives
the result of his work among five Mamvu-
[P. 186-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P 188-C]

obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 [83]

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion. 774.

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 189-A]

000 this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

114 Schebesta (1950) bases his detailed study of Mbuti religion on an eight-month sojourn among the southeast archers on his second visit to the Ituri. He also mentions other information collected during his two visits which is of relevance to the net hunters and the Kango farther west. Here we are concerned only with his archer material.

The Chthonic God

776 Among the Efe archers Schebesta found the
192 name Toré, applied to what he designates as
184 "*Buschgott*," or God of the Undergrowth. Other names frequently heard are Muri-muri, Mbali, Muku, Kalisia, Bi'i, Ba'atsi, Epilipili, Puchopucho, Matu, and Lodi. Like Toré, Muri-muri is found among all archers. Those to the north describe both Toré and Muri-muri as a small, Mbuti-like forest dweller, to meet whom is death because he is the destroyer of all. The central archers distinguish more clearly between Toré and Muri-muri. The latter, who is short in stature, is sometimes termed Toré *bo'ichu* (Costermans, 1938, Toré *bo'iko*). The former is,

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore. 776 177 [114]

Schebesta believes that, though different groups of archers give precedence to one name or another, there is only one God of the Undergrowth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning. 776 82 [184] [825]

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good. 776 [171]

Cult Practices

776 782

A number of practices are associated with the

[p. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 706 192 114

[P. 190-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-A]

function, any more than has the whole ritual of initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952, 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114 •

[P. 192-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.193-A]

114 sion, based as it often is on data provided by unreliable informants but passed as certain fact (Boelaert). According to Costermans, Schebesta's conclusions result from his selection of data to suit his (admitted) preconceived theories. Further, Schebesta relies, as he himself says, on the evidence provided by legends which he accepts without exercising any of the caution necessary for the proper use of such material. Possibly many of the legends and the associated concepts are indeed of Lese origin.

The Godhead

771 776 The Chthonic God of the Undergrowth plainly does not stand by itself, not even when supported by an embryonic "*Totengottheit*," which Schebesta finds among the archers but believes to be of little significance. From an examination of Mbuti mythology and a comparative study of religious terms, Schebesta concludes that there is a third, and important if vaguely conceptualized, "*Himmelsgottheit*."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

62 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

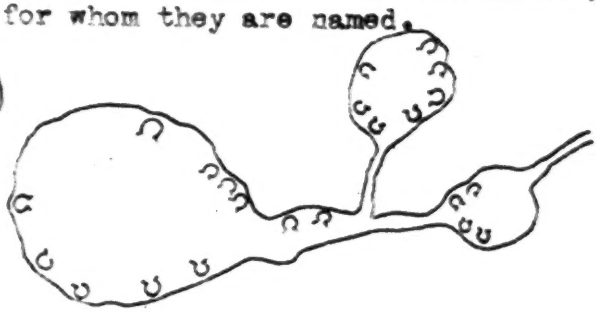

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patrician, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

621 361 592 162 361 342 [114]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 **Various**
[114] early travelers describe net hunts in similar terms (Parke, 1891; Lloyd, 1899; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924). Parke (1891) gives a detailed description of the nets, which corresponds to that given by Putnam, and records their length as from 100 to 200 feet. He gives the height of the net, however, as 5 feet, while the nets used by the Epulu net hunters are barely 4 feet high (Figs. 34–36).

When a suitable place is reached, the women make beaters of twigs and branches, and go off into the forest, while the men set the nets up end-to-end, in a large semicircle. The women carry their babies, but the young children are left with the men.

Putnam indicates that there is a difference in the value of different positions in the circle of nets; the central positions are the most likely to catch game. There is a definite system in set-
[P. 203-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's mate-
[184] rial and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta
[114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison.
881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl,
[346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this
[302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At

[P. 216-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

881 The first *nkumbi* of which I saw something
• 114 was in 1951 at the village of Effundi Somali. I
608 saw only a part and the final closing ceremony. Although I may well have missed much detail, it is unlikely that I would have missed anything of the nature of a *karé* relationship had one existed. There was certainly no sign of it. The next *nkumbi*, which took place in 1954 at Camp Putnam, was exceptional in that no village boys of the right age were available, so only Mbuti boys were initiated. Thus, there was no question of *karé* relationship between them and villagers, but also, during the entire course of the *nkumbi*, I heard no mention of it. This, together with Putnam's own silence on the subject, would seem to indicate that this relationship is either not so widespread or not so important as Schebesta assumes.

881 The peculiar circumstances of the 1954 *nkumbi* are given briefly here. Though exceptional, they contain some interesting points for

[114] [1] These covered my visits to the Ituri in 1951 and 1954–1955 only.

[P. 217-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1965) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

Z P 881 534 [114] [575] Z P 881 Z P [332] [292] P 881

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at 575
that time. 533

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of 796
the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not 575
clear and which took place down near the vil- 534
lage. One villager took part. The trumpet and 533
the performer, covered with a cloth, were car- 796
ried in from the forest on a crude litter and dis- [314]
appeared behind one of the huts. As the playing
and singing proceeded, the villager and one or
two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing
leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them
against the door of the hut behind which the
trumpet was playing. There was much laugh-
ter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally,
the player and trumpet were carried away as
they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have 765
witnessed were of the more serious kind, follow- 533
ing the general disruption in the district among
villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam
died. At these meetings no drums were used, [534]
even though they were sometimes available.
But even at such meetings there was generally [535]
a period, early in the night, during which the [331]
men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked
the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly ob-
scene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P 231-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
177 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

[NET HUNTERS]

538 114 with origin, but rather with dissociating the insignificant from the significant, regardless of origin. A collection of legends as told by four men of the Epulu net hunters, then, is something of great value but to be used with care. Mrs. Putnam made such a collection, totaling some 200 legends. Its very size, coming from a single hunting band, adds to its value. To a person knowing the band and the men who told the legends, the significant can often be easily distinguished from the insignificant. But source material of this kind needs much fuller documentation than is available for use to be made of it for purposes of sociological analysis (see Turnbull, 1959).

538 [626] [1] Similar caution is needed with legends, which, as with the archers, are an important means of expression for the net hunters. The legends are also effective means of social control and illustrate attempts to rationalize the unknown. If we talk about "Mbuti legends," we not only open ourselves to questions as to whether particular legends are of villager or Pygmy origin, but we also imply that the legends necessarily have traditional significance for the Mbuti. The Mbuti like a good story; they will retell it whatever its source. A legend may have had some particular significance for the people to whom it originally belonged, but for the Mbuti its only importance may lie in the scope it offers their histrionic talent.

[P 233-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *toré* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 • [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of his Sua material are net hunters or archers. But, except for his remarks on the Kango and "village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the extreme west of theIturi forest, he seems to have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti. His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184]
greatly from that for the archers. The names 176
given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti, Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neighboring villagers. According to Schebesta, Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [224]
owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benevolent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt, guiding their weapons and assisting the beat, preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187]
is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes known to the elder, telling the hunter where to find game.

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776 close the forest to them, until they make the 782 propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are ex- [778] pected to make offerings to Kalisia from their food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this purpose (*ende kela*). The hunters may less ceremoniously throw offerings of food into the forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right mind would fail to make these propitiatory sacrifices: "*à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira*" (Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Sche- 114 besta does not always identify his source of information. However, from a number of ad- [124] missions such as that noted above, we must assume that his informants were frequently villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied on the question-and-answer technique among both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933, 171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776 forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171] villagers, who regard him in no way as benevolent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity Songe (the moon), with its own remote world, as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 754 266 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 754 177 This belief seems associated with death and with people who are near to that particular crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 114 [184] The Putnam material does not support any theory of a celestial God such as that described by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-0]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

776 114 • 771 [788] [811] [776] [821] [172]

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

000 material. These each have their drawbacks.
• 114 Schebesta gives a more complete picture than Putnam of the Ituri Mbuti but in such generalized terms as to be, in effect, no more than a disjointed anthropological gallimaufry. It is evident from his own statements concerning his field-work technique (Schebesta, 1932, 1936b) that the "facts" he presents are sometimes no more than hearsay, perhaps confirmed by "*flüchtigen Einblicke*" (1948, 475). In addition there is often no certainty as to which particular Mbuti he means. It is equally evident from his admittedly preconceived notions and avowed objective that his theoretical work is more than a little biased.

The Putnam material does not provide such over-all detail as Schebesta's account and is regrettably lacking in information on kinship systems (as is Schebesta's work), legal system, and even on the more observable manifestations of the relationship between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors. It is, however, localized. We know exactly to which Pygmies he refers. It is unbiased by any personal prejudices or preconceived theories. It is based on more than two decades of intimate contact with the Mbuti throughout the forest in the case of Patrick

[P 242-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 242-C]

Putnam, and nearly one decade in the case of 114 •
Anne Putnam.

The vital gaps in this combined material, 128
together with its general nature, render any at- 121
tempt at systematization fruitless. As it is presented, however, it stands as a body of facts, more or less reliable, related to two specific types of Mbuti society—archers and net hunters. We can use it initially, then, to test the validity of this classification. Second, the survey suggests a new approach to the relationship between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors. Incidentally it throws a clearer light on Schebesta's notions as to the cultural unity of the Ituri Mbuti and on the irrelevance of his division of the Mbuti into linguistic groups which correspond only to villager groupings, and not directly to any significant structural differences among the Mbuti themselves. Here we concern ourselves with a brief comparison of our two major sources, section by section, with reference mainly to the classification of the Mbuti according to hunting technique.

ORIENTATION

There is ittle call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P 242-D]

[P.243-A]

192 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently.
[170] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[28] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[44] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

[p. 244-c]

mutually dependent and equally important role 224
in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Arch- 476
ery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a 621
familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, 562
with the cooperation of two or three men. It is 184
not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close coopera- 184
tion and lack of specialization, is associated 554
with a more egalitarian political system than 561
that of the archers. While Schebesta described 224
an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful line- 621
age heads, Putnam vigorously denies the exis- 114
tence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
• 114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[482] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P 245-B]

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initia- 177
tion of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between Pygmy and villager initiates among the net hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers, probably because of his insistence (1952, 281) on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an initiation into the religious association of *toré* for both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is contradicted by my own experience among the net hunters. In any case, if there is a difference between the two groups over the significance of *nkumbi* initiation (and it may well be only a difference of interpretation rather than of fact), it does not seem directly related to any difference in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 796
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more directly with prevailing differences in villager custom rather than with any inherent differences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the nature and function of the closed associations, are more properly the subject of discussion of the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the difference between net hunters and archers, which is our main concern here.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold equally well among the archers. It is simply one [121] of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light [575] of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [192] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *toré* society is an in- [776] tegral part of the religious system of the archers and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.
[P 248-B]

Schebesta (1950, 13) insists that there is a 184
cultural unity among the Ituri Mbuti, which 114
he believes is clearly visible in their magico-religious system. He may well be right. Probably he is, but his method of comparing terminological usage among a number of different Mbuti bands as though he were dealing with self-evident facts, while relying frequently on casual information, does little to support his theories. When dealing with cult practices, he is more concerned with the origin of a particular practice than with its sociological significance. He accepts statements and even legends at their face value and builds his elaborate theories on this flimsy foundation.

In trying to draw any useful comparison be- 184
tween the material on the archers and that for 121
the net hunters, we are constantly confronted with the question of origin. Is this or that custom or ritual of villager origin? If so, how far [177]
has it been adapted and what significance has it? The latter question is more important for the social anthropologist than the former and is precisely the question we must ask. We are concerned not with the origin of any particular ritual but rather with its significance and its relationship to other practices in a system of related institutions. Thus when we deal with religious 000
[P. 248-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 881 575 Z 563 881 575 of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [114] [608] Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

[p. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association. 114 186 881 [554] (177)

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1966 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the *nkumbi* or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the *nkumbi* to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

In the 1954 *nkumbi* there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the *nkumbi* should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *ganza* (members of the *nkumbi*) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P 252-D]

In the final section we consider some legends collected by Anne Putnam among these same Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*. 128 186 539

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

539 [181] [186] [177]

In order to understand the Pygmy values more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti rejection of villager values is effectively valid and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by four of the more important hunters belonging to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters 539 114

[P. 259 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 260-A]

539 114 and by others. Although only a limited though representative selection of the legends is presented, a word should be said about the way the legends are told and the way these particular examples were collected and translated (Turnbull, 1959).

539 114 126 The original manuscripts were prepared under extremely difficult conditions by Mrs. Putnam while living in one of the Mbuti hunting camps. No typewriter was available. Apart from the physical difficulty of making a longhand rendition of the legends, as they were told, was the problem of translation. Mrs. Putnam did the only thing anyone except a proficient linguist could do, she translated the legend as it was told and wrote it down in English. This [91] procedure was further necessitated by the habit of these Mbuti, who speak three languages, of changing in the telling of a single legend from one to another as the mood seizes them.

539 114 Certainly, the ideal would have been to record the original texts, but these we do not have and could hardly expect to have under the circumstances. But we can be sure of the content and the general form of expression. I myself worked on the original manuscripts shortly af-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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ter their completion and had the opportunity of hearing many of the tales retold, sometimes spontaneously but more often with a little prompting given with the aid of the manuscripts. The only legends that were retold in recognizable form were those concerning creation myth, origin, and tradition, and a few of the more popular ones concerning the *satani*, or forest spirits.

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In transcribing from the manuscripts I have not altered the content, but I have attempted to reproduce the legends in a way that will convey something of the manner in which they are told, and I have omitted the often endless repetition. For the present purpose I have divided the legends into three groups: (1) creation myths, legends of origin and tradition; (2) legends dealing with social relations; and (3) legends dealing with relationships to the supernatural.

The bulk of the collection is divided equally between the second and third categories. Only three of the total of 200 legends concern the creation of the world, the stars, and the sky. Fewer than a dozen may be said to deal with the origin and traditional history of the Mbuti. The creation legends are very curtailed versions

[P. 260-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

CONCLUSIONS

[P.273-A]

121 We set out to make an ethnographic survey
128 of material on the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, to evaluate that material, and to see what problems it raised and which direction further field work should take. Rather than attempt to record the material from all sources, we used only the material that added to our knowledge of two specific groups of Mbuti—the archers of the southeastern Ituri Forest and the net hunters of the Epulu District. The rest of the material consists largely of isolated descriptive remarks which cannot always be accurately associated with any one particular region, let alone any particular group or band of hunters. Its inclusion would have added nothing to the sociological value of this work.

114 The material on the two groups to which we limited ourselves is by no means adequate either. Schebesta's information for the archers is to be regarded with caution because of his admittedly preconceived notions and his faulty methodology and field-work technique. The

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 Putnam material is drawn not from a single coherent account, but from a number of isolated manuscript notes and from the written observations of Anne Putnam, put together by myself in the light of my own partial knowledge at the time of writing, of the particular Pygmies of whom the Putnams write.

128 The survey must be taken as a survey of source material and not as an ethnographic description of two types of Mbuti society. Though I have tried to draw from the material as much description as possible, obvious gaps are revealed, particularly in our knowledge of the social structure of the Mbuti. We have virtually no information, for instance, on the kinship, legal, or political systems of either group. Undoubtedly, the social structure is simple, but it is all the more regrettable that we do not have any detailed description of it. Our ethnographic description, in so far as it is such, gives an account of various institutions but with no hint as to their interrelationship. The account itself is never sufficiently detailed to permit speculation with any accuracy. In one sense it is virgin ground for the field worker, but not completely so. The survey reveals that the Mbuti should be studied with regard to their economic classification as archers and net

128
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[P.273-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 184 hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the P [575] difference between Schebesta's account of the [114] archer *toré* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P 829 648 186 Z 563 The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net [P 274-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. vii]

Acknowledgments

The present study is based on field work conducted during the years 1957 and 1958, under the support of a grant from the Emslie Horniman Anthropological Trust. To the trustees I owe thanks not only for their financial aid, but also for their personal interest and encouragement. 114 • 122

My academic debt lies above all to the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford and to its members under whom I studied. To them all I am sincerely grateful, and I hope that this work will to some extent justify their constantly cheerful, if at times somewhat skeptical, encouragement and optimism. 000

But for the patience and endurance of Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, I might never have enjoyed the privilege of being an anthropologist. Dr. John Peristiany was my first teacher, and his personal interest and understanding helped me to find my way during the first erratic years. But to Dr. Rodney Needham I owe more than I can say, for he undertook to supervise this study and has nursed it along over a period of several years and across many thousands of miles of land and water. Despite all too infrequent opportunities for meeting, he persisted in his attempts to make the work more sound and perceptive. I am most conscious of many shortcomings; some due to the ever-restricting factor of time, but others due to the sheer difficulty of dealing with a theoretical and geographical area for which there is so little published material of real use. Largely because of this factor, the study is isolated and does not attempt to draw upon the comparative material that is available. Such comparisons can most fruitfully be made after further intensive field studies of the Mbuti have been made. The inherent problems of the field work have created many serious gaps that remain to be filled on the next field study, and this, together with the necessity for presenting a lengthy ethnographic description, has made the task of analysis infinitely more difficult. Dr. Needham's perceptiveness as well as his own field ex- 128

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 study as a comparative base from which the study of the Mbuti as a
[101] whole may be more speedily and accurately advanced. It is also believed that although the bulk of the study involves a single hunting band, much of the basic structure uncovered applies to other Mbuti bands. The major limitation, however, is that we are here concerned primarily with one band rather than with the Mbuti as a whole, yet this was an inevitable necessity.

Other limitations arise from the lack of monographs on comparable groups of forest nomads, from my consequent reluctance to generalize too far from so narrow a base, and from the difficulty of presenting the principles of organization of a society that does not possess the formal institutions found in larger and more sedentary societies. Nonetheless, such principles plainly must exist, and while our general objective is to outline the form and structure of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers of the Ituri Forest in the northeast Congo (Leopoldville), we also have the more particular objective of searching for the elusive principles that integrate each apparently autonomous Mbuti band, giving it an identity of its own by which it recognizes itself and its integral but diffuse relationship with other bands. For it is in light of these principles that we must try to understand the effective but problematical relationship that pertains between any Mbuti band and the village cultivators who are its neighbors.

121 Another limitation derives from the lack of reference material on
• 114 the Mbuti, which necessitated the gathering of ethnographic minutiae in the field and their presentation here, adding considerably to the bulk despite vigorous sifting. However, without a firm ethnographic base no analysis would be possible, so the provision of such a base is considered a prime prerequisite.

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular analysis, though this is not to deny their possible value in other fields. My own subsequent account of the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1961) was in no way intended as an academic study, nor is it suited for use as such, though it served a useful purpose in helping the field worker detach himself from the subject of his study, enabling him to examine it more critically.

[197] In my examination of other sources (1956) it was suggested that subsequent field work might discover a more meaningful division of the Ituri Mbuti than the linguistic division made by Schebesta, as

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the languages referred to, although spoken by the Mbuti, were evidently of non-Mbuti origin. Consequently another objective of the present study, based on further field work, is to begin to look for valid structural differences that do exist, following up the contention (*ibid.*) that one would expect to find such differences between the Mbuti who hunt by net and those who hunt with bow and arrow. The boundaries of the net-hunters and archers incidentally correspond, very roughly, to the linguistic boundaries drawn by Schebesta between the Sua- and Efe-speaking Mbuti: the Aka, to the north, although somewhat divided amongst themselves, offer a third category, some of them using the spear as their prime weapon.

To all these ends it was decided to make a further field trip in which one hunting band would be studied intensively throughout a calendar year, and in which as much comparative material as time and field conditions permitted would be gathered from other hunting bands. It was decided in advance, in the light of previous personal experience, that the sacrifice of a whole year to the study of one small band was essential, even though it would mean that any final conclusions about the general nature of Mbuti society would have to be delayed until a number of other such studies had been made. A band of either archers or net-hunters is a highly mobile, volatile entity, demanding of the field worker the utmost persistence in both physical and intellectual pursuit. It was quite obvious, also from previous experience, that the band not only constantly changes location, but it also constantly changes in composition. The significance of these fluctuations would only be discovered, it was felt, by following them right through their course in one given hunting territory before attempting any comparative studies among other bands. Above all it was essential in one band to find out what the significant social groupings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How was the band divided, along exactly what lines did the characteristic splits occur, what forces operated to hold the band together and to divide it? The scope of the one-band study was aimed at answering such questions and others that concern band relationships with local villages of cultivators. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding of the true nature of the over-all Mbuti/Villager relationship in this area, following up on the suggestion made earlier (Turnbull, 1956, 363–64) that this relationship was not one of master/servant, still less of slavery, and probably not even of symbiosis.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 In paying special attention to this relationship it was felt that the otherwise intangible value-system of the Mbuti would be more clearly revealed, leading to an understanding of the ritual relationship that appeared to exist between the Mbuti and the forest, as implied in the accounts of other observers and in my own prior experience, but nowhere made explicit.

114 EXECUTION

101 Field work was undertaken between the summer of 1957 and the
131 late winter of 1958, entering the then Belgian Congo by driving through from the West Coast, collecting as many local accounts of pygmy or pygmoid hunters and gatherers along the way as possible, for future reference. Such accounts were gathered in Dahomey, Nigeria (particularly towards the east), the Cameroons, Gabon, and throughout the Congo, but few hunting bands were encountered until well towards the Ubangi River (see Map 1). It was decided not to spend time trying to make contact, except on the far side of the Ubangi, where contact was relatively easy, and where there were also some Binga pygmies from the west bank of the river.

114 From the Ubangi over to theIturi it was quite obvious that, as
13 elsewhere, true hunting bands only existed where there was substan-
[144] tial primary forest, and that elsewhere not only was the hunting and gathering economy defunct, but there had been so much intermarriage that one could not truly speak of a pygmy physical type any more than one could speak of a pygmy culture.

Leaving aside the forested area south of the Congo River, which I did not cover but for which pygmoid groups are reported, I found relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) as well as in the forested regions
[101] around the Ubangi River. But by far the heaviest concentration is in the Ituri Forest, where all the pygmies recognize their unity in the name Mbuti, and where both the physical and the cultural integrity of the hunters and gatherers seems to have been best preserved.

121 There was no question that this was the right area for the major bulk of the field work, but there was some question as to which band to select for the intensive study. I eventually decided on the Epulu

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one.

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism:

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps.

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized.

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations.

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans.

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *elumdi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent retractation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
/ Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[22] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of [164] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, [165] caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; 448 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- 177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *bpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the 123
year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning fes- 114
tivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when 764
in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much 765
respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even [184]
among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migra- 114
tions, living in every camp it established during the course of some 166
fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it; on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts 114
of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion [126]
was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others 123
to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing. 123 648 764

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint. 123

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family. 123 122 114 [576] [589]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

niques do not affect the basic structural unity. The fact that the 101
Mbuti fall into different linguistic groups is no more than accidental, 197
and is of recent historic origin. The linguistic division is that propounded by Schebesta (1938, pp. 24–26). In effect he uses the terms Aka, Efe and Sua to refer to those pygmies who were in territories invaded and settled by the Ngbetu/Zande, the Lesé, and the Forest Bira respectively; these pygmies apparently adopted the languages of the newcomers to their respective areas and they have maintained some kind of relationship with their Negro neighbors ever since.

The question of language is by no means settled yet, and it may be 197
that either KiLesé or KiBira may in fact prove to be a language of 174
pygmy origin adopted by the Negro invaders. At the moment there is no significant evidence available to this effect, and given a situation where small isolated hunting bands (of an absolute maximum of thirty nuclear families and a possible minimum of three) are brought sharply into contact with larger, more permanent, technologically more advanced peoples with a tribal system, we can only assume the likelihood that the pygmies adopted the languages of the newcomers, losing most of their own.

In this case the linguistic division suggested by Schebesta most 197
certainly only refers to a post-contact situation and does not neces- 114
sarily point to any indigenous difference between these three groups of Ituri hunters and gatherers. The fact that, very approximately, the linguistic boundaries also correspond to the boundaries between pygmy hunters who emphasize the spear, the bow and arrow, and the net may be no more than a mark of acculturation with the three distinct Negro groups; on the other hand it may point to some earlier distinction, but in any case is of much more significance in any contemporary study of social structure.

In dismissing the linguistic differences as any indication of internal 197
differentiation it is worth pointing out that any pygmy from any area 101
in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken. This is one small pointer toward an earlier linguistic unity among all Ituri pygmies, as is the fact that they all seem to recognize themselves by the term Mbuti. One hears this term far more frequently than any other when pygmies are distinguishing themselves from villagers, in all parts of the forest. Even in distinguishing them-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to rule if the ceremony is to be effective, whatever its purpose. By "festival" I mean something rather different. It in no way necessarily implies an annual or regularly recurrent event; its objectives may be precisely the same as those of a ceremony, but the means employed are different. There is no precisely regulated pattern of behavior. On the contrary, there is an important element of spontaneity that gives the occasion a vital immediacy, keeping it in the current context rather than connecting it with the past. I confess that the term "festival" has, for me, other less easily definable connotations that make it more suitable for use in the Mbuti situation, the most important of these being that it implies wider, freer participation, less pomposity and more enjoyment, an abandonment that is almost subversive with respect to the commonly accepted norms of behavior.

Most important, I have to revoke my earlier usage of the term "Essumba" or "Lusumba" (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1], 1957[2]). The context in earlier writing, I hope, makes it plain when I am referring to a magico-religious festival of the Mbuti as distinct from a ceremony practiced under the same name by the villagers. The misleading terminology employed before my last field trip was due in part to the difficulties of the linguistic situation and the fact that I was then using the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as my major means of communication. The importance and significance of the confusion will appear later in the text, but as I now wish to use a terminology that will clarify the situation as much as the actual linguistic confusion permits, I have to state that wherever in the past I have referred to the magico-religious festival of the net-hunting Mbuti, in which the men play a predominant part, and where I have used either "Essumba" or "Lusumba," it would have been more correct to have used the term *molimo*. Even this term, however, has its counterpart in the Bira *molimo* ceremony, but at least we can now distinguish more easily between both of these and the other local ceremonies known variously as *essumba*, *lusumba* and *ishumba*, which ceremonies are connected primarily with the Ngwana villagers and their earlier slave-trading and ivory-collecting practices.

One last small correction of past usage; whereas before I once or twice (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) used the spelling *Alima* for the festival associated with the puberty of Mbuti girls, I now use the form and spelling *elima*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

114
121

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

224

621 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 33]

CHAPTER 3

The Mbuti/Villager Relationship

THE QUESTION OF DEPENDENCE

Although we are primarily concerned with the structure of Mbuti 121
society, there are a number of valid reasons why we should first con- 648
cern ourselves with the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

For one, this has been the area of greatest misunderstanding and this misunderstanding has consequently affected attitudes toward an understanding of the forest hunting and gathering life of the Mbuti even when apart from the villagers. It is widely believed that the Mbuti are subject to village authority, that they are a subordinate people. This belief rests on the assumption that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, and the theory of dependence has been extended to political and ritual fields as well as economic. The exact degree of dependence is something that we have to examine carefully throughout our study, though we can only take it up specifically after we have considered the Mbuti in both the village and the forest worlds.

The notion of dependence has led to the theory that Mbuti cul- 121
ture, such as it is, is in itself derived from the superordinate village 177*
culture, and we shall see that this is far from the truth. Even when we look at the Mbuti in the village world it is not hard to see the superficiality of his alleged acculturation, for the very willingness with which he adopts village institutions and falls in with village ways leads him inevitably into one contradiction after another, which contradictions are possible only because the institutions do not have the same structural significance for the Mbuti as for the villager.

The cause of the misunderstanding is largely that previous ac- 121
counts and investigations have been derived from experience of the 14
Mbuti in the village context, in almost complete ignorance of even

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the molimo, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

		Male Members		Female Members	
621 614 613 Camp 32 – in 26 huts, there were		13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
3b –	22	10	5	10	6
3c –	22	11	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

		Male Members		Female Members	
Camp 3d – in 9 huts, there were		5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
3e –	9	5	3	6	3
3f –	6	4	4	4	3
3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 613 361 The camp plans (Plans 32-g)[A] indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a-m). 621 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly • 114 verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe- [614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

[A] [see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	Members Male	Members Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] • [361] [184]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analysis]

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values.

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth.

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [182]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [165]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east. 221 222 533 535 [372] [534] [192]

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in holes in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives. 222 [114] 221 481

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect. 222 [192]

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish. [415] 262

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled 262 252

someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him. 685 157

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move. 685 157 578 251 627 554 627

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects. 685 627 578 152

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masini, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp. 627 431

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but 685 157 421 114

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.246]

CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
[621] [628] posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 776 778 184 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré*, *e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- [114]
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon [776]
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okinu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [191]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

[P.268]

CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 602 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 601 593 [561] We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[114] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

602 621 561 121 We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward [114] (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apua'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples *reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual* does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

is resident. It is seldom that he refers merely to geographical boundaries, for trespass, as seen, is rare and of little consequence. Yet it is a term he frequently uses, and as an organizational principle it is equal in importance to age.

While agreeing with Steward that the environment may to some extent be determinant as well as permissive of certain elements of social organization, I find it impossible to see the validity of his wider deterministic claims for cultural ecology.[9] But while Steward seems to have overreached himself, or rather overreached his material, in trying to draw up general principles of culture change, nonetheless in regarding cultural ecological adaptations as "creative processes" (1955, p. 34), his stress on cultural ecology as a particular factor is highly relevant to the Mbuti and in itself an important contribution. We have seen throughout the importance of the economic abundance offered by the forest, permitting economic independence to each band. While the presence of the village tribes is sufficient indication of the permissibility of cultivation, at the technological level of the Mbuti one might say that the environment determines hunting and gathering. It is certainly relevant to say that the Mbuti, at least, would agree with Steward, for they say it is the only way they can live, that if they cultivate they will die. The truth of their assertion is not relevant here; its importance lies in that it reveals the depth of their felt dependence upon the forest.

Nothing is gained, however, by saying that the Mbuti exploitative

[9] Indeed, it would be impossible to do so since Steward uses the Mbuti as an example of an ecologically determined patrilineal band, content to base his analysis on Putnam (1948) as interviewed by Carleton Coon and represented in a brief and obviously general and sketchy article. Steward's only other Mbuti reference is to Schebesta's preliminary seventeen-page field report in *Anthropos* (1931). A minimum of inquiry would have revealed numerous other sources, which while admittedly unsatisfactory would, through their very divergence, at least have demonstrated the inadvisability of relying on the two sources quoted (cf. Turnbull, 1965). Further evidence to support his theory, for the Central African Negritos, was drawn by Steward from the reports of Schmidt (1910) and Tailles (1918). Not one of the many articles in *Zaïre*, *Congo*, or *Kongo-Overzee*, is cited, nor is Schebesta's major work, *Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri*, nor the abridged and revised edition of that work which appeared in French in 1952, *Les Pygmées du Congo Belge*. Unsupported assertions such as that "the exploitative patterns produced the features typical of the patrilineal band" (Steward, 1955, p. 108) are bad enough; the apparent ignorance of major texts (for Steward nowhere gives any reasons for not using them) is worse; but still worse is the sheer misrepresentation of the facts he does claim to have at his disposal. Thus he claims that the populations he has selected to illustrate patrilineal bands—the Bushmen, Congo Negritos, Australians, Tasmanians and Fueguians, "and others"—are similar "because the nature of the game and therefore of their subsistence problems is the same in each case" (1955, p. 38). It is difficult to see much similarity between subsistence problems of the Kalahari Desert and the Equatorial Rain Forest, even if they are on the same continent.

patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, regarding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *ebo* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and disputatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association between religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion, upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

102
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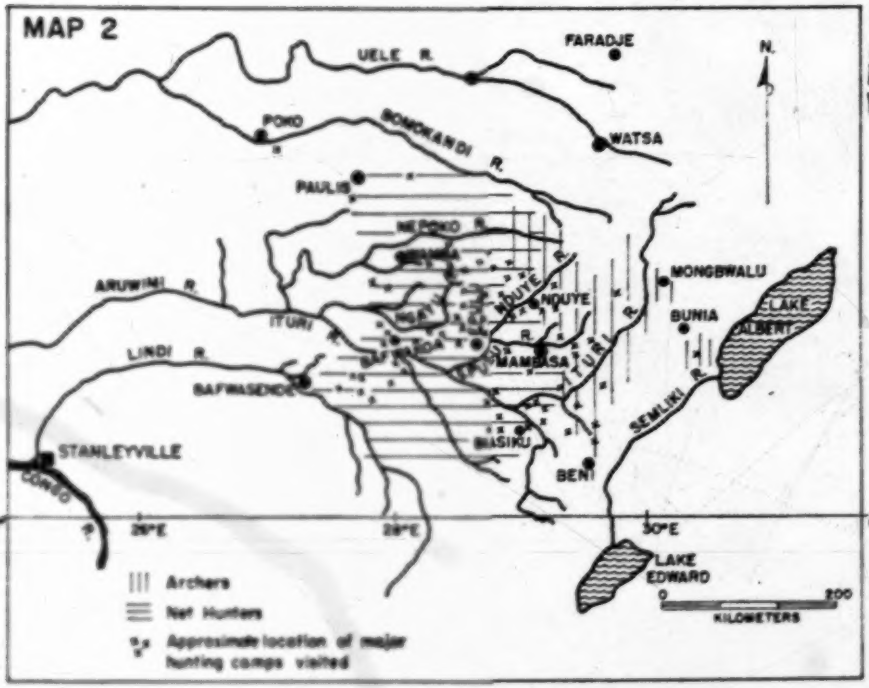
MAP I

Extent of personal knowledge of pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* and personal contact made during 1957/8 field trip (not covering central and southern Congo)

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



102
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131
133

Approximate location of hunting bands visited in the Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.391]

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He has made three extended field trips to Africa, from which he drew the material for this volume, as well as his two previous books, *The Forest People*, a more informal study of the Congo Pygmies, and *The Lonely African*, a study of tribalism and cultural change in modern Africa. He is a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and a Corresponding Member of Le Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale.

3: Turnbull

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[For numerous scattered references throughout this source on the author's participation in various Mbuti life cycle events, see whole text, category 116, passim.]

24 Turnbull R-5 (1951-1959) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Foreword

THE FOREST PEOPLE is about the life of a Pygmy people living in the Ituri Forest in the Congo. Its author is an anthropologist. The book is exceptional. 114 •

These three statements do not—alas—form a syllogism, but they do have some connection with each other, and together they help to explain why reading *The Forest People* is an unusual and satisfying experience. Most of the literature on the life of "primitive" people is in the form of fairly technical reports in which individuals are swallowed up by abstractions and feeling is replaced by analysis.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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There is nothing wrong with this for the purpose it serves. But you get little idea from these monographs of what it is like to lead the kind of life they describe, or what the people observed are really like as human beings.

One might conclude from this that anthropologists with their special orientation were not the best suited to give us a non-technical, humanized, and personalized view of primitive people. It is my belief that the contrary is the case. Their special techniques, their sympathy, and their understanding make them in fact ideal interpreters. Indeed, it is the professional interest of the anthropologist in primitive societies, in the first place, that drives them to devote the years of patient study and observation that are required for the insight they seek. And, in the second, their rigorous analytical methods guarantee some measure of the objectivity without which the less wary observer is often led into sentiment and bias.

One of the reasons why *The Forest People* is an exceptional book is because its author, Colin M. Turnbull, is an anthropologist who knows the Pygmies intimately from years of living among them. In this book he has fortunately chosen the unusual course of writing about them as individuals, as his friends, each with a personality of his own. From his knowledge of their culture and its adaptation to the conditions of an African rain forest, he is able to provide another dimension to their lives that the casual visitor might easily miss altogether. As a result the reader can enter into some understanding of the meaning of their lives and enjoy the exhilaration of participating in a culture other than his own.

HARRY L. SHAPIRO
Chairman and Curator
of Physical Anthropology

January 1962
American Museum of Natural History

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ing the power, small as they were, to kill elephants. The Pygmies today still kill elephants single-handed, armed only with a short-handled spear. And they blend so well with the forest foliage that you can pass right by without seeing them. As for their having tails, it is easy enough to see how this story came into being, if the Pygmies seen by the Portuguese dressed as they do today, as is more than likely. The loincloth they wear is made of the bark of a tree, softened and hammered out until it is a long slender cloth, tucked between the legs and over a belt, front and back. The women particularly like to have a long piece of cloth so that it hangs down behind, almost to the ground. They say it looks well when dancing.

Some of the accounts of nineteenth-century travelers in the Congo are no less fanciful, and it was George Schweinfurth who first made known to the world, in his book *The Heart of Africa*, that Pygmies not only existed but were human. He was following in the path of the Italian explorer Miani, who a few years earlier had reached the Ituri but had died before he could return. One of the most curious of little-known stories about the Pygmies is that Miani actually sent two of them back to Italy, to the Geographic Association, which had sponsored his trip. The president of the association, Count Miniscalchi of Verona, took the two boys and educated them. Contemporary newspaper reports describe them as strolling the boulevards, arm in arm with their Italian friends, chatting in Italian. One of them even learned to play the piano. From the present Count Miniscalchi I learned that both Pygmies eventually returned to Africa, where one died and the other became a saddler in the Ethiopian army. He last heard from the latter, who must then have been an old man, just before the outbreak of World War II.

Stanley describes his meetings with the Pygmies in the Ituri, but without telling us much about them, and indeed little was known beyond the actual fact of their existence until a White Father, the

175 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twen-
114 ties to study them.

114 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in
144 which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later
174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not
114 533 ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's
177 account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 177
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [161]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [174]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Sche- [177]
besta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the Bol.ese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three [401]
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *ndembi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

114 105 177 initiation camp, I could not accept this point of view at all. Yet it was one shared by others, some of whom had lived in the area for years.

114 177 The explanation was simple enough, and it was not that either one of us was right and the other wrong. Whereas Father Schebesta had always had to work through Negroes, and largely in Negro villages, I had been fortunate in being able to make direct contact with the Pygmies, and in fact had spent most of my time with them away from Negro influence. Other Europeans had also only seen the Pygmies either in Negro villages or on Negro plantations. But I had seen enough of them both in the forest and in the village to know that they were completely different people in the two sets of circumstances. All that we knew of them to date had been based on observations made either in the villages or in the presence of Negroes.

184 Whereas my first visit to the Ituri Forest, in 1951, had been made mainly out of curiosity, I had seen enough to make me want to return to this area for more intensive study. An ideal location was provided by a strange establishment set up on the banks of the Epulu River back in the nineteen-twenties by an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam.* He had gone there to do his field work but had liked the place and the people so much that he decided to stay. He built himself a huge mud mansion, and gradually a village grew up around him and became known as "Camp Putnam." The Pygmies treated it just as they treated any other Bantu village (the main Negro tribes nearby were the Bafiru and BaNdaka, with a few Modern BaNgwana), and used to visit it to trade their meat for plantation products. This was where I first met them.

* Patrick Putnam first went to the Belgian Congo in 1927 to do field work for Harvard University. Apart from one or two brief return visits to the United States he remained there until his death at the end of 1955. At Camp Putnam he established a dispensary and a leper colony, turning his house into a guest house to help pay the expenses of his hospital work.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

But on my second visit, in 1954, I was provided with a real opportunity for studying the relationship between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. The event was the decision of the local Negro chief to hold a tribal nkumbi initiation festival. This is a festival in which all boys between the ages of about nine and twelve are circumcised, then set apart and kept in an initiation camp where they are taught the secrets of tribal lore, to emerge after two or three months with the privileges and responsibilities of adult status. 114 177 88

The nkumbi is a village custom, but in areas where the practice prevails the Pygmies always send their children to be initiated along with the Negro boys. This has been cited as an example of their dependence on the Negroes and of their lack of an indigenous culture. The Negroes take all the leading roles in the festival, and as no Pygmy belongs to the tribe, none can become a ritual specialist, so the Pygmy boys always have to depend on the Negroes for admission to an initiation, and for the subsequent instruction. An uninitiated male, Pygmy or Negro, young or old, is considered as a child—half a man at best. 177 88

Only relatives of the boys undergoing initiation are allowed to live in the camp, though any adult initiated male can visit the camp during the daytime.

But it so happened that on this occasion there were no Negro boys of the right age for initiation, so the only men who could live in the camp and stay there all night were Pygmies. To go against the custom of allowing just relatives to live in the camp would have brought death and disaster. Nevertheless the Negroes went ahead with the festival because it has to be held to avoid offending the tribal ancestors. The Negro men would have liked to stay in the camp all night, as normally instruction goes on even then, the boys being allowed to sleep only for short periods. But custom was too strong, and they had to rely on the Pygmy fathers to maintain order in the camp after dark and not allow the children to have too much sleep.

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[197] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
• 114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FW 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FW 4453, Music of the Ituri Forest

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481 484 and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their 186 slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484 evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, 224 he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and [115] he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131 Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484 what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [114] lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222 and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114] quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, 372 484 keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by 484 recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now 133 and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main [515] stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into [821] the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally 361 arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. 484 It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most 361 114

Sr Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1983 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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361 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of
• 114 what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

137 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountain-
132 ous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel so small and insignificant as the other animals running the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective.
137 Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mould was rich and cool and moist.
[132] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mush-room-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all
[361] but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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for a year took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Maisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond. 361 342 412 [123]

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds. 342 314 48 114 123 [321] [487]

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground 314 114 123 [412]

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and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had arrived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loko, Ekiangs's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekiangs and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's oldest son, Agerengs, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loko's. Old Sao had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the path that led off to the Lelo. Massamba was finishing the frame for her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fan over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula*, had tried to fight its way through Moke's net.

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekiangs with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back.

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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The World of the Village

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I FOUND THE FIRST WEEK back in the village difficult and depressing. During the day the air was hot and dry, and filled with fine particles of dust. At night, when it was cooler, gnats and mosquitoes made me appreciate all the more their absence in the forest. My hut, ten times the size of my home in the hunting camp, seemed close and stuffy, and as I lay in bed I could hear the huge spiders, some several inches across, crawling about in the leaves of the roof. Occasionally one dropped onto the bed with a dull thud and lay there for a while before stalking away. At first I carried out an active campaign to get rid of them, but it was useless—and a mosquito net would have been unbearably hot.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE VILLAGE

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unmoving triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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any culture of their own. If the facts were what they seem to be these observations might hold water, but the real facts are very different.

During my visit to Epulu in 1954, I had the good fortune to stumble quite accidentally upon fresh information, which almost completely reverses the picture. At that time I was present at an nkumbi, which I have already mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, but which merits more detailed description.

There years had then elapsed since the previous nkumbi, in 1951, and it was time for another. The purpose of the ceremony is not only to fit village boys for adult life, making them full members of the tribe, but also to ensure the continuity between the past, present and future life of the tribe; between the living and the dead. To the villagers the dead, the ancestors, are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so; and only those who are initiated will join the ancestors when they die. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. The dead are, in fact, living—but in another world. Regular initiations are essential to ensure the continued growth of that far-off tribe of ancestors. I have even seen a young boy who had been due to enter the nkumbi but who died just before it took place, circumcised and accorded full initiation rites before burial, just as though he were alive. In this way he was able to go to join his fathers.

In 1954 there was a unique situation. There was only one village boy of the right age for initiation (usually between the ages of eight and twelve in this area), and his father was a Christian who refused to allow the boy to participate. Every pressure was brought on the family, but to no avail. There were eight Pygmy boys of suitable age, and normally there would have been at least as many villagers. They would all have been initiated together but in such a way as to make clear the inferior status of the Pygmies. One of the initial acts is the circumcision of the boys, and a Pygmy boy is sent first "to clean the knife."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

13

Forest Horizons

TOWARD THE END of my stay at Epulu I felt that it was time to get away to other parts of the forest. I had been with the one hunting group for a year, moving about the forest with them, coming in on their trips to the village, returning with them to their hunting camps. It had been a full year, and the privilege of sharing the life of this group had begun to tell. Living so closely it was impossible not to begin to see the world as they saw it; sharing their pleasures and sorrows made it impossible not to feel as they did; and just being with a people so filled with the love of the forest made it impossible not to love as they did. The more I wanted to stay with them, and them alone, the more I knew it was time to move. 114

Jr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

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114 I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and setting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

P [122]

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Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakou. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakou, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

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522 Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of
523 Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in
P 115 his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend,
123 and with great splendor the powerful old man called for another chair to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and

P [198] still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

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Mbuti

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kawiki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been extremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabuda villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He explained to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face peking out from behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, movie-makers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

N Tumbell B-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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and most beautiful voice of what a terrible experience we had been through the night before. Meanwhile, I found myself in the company of the kindest, wisest, and most sincere person I had met in this part of Africa.

After he had seen that I did justice to an enormous breakfast he took me down to look at the new church he was building. Moslems and pagans worked side by side with Christians, breaking rocks on the mountainside, carrying them to the site, squaring them and heaving them into place. All this help was voluntary; Father Longo paid the workers whenever he was able, which was all that was expected. It was done willingly because over the years the people of the surrounding villages had come to know Father Longo for the man he was. He was not concerned simply with adding a lot of names to his roll of converts but primarily with living a life that would be an example that others would want to follow. He made everyone equally welcome at his mission, regardless of religion. Some months later, when the new church was finished, it was consecrated at a service made all the more beautiful by dozens of his Pygmy friends, who came in from the forest carrying gifts of forest fruits and flowers and danced their pagan way up the aisle. They were filled with as much joy and devotion as Father Longo himself.

P 114 C 194 69

We came to know the Pygmies in the neighborhood of Ndoye well, but in spite of our initial setback with Chief Lopao we still wanted to make some contact with the BaLese. Father Longo suggested that we try the other powerful Lese chief, Nakubai, whose village was a number of miles to the north. We followed his advice, and Nakubai did everything he could to reverse our opinion of his people. He was not only hospitable, but he understood when I said that we wanted to visit his Pygmies without the restraint of having a villager along with us. Whereas Kachai and others had insisted on keeping us under constant surveillance, Nakubai even said that we would probably see far more if we went on our own. As a result we

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had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

491 middle to get a better view of the way the supporting lianas were fastened, he urged me on, saying that it was not natural to be standing there in the middle of the air over a dangerous river.

• 114 On the far side we came to a camp, and there we found some relatives of the Epulu Pygmies, including one girl who was well known to us both—Makubasi's first wife.

797 We stayed there for the night and then moved on up a trail that 197 led to the Protestant mission of Bisiku. This was headed by an American missionary, the Reverend Charles Bell, and his wife. They had been in the Ituri for about as long as Father Longo and Pat Putnam had. As soon as they heard that we were staying in the camp down by the river they made arrangements for us to stay at the mission, and without knowing that we were on our way Mr. Bell set out on foot to issue the invitation in person. I had a special reason for accepting it; I wanted Kenge to have a fair notion of the way different missions operated. I certainly had no desire to see him converted, but having given him a taste of missions it seemed fair that he should have an all-round picture, and earlier during our trip we had had an unfortunate experience with a different Protestant mission.

At that mission prayers were said in public about five times a day, mention always being made of any converts who might be ill, however slightly. Prayers were also made requesting the Almighty to provide a road into the forest so that the mission could have easier access to the Pygmies, and thanks were offered for a new automobile that had been acquired. All this was perfectly understandable to the villagers, with their own tradition of witchcraft. They merely thought this a particularly powerful form of magic. Kenge was skeptical. "How is their god going to put a road into the forest when the white man can't do it?" he asked.

But one day, while we were there, a wounded Pygmy was brought in. He had been gored while hunting and was groaning with pain.

Tunbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Effect

be very glad if I came to their camp; I would find it less noisy than Ekiango's.

I asked Kenge what he wanted to do, and without hesitation he said he was going to follow Masisi. Maipe was his half-brother, and a very good friend of his, but his main reason, he said, was that he was tired of noise. He knew that Masisi's camp would be a quiet one, with lots and lots of singing and dancing. To the Pygmy, noise is synonymous with trouble, with dispute and discontent; music is never referred to as noise, but rather as "rejoicing." I felt that Kenge was right, and we decided to follow the next day.

It was, I knew, to be my last trek into the forest with the people I had come to think of as such close friends, and even though I still had another two months to spend with them I was sad. It was partly because of this, and partly because, like Kenge, I was so profoundly content to be back in our own part of the forest, that I found the forest more beautiful than it had ever been. Kenge said it was just because it was the honey season, but as we passed the plantation and entered once more into the shade of the great friendly old trees, he added, "This is the *real* world . . . this is a good world, our forest."

We walked slowly, enjoying every minute. We passed through the plantation that Njobo and Masisi had begun to cultivate more than a year and a half earlier, and found it a ruin, happily abandoned for more worthwhile things. We skirted Apa Mubeko because Kenge said Cephu had camped there recently and it would be full of jiggers. In the deserted remains of Apa Kadiketu we stopped for a rest, sitting on a log that had once resounded to the hammering of ivory bark-cloth beaters. I thought of the great molimo songs that had been sung there, and wondered if I would hear them again before I left. Beyond Apa Kadiketu we followed the path to Apa Lelo, almost to the spot where I had once seen a leopard crouching up in the trees above me. There we turned west, following an animal trail that was narrow and tangled. It led through hilly country completely new to

Tunbull 8-5 (1951-1956) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
8 Mbuti

me and finally brought us down to a swampy region, dark and dark. 114
A stream flowed through the middle, fed by innumerable tiny rivulets from the hills all around. We picked our way across, balancing on fallen tree trunks and jumping from log to log. As we began to climb a steep hill on the far side I heard the telltale sound of bark cloth being pounded into shape, the cheerful chatting of women as they called to each other while they finished the building of their huts, and an occasional outburst of song, sung for no other reason than that this was the honey season, the season to be happy, the season to rejoice. Kenge gave a loud whoop of pleasure and darted [152]
among the trees like a young antelope, leaping and bounding out of sight. When I reached the clearing he was slowly sitting down, his face buried in a sticky mongongo leaf dripping with rich brown honey. He looked up and laughed.

The camp was called Apa Tounghe, the *tounghe* being a special 36
kind of honey tree. It was built halfway up a fairly high hill, on a [152]
patch of ground that was not quite level. Mosisi's house was at the highest point of the tiny clearing, with Aotelinda to one side and Maipe's mother to the other. Mosambo had built a house that virtually joined onto that of Mosisi. Mine was halfway up the slope on the other side, facing across to Maipe. It was all ready when we arrived, the only one completely finished. Mosisi proudly led me to it and inspected it with me. He had built the bed himself, carefully [352]
refraining from turning the ends of the branches up sharply as Pygmies seem to think should be done, so that the bed becomes the shape of a hammock without any of its back-saving resilience.

It was not thirty feet from one side of the camp to the other, and 000
the forest closed in a protective wall all around us. Kenge and I set off to see what the surrounding country was like, and soon we were far beyond the sounds of any voices other than our own. Everywhere we went we saw mushrooms and nuts and berries, and we collected

of me. Mutsi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Mutsi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekiango was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apu Kadikotu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Mutsi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from the highest branches, and on these the youths practised their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. As that they all gathered 532
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, ensconced to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew 534
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Musisi and Cephu made their appearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten. 521

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

• 114 or chirp of a cricket tells you that the forest is alive with some presence.

As I splashed my way through the last stream and climbed to the top of the rise above Apa Lelo, the sounds of the forest grew louder. This was a friendly sign, but somehow it made me feel even more lonely. Then I came down into the old camp. The huts were rotted and collapsed, the clearing overgrown. As I roamed about, tracing where huts had been and remembering who had lived there, kicking idly with my feet in the hopes of finding some familiar object, it all began to live again. I wandered down to the Lelo, as calm and placid and beautiful as ever, and I thought of the molimo. As I looked into the waters where the trumpet had once been hidden, it was as if I heard its voice in the distance, gentle but insistent.

181 When I had bade my farewell to that very special river and returned to the camp, I saw it as it really was in the timelessness of the forest world—the huts strong and green, the fires burning brightly, and the air heavy with the scent of cooking. Lizabeti was running about with the other children, swinging happily on her crutches. The men helped one another to examine and repair their nets, while the women cooked and gossiped. Maini was shouting at someone, and Manyalibo was trying to pacify him in his usual gruff, good-natured way. Old Moke sat back in his chair and puffed at his pipe, gazing up at the tree tops so very high above. I heard him murmur once more, "You will see things you have never seen before. . . . You [172] will understand why we are called People of the Forest. . . . When the Forest dies, we shall die." And for the last time I heard the chorus of that great song of praise: "If Darkness *is*, Darkness is Good."

000 The camp and the people disappeared, leaving only a shimmering haze over Apa Lelo, but the song remained, for the song is the soul of the people and the soul of the forest. The molimo trumpet, now

% Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

About the Author

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He has made three field trips to Africa, the last of which was

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Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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114 *spent mainly in the then Belgian Congo, from 1957 to 1958.*

Mr. Turnbull is now on the staff of the Department of Anthropology of the American Museum of Natural History, in charge of African Ethnology. He is also a Fellow of the British Royal Anthropological Institute and a Corresponding Member of Le Musée Royale d'Afrique Centrale.

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4: Putnam E-5 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 114 • Putnam has been living with the people of whom he spoke for nearly two decades. He dictated to me a somewhat longer story of pygmy life, which I have condensed to be present compass. He went over the copy carefully and made corrections. He is not satisfied with it, and has gone back to learn more. Meanwhile he is willing to let you read what follows. This material has never before been published.

[28]

[P. 322-D]

In Turnbull 8-6 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

One of them, a youth called Kenge, had even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.

Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, showing it to me with infinite pride.

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

Tuttle E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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to raid the Negro plantations myself, and to cut the huge banana leaves on which we used to sleep every night. On such occasions Kenge would return late, when he thought I was asleep, lie down beside me, and very soon begin to work the blanket off my back until he was comfortably covered. If I objected, he merely muttered something that I couldn't understand but that brought tinkles of laughter from all the other Pygmies lying around the fire.

When I told him he was fired, he took it as permission to take two or three days' holiday. Then one morning I would wake up to find a neatly dressed and unrepentant Kenge squatting over a smoky fire concocting an especially elaborate breakfast for the two of us. In the middle of eating breakfast, without asking me if I had had enough, he would often take the dish and pass it with a grand air to the other unmarried youths sitting hungrily around. If I protested he would simply tell me that I had eaten enough. If I said that I couldn't afford to feed all the bachelors in the camp, he would ask me how much my Leica camera had cost. Since it cost me four hundred dollars, and for four hundred dollars I could live in the Congo for four hundred weeks, there was no effective answer. Kenge knew it, and besides, he was on his own territory. I was a mere intruder.

So when I heard that Kenge had become chief bugler for the Animal Station I was both relieved and sad. I knew I had been saved a lot of headaches, but Kenge was worth them all, and more. I began to look around for someone else who could take his place. Then one morning, just a few days after I had arrived, I woke up, and there he was, a well-groomed Pygmy in buttonless shorts and shirt, a cup of coffee balanced expertly in one hand. I asked him about his bugling, and he said he was tired of having to get up so early every morning, and anyway it hurt his lips. He announced that he was going to work for me again. I told him I could not afford to pay him much, as I wanted to stay a long time and had to make my money last. Kenge looked at me in the frank, open-eyed way of the real

St Turnbull B-S (1951-1960) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me mostly as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[45] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[93] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the mission, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *Bali'pata*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[55] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[77] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

St Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naive Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekiongo. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest.

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's

group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife, from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

Since I had been with them before, the group had changed slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the round and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the store and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tangwa said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Mazyaldo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

N Tambaoli B-5 (1951-1956) 1952 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamaikan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could foist for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, throwing an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach, gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro plantations at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481
and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their 484
slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest 182
as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484
evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, 484
he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and [115]
he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadikeru—the Camp of 131
Kadikeru. Nobody was sure who or what Kadikeru was, but that was 484
what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [114]
lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadikeru was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222
and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114]
quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

9. Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.
[P.72-E]

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
518 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 534 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534
for old men to talk about these things. 123 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322]
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411]
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157]
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

115 But, most important, he[1] told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We
[533] wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[1] [i.e. Moke - analyst]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 114 I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and set-
P [122] ting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the
P [186] occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakoa. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakoa, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

C Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of
622 Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had
563 met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in
P 115 his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend,
123 and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and
P [439] still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

What shall I say when the administrator comes and finds the cotton is not ready?"

I suggested that he could send one of his sons into the forest after the Pygmies, guessing what the answer would be, if Pygmies here were like Pygmies at Epulu. And sure enough Kachui shook his head and said he had sent three sons after his Pygmies, but each time when they reached the hunting camp it was deserted, and nobody seemed to know where they had gone. Kenge shook his head and I was afraid he was going to laugh. But he merely said what a terrible way that was to behave, and that everyone knew that Pygmies should always do what their master told them. This surprised Kachui, and he warmed to his theme, telling of all the ways in which he was constantly being tricked and cheated and robbed by the Ba-Mbuti. Kenge continued to look disapproving, clucking his tongue and nodding in agreement whenever Kachui said he would be justified in putting every last Pygmy in jail—when he could find them.

But Kenge proved to be more than diplomatic. In turn he began questioning Kachui and showed that over the past year he had come to know just the kinds of topics I liked to hear discussed. The fact that he raised the subjects dispelled all suspicions that Kachui might have had, and he even told us the exact whereabouts of such Pygmies as he knew he could find for us, most of whom were tending his illegal plantations. He offered to call them in if we wanted to question them, but we said no, we would rather go and visit them. After some hesitation Kachui agreed, and made arrangements for us to leave the next morning. He installed us in his official guest house and sent over one of his sons with gifts of food. He also sent over two of his daughters, and I was tempted to find out whether they were both intended for me, or whether one was for Kenge. But I merely gave them a small gift apiece and said we were tired and were going to sleep. Kenge was thoroughly disgusted and assured me that they did not have leprosy. I had a hard time trying to convince him that

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Congo-Kinshasa FO1

this was not the point, and he finally just rolled over in his blanket, muttering that sometimes he thought Europeans were as crazy as villagers.

For the next few days we visited Kachui's plantations and talked with such Pygmies as we found there. But it was impossible to shake off the chief's sons, who stuck to us like leeches. As a result I could get no response at all; everything that the Pygmies said was said to impress the villagers. The only useful information was obtained by Kenge, who got into the habit of slipping away while I was "holding court," as he called it, and talking to his fellow Pygmies well out of earshot.

One thing was plain, however, and that was that no matter how powerful Kachui was—and it was certainly within his power to have any Pygmies put in jail and flogged—he was no match for the people of the forest. Kenge learned that the main group had been away for over six months and had no intention of returning yet. They were a long way off and came close to the village only when they wanted to raid the plantations. Even while we were there Kachui's sons tried to find out where the rest of the Pygmies were, but everyone protested complete ignorance.

A few days at Bafwakoa were more than enough. With Kachui lying in wait the Pygmies were not likely to tell us where their companions were, and even if they did Kachui was not likely to let us out of sight. He became un-co-operative when I asked to look at the tribunal records, for which I had official permission. He was forced into admitting that he did not consider the Pygmies real people, and therefore they had no right to have cases tried in the tribunal. He said that any complaints by the villagers against Pygmies were heard by him; he judged them himself and no records were kept. He made it quite plain that the judgment always went in favor of the villager. Kenge then disgraced himself by asking what happened if a Pygmy brought a complaint against a villager. Kachui

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Mbuti

THE MBUTI PYGMIES: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC SURVEY

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INTRODUCTION

[P.145-A]

114 THE PRESENT SURVEY was originally written as
12 a thesis for the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford University and submitted in 1956 for the degree of Bachelor of Letters (B. Litt.). It is difficult, having just completed for publication a monograph based on my own field work, to undertake the publication of a thesis written in student days, dealing with the same area but based on the work of others. It inevitably leads to self-conflict, for the new self does not always agree with the old. Further, the survey does not claim to be comprehensive. It is presented, however, as a first step in the gathering together of the earlier literature that can be best relied upon for information concerning the social structure of the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo. It has two major objectives.

121 One, and the most important, is to set down
127 in English a straightforward description of such ethnographic facts as are known about the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, based on the published and unpublished material available up to 1956, with the addition of a few references up to 1960. For the Putnam material I am most indebted to Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who made available all the notes left by her late husband, Patrick Tracy Lowell Putnam.

121 The other objective is an evaluation of the selected material, a consideration of the problems it raises, and an attempt to resolve some of the more evident contradictions.

114 12 Further reasons for publication of this survey, despite subsequent intensive field research, are, first, that my later field work (1957–1958) was concentrated primarily on making a detailed study of a single hunting band, so there is still no general structural study of the Ituri Pygmies. Also, the results of my more recent study will be better understood in the light of this survey, from which it drew its inspiration.

114 Second, despite the extreme importance of the Mbuti, one of the few remaining hunting and gathering peoples in the world, virtually all the published scientific material is in German, Dutch, or French, with the exception of Schebesta's three early travel books: "Among Congo Pygmies" (1933), "My Pygmy and Negro Hosts" (1936a), and "Revisiting my Pygmy Hosts" (1937). The only original work in English dealing with the Mbuti, up to 1961 in fact,

[P. 145-B]

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was Patrick Putnam's article in "Reader in Anthropology" (1948). For the reader of English, then, some guidance is necessary.

Third, the bulk of the available material is unsatisfactory and requires careful sifting if proper use is to be made of it. Fuller details are given in the section on Source Material (p. 149). Such a preliminary sifting has been attempted in this survey, drawing on my own limited field experience of 1951 and 1954.

Fourth, Schebesta's work in particular, our main source, is, for methodological reasons given in the course of the survey, unsatisfactory for certain types of analysis. This is an evaluation rather than a criticism, for Schebesta's objectives were definite and different from those of contemporary social anthropologists, and he presented his material accordingly. In his presentations it is sometimes difficult to be sure exactly which group of Mbuti he is discussing because he regards them all as a single cultural, sociological entity.[1] This does not by any means totally negate the value of his work, which should be consulted by any student of the area, but certain cautions are essential.

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tain cautions are essential. In the present survey I have tried to make Schebesta's material more useful for analytical purposes by culling such information as can be taken specifically to refer to one or another *particular* group of Mbuti. The bulk of such pinpointed information in Schebesta's writings refers to the Efe archers of the southeastern Ituri. This group can then be contrasted with the other major group, the Sua net hunters, for which we have additional sources. 114 128

The result is inevitably somewhat disjointed and full of lamentable gaps. There is also the tiresome necessity of continually specifying "according to Schebesta, . . ." "Schebesta says, . . ." "in Schebesta's account, . . ." and I

[1] Such an approach is at least better than that of Gusinde, whom we must abandon altogether as a possible ethnographic source because he (1955, 12) holds that all African Pygmies and Pygmoids from the Gabon to Rwanda, and whom he groups together under the single unfortunate term "Twides," *are essentially the same in their mode of living and cultural organization.* It is difficult to see much similarity, I find, between his "Twides" in the Great Lakes region, whom he describes as sedentary grassland potters, and his Ituri "Twides" who are nomadic forest hunters and gatherers.

[P. 145-D]

[P.146-A]

114 must confess to leaving out such references
128 wherever it seemed plain that the whole passage referred to that one authority. The impression of inadequacy is heightened by the fact that almost the entire bulk of the material available is general and descriptive rather than specific and analytical. In trying to sift that which falls properly into the latter category, then, we necessarily must abandon the continuity and sense that existed in the original works. It is therefore not to be expected that the present survey will in any way offer a coherent ethnography of the Mbuti.

121 Fifth, in the course of the survey (pp. 194–
114 241) I make similar use of the unpublished notes
[127] of Patrick and Anne Putnam and expand their account of the net hunters with a limited amount of material from my own field notes dating from 1951 and 1954–1955. My own interest during those two first visits to the Ituri were other than strictly anthropological but concerned certain aspects of social organization. As I was working in the same area as the Putnams, the material is valid and useful for the rounding out of their observations. In

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this way the survey points up the major differences and similarities between the two Mbuti groups (the archers and the net hunters) and opens the way both for more intensive limited studies and for comparative work.

Sixth and last, a survey such as this seems necessary in order to clear the ground of the confusion of contradictions and uncertainties in our present sources. The diversity of opinion, in itself important, proved to be of the utmost significance for my own later field work. Although it is somewhat begging the question, it might be said that only by accepting the contradictions as fact, then seeking a structural means of resolving those contradictions, can we begin to approach the truth of the situation. The survey, in this way, may be taken to point the direction in which further field work is needed. This is as true now, since my own field trip of 1957–1958, as it was then. That trip, concerned mainly with a localized band of net hunters, confirmed much of the general thesis of the present survey concerning the differences between archers and net hunters. However, detailed studies of other bands, both archer and net hunter, are vitally needed if we are to arrive at an understanding of the nature of Mbuti society as a whole and of its relationship with villager society.

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[P.146-C]

The latter problem, that of the relationship 121
between the two neighboring peoples, is of the greatest importance and has been subject to the greatest misunderstanding. It should be emphasized that the opinions cited here, including my own, are opinions and are to be accepted only as such. It should also be realized that the situation is by no means static. Not only has the 121
relationship between the Mbuti and the vil- 178
lagers been changing even during the years since I have known them, but so, in all probability, has the internal structure of Mbuti society. It is quite possible that such change has long been a characteristic of the area, and it is almost certain that the Mbuti-villager relationship has never been static, which may account for some of the diversity of opinion, and a general historical perspective undoubtedly helps us to evaluate the rather sketchy material at our disposal.

We have, for instance, a steady regression in 114
factual knowledge of the area from the time of our earliest Egyptian sources right up to the beginning of the present century, at the turn of which our ignorance of the African Pygmies was just about complete, even to disbelief in their

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very existence. It is not surprising that the reports of the late nineteenth-century explorers in central Africa should have excited the imagination of sociologists, and particularly of Schmidt (1910). The material available to him was most unsatisfactory. It dwelt mainly on the bizarre, stressed the physical appearance of the Pygmies, the peculiarities of their mode of life, and generally exaggerated normalities into abnormalities with lively imagination. Schmidt was well aware of all this but was nonetheless fascinated by the obvious differences between these people and their taller villager neighbors. His work, and that of his followers, including Schebesta, are colored by this initial interest. 114

There was a belief that the distinct physical appearance of the Pgymies connoted not only separateness from other races but also unity amongst themselves and anteriority; that is, that the Pygmy races of the world were basically one, anterior to, and "purer" than other races. Here, then, it was thought, one should look for the roots of man's religious belief; this is the second major supposition that determines the nature and format of the work of this school. If we bear this in mind, the work of Schebesta, who was responsible for the first and only complete over-all field survey of the area, is more un-

[P. 146-D]

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[p.147-A]

114 derstandable, more valuable, and more usable.

121 An examination of all the available source material indicates very clearly the necessity for immediately establishing a limited study of well-defined groups, uninfluenced by any theoretical preoccupations with questions of sociological unity, anteriority, or origin. The term "Pygmy" leads far too easily to meaningless generalization. It may well prove that even the [101] term "Mbuti," by which is understood the Pygmy population of the Ituri Forest, is too broad. The breakdown in this survey between the different economic groups of Mbuti is only a tentative investigation to discover significant similarities and differences.

114 In view of the existence of Schebesta's (1938, 128 1941, 1948, 1950) major work, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," with its special reference to archers, and my own field work and recent and forthcoming publications on the net hunters, the survey here has been kept to reasonable dimensions and does not pretend to give a complete picture. The accounts of Schebesta and Putnam are presented with as little speculation as possible. It will be readily seen that there is insufficient information, almost throughout, for any effective analysis to be made. But certain problems arise, and in the conclusions some attempt is made to outline these further, particularly the nature of the Pygmy-villager relationship.

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121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among them much longer. For some thousands of years 177 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside 175 influence. In historic times various village tribes [174] invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering 177 economy. What emerges from a study of this
182 [P.147 B]

[P.147-C]

particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 182

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tic or racial differential. It might be well to define how certain other terms are used.

CAMP: This term distinguishes the settlement of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There may be hunting camps, those situated in the forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

BAND: This refers to the total Mbuti hunting population, regardless of kinship, that recognizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. The band may occupy a single camp or split into several camps within the same territory.

VILLAGE: The settlement of the Bantu and Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the forest. Such a village is likely to have a much more clear-cut kinship composition and political identity than an Mbuti band.

VILLAGER: This term, unless otherwise stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cultivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the basis of the relationship is the fact that these tribes are village cultivators and not forest hunters.

LINEAGE: We adhere to the definition and usage suggested in "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" (1954, 88–89). The definition is given as follows: "A lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person through a determinate number of generations."

CLAN: Similarly, we use this term as suggested in "Notes and Queries" (1954, 89–90) whereby clan members may trace their unilineal relationship through one line or the other, i.e., we do not use it in the sense of a matriclan as opposed to a gens. Further, we here regard the lineage as a subdivision of the clan, lineage members being able to trace their membership to a known ancestor. A number of such lineages hold themselves to be related by the common descent of the lineage ancestors from a remote, possibly fictional or totemic ancestor.

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original sur-

[P. 148-A]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P Z 101 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P Z 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

SOURCE MATERIAL

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

114 175 177 ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING THINGS about a survey of ancient and early sources concerning the African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from the time these people first entered the recorded scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge of them decreased steadily until the late nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact. They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta, 1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth [101] Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of representatives of conquered nations, among which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the northernmost Pygmies are still known today. Yet, until the turn of the present century, the modern Western world believed the Pygmy to be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing Pygmies along the Nile.

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Herodotus (1866, vol. 2, sect. 32) in the fifth century B.C. reports an expedition of Nasamonians to discover the source of the Nile. They cross a vast desert and, while resting at an oasis, are captured by diminutive men, "under the middle height."

Homer (1864, vol. 3, 3–7) introduces an element of myth when he talks of fighting between the cranes and the "Pygmaean race" to the south, but Aristotle (1910, vol. 8, sect. 2) sees fit, for some reason, to assert quite categorically that Pygmies do in fact live in the land "from which flows the Nile"; he adds that they live in caves.

An isolated reference in the sixth century comes from the Emperor Justinian's ambassador who, on his way to Ethiopia, on an island off the east African coast, came across a tribe of Pygmies speaking an unknown language (unknown even to local inhabitants). That is about the last reference to Pygmies as human beings for some 10 centuries. In the fourteenth century the cartographer who drew up the Hereford Mappa Mundi still placed the Pygmies near the

[P 149-B]

[P.149-C]

source of the Nile, although in his secondary role as theologian he depicted them as monsters, with their faces in their breasts or their heads below their shoulders. He labels them as troglodytes. 114 175 177

Battel (1625, vol. 2, 983) refers to the existence of a nation of dwarfs and places them in the land of the Yobbi, north of the Sette River. He calls them "Dongo," and it is in this area where Du Chaillu (1867, 1890) discovered the "Obongo" Pygmies in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other seventeenth-century reports by Portuguese explorers describe what seem to be relatively pure Pygmy races who apparently brought ivory down to the west coast traders. Unfortunately, these explorers had vivid imaginations and interspersed their descriptions with most unlikely information, such as the power of these little people to become invisible, the only explanation they could

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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hnd for how the Pygmies could kill elephant. In this way belief in the existence of real Pygmy races in Africa was only further discredited; so much so that an anatomist named Tyson obtained a skeleton of one of these fabulous beings and, after careful examination, wrote a treatise (Tyson, 1699) showing that it was quite clear that "Pygmies" were, in fact, not human beings but apes. He had good grounds for this assertion, because the skeleton he examined, and which survived until recently at the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, England, was that of a chimpanzee. He rounds off his discourse in the following general terms: "The most diligent enquiries of late into all parts of the inhabited world could never discover any such puny diminutive race of mankind." His explanation of the "fables" was that travelers had mistaken apes for men (Windle, 1894).

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth there seems to have been a complete silence. Then follows a succession of explorers, travelers, administrators, and anthropologists who finally established the fact that Pygmies did exist and were, indeed, human. But that, and their approximate distribution, is about all they do tell us. Well into the twentieth century we get fanciful adventurers seriously observing

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 150-A]

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.
177 The material provided by these nineteenth-
century explorers is valuable, however, for an
114 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
175 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley
101 (1879, 1890), made little more than passing
reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually
called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally ac-
knowledged as being the first to establish be-
yond a doubt that there was indeed a race of
such people in central Africa and to give us some
real information about them, particularly con-
cerning the association of the Aka (northern-
most) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the
Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to
throw in some of the many "red herrings" that
have distracted even the most recent anthro-
pologists from a strictly scientific study of the
people, leading them into the speculative realms
of origin, connection between Pygmies and the
Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of origi-
nality of Pygmy culture.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 Others, such as Casati (1891), Le Roy (1897),
101 Burrows (1898), Johnston (1884, 1902, 1903,
175 1905, 1908), David (1904a, 1904b), Hutereau
181 (1924), Powell-Cotton (1907), and Czekanowski (1922), to mention only a very few, give further details that are of interest but cover such a wide area as to make it impossible to gather any but the most superficial notion of a generalized "African Pygmy." When these sources provide us with factual observations, the facts are often not untainted with imagination. When they go beyond facts, additional "red herrings" are cast up, such as the silent trade between Pygmies and villagers, the lawlessness of Pygmy society, the Pygmies' complete lack of religion, and their ferocity and cannibalism. To add fuel to the fire, equally imaginative interpretations show them as having reciprocal and open trade relationships with the villagers, as living an ordered life according to their "natural instincts" for law and order, as following a monotheistic mystical religion, and as living a gentle and peaceful existence. According to this material, the "Pygmies" do have their own language and they do not, their way of life is totally different from that of their villager neighbors and it is a direct copy of villager life, they live in the heart of the forest and they live on the edge of the villages. These are just some of the contradictions that make it

[P. 150-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.150-C]

impossible to form any single coherent picture. 114 101 181 175

When Schmidt wrote "Die Stellung der Pygmäen-völker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschen" in 1910, all these contradictions were his source material. Pygmies existed, but they still had tails and were flying about from treetop to treetop, or else they were crawling on their bellies like snakes to enter their diminutive houses. Quatrefages (1887) and Le Roy (1897) had, at the end of the nineteenth century, attempted to draw together what was known about Pygmies all over the world, but Schmidt's study is the first work of real importance. He confines himself mostly to the African Pygmies and Bushmen and pursues two lines of thought: first, the relationship of both to Asiatic Pygmies; and second, the place of the Pygmy, both racially and anthropologically, in the evolution of the human race. Was the Pygmy the original inhabitant of the equatorial forests of Africa, or was he a degeneration of present Bantu stock—a throwback? These "red herrings" are still being diligently pursued, while the Pygmies and their social structure have gone unstudied by any anthropologist except with reference to these problems.

with reference to these problems. The one contemporary work of any real note, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," is the result of research undertaken by Schebesta (1938, 1941, 1948, 1950), who was undoubtedly strongly influenced by the Schmidt school of thought, and was preoccupied with the problems of the origin and cultural unity of the Pygmies and of their racial and anthropological separateness from the villagers. 114 101

The problem of the relationship between the African and the Asian Pygmies, opened by Quatrefages in 1887, was followed up by Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), Nippold (1936, 1937), Gusinde (1942), and Schebesta (1938, 1952). The problem itself does not concern us here, except in so far as preoccupation with it in these sources affects our evaluation of them and explains their tendency to generalize in terms of "Pygmy" or "Bambuti" culture and society.

We must ask ourselves what use can be made of all this material in a serious study of the African Pygmies, particularly as there is such a dearth of reliable contemporary material. At first sight we seem to be in possession of an abundant supply of raw material, even if we limit ourselves to the Pygmies of central 114

[P. 150 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 151-A]

114 Africa. Until the early twentieth century there are some 30 sources that seem to contain reliable information concerning not only the Ituri Pygmies but those of equatorial Africa and the central Congo area. In each of these sources we are given information as to the alleged origin of these particular Pygmies, tribal groupings and distribution, migrations, and other data. We also get fairly full and reliable information as to economic activities, particularly various hunting techniques. Technology is moderately well dealt with; social and political life is presented in a series of categorical but conflicting assertions; and religious life is frequently mentioned, but usually in such vague terms that the information is useless.

From a consideration of the material as a whole, one thing emerges: while certain points of correspondence, mainly technological, can be found throughout, superficially evidencing some uniformity of culture, the contradictions of evidence found within any one area are far more striking. These contradictions are present in all fields—social, economic, political, and religious.

114 [101] If we were not dogged by this notion of the "Pygmies" as one people, supported by their undoubted racial homogeneity and territorial contiguity, we would certainly think we were dealing with a number of totally different social systems, if not different peoples.

The more unreliable and imaginative sources have already been rejected, and we must accept the remaining information as given, however much it contradicts itself. The only alternative is to reject this material *in toto*, and there is certainly no justification for so doing other than the convenience of avoiding the contradictions. It seems preferable to accept the contradictions without trying to unify the facts. That is to say, a thorough summary of these early sources indicates that we are by no means dealing with a single people, even within as limited an area as the Ituri Forest or, indeed, one section of it. This consideration has affected the format of the present work and its limitation to a specific section of the African Pygmies. Reference to facts to be found in the early sources are made only when it is certain that they apply to the particular Pygmies under discussion. This method seems to be the only valid way of utilizing the material. It reduces the bulk of ethnographic evidence considerably, as it is seldom made clear exactly which group of Pygmies is

114 101 128

[P 151- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[p. 151-C]

under discussion, and the material nowhere deals with any one specific group fully.

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Having spent some time examining a large body of literature, one is naturally loath to make so little use of it, but this demonstration of the need for detached localized studies rather than generalized studies concerned with or dominated by the notion of racial and cultural unity is in itself no small contribution. The extent to which one must localize sociological studies among the Ituri is as yet unknown, but some indication will appear in the following work.

It might be added that Schebesta, who made an exhaustive study of these same sources, also found himself unable to make a great deal of use of them. He (1948, 295) criticizes Hutereau, whom he regards as being one of the most important sources, for generalizing from one group to another (though Hutereau was mainly concerned with the Aka). He regards the others as even less reliable, and most of his references to them are accompanied by cautions as to their trustworthiness.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

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Having decided, for the purpose of the present survey, to reject the historical sources for the most part, we must determine the extent to which the survey will be limited and then give a brief account and evaluation of the contemporary sources from which it will be drawn.

It must be emphasized that we are not attempting to summarize all available material on the "Pygmies" in general. Ethnography itself can have meaning only when we know to what people our facts belong and when the facts are sufficiently comprehensive to appear in a system of relationships. We see above, in the review of historical sources, that facts that would otherwise be of considerable value are useless to us because with few exceptions we cannot relate them to any one specific group of people. Further, the facts are so few and so isolated that we have no way of relating them to one another in any kind of system. When we come to contemporary sources we are not much better off. We must first decide not to include Pygmoids, 101
such as the Twa and Tswa, because of the very 128
obvious sociological differences and the feeling that we should make the present survey as detailed and as apposite as possible. Once we have limited ourselves to true Pygmies, we find we

[P. 151-D] TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 152-B]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.152-A]

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FIG. 1. Map showing extent of personal knowledge of Pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* or through personal contact made during the author's 1957–1958 field trip, not covering the central and southern Congo. Circles indicate accounts of Pygmy or Pygmoid hunting bands; crosses, actual contact.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have a concentrated body of Mbuti Pygmies in 101
the Ituri Forest and some apparently scattered 128
Pygmy groups farther west and through the forests of equatorial Africa (Figs. 1–2). Of the latter, unfortunately, too little is known for inclusion here.

For the Ituri Mbuti one of our main sources 101
is the four-volume work by Schebesta (1938, 114
[P.152-8] 127

[p. 153-A]
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PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965
L. Turnbull

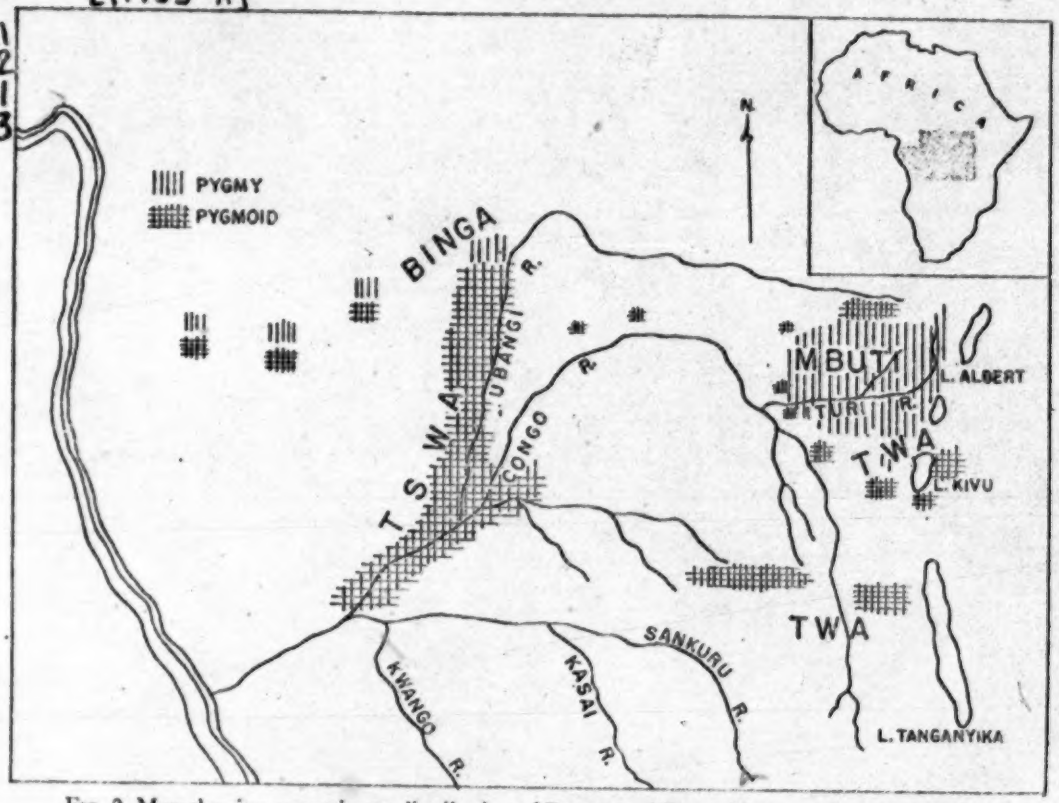

FIG. 2. Map showing approximate distribution of Pygmy and Pygmoid groups in central Africa.

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1941, 1948, 1950). Schebesta divides the Mbuti (whom he calls "Bambuti") into three major groups: Aka in the north, Sua in the south, and Efe in the east (Fig. 3). His first trip to the Ituri was spent in an over-all coverage of the forest, during which he culled facts from all these groups but necessarily at a superficial level. Realizing this and desiring to make a more profound study, he returned and concentrated on the Efe in the triangle bounded by the roads joining Mambasa, Irumu, and Beni (Fig. 3). The bulk of his work concerns these Efe, who hunt primarily with bow and arrows, and as it is the only group of which he has detailed knowledge it is the only group that we present from his work with any degree of fullness. His references to the Kango in the west, the Aka, and the Sua, are too few to form a systematic account of these societies as such, and, as already mentioned, we see little value in isolated, unsystematic ethnographic data.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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There is, however, another source on the 114
Ituri Pygmies (mostly unpublished) in the 127
form of the field notes of an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam, who first went to the Ituri in 1928 and was resident there until his death at the end of 1953. His material is con- [101]
cerned with the Sua who, unlike the Efe, are net hunters. With this material are also the notes of his widow, Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who lived in the Ituri for more than eight years, until 1954; and, finally, my own field notes covering my first two visits to the same area (Epulu District) in 1951 and 1954. I combine 127
this material as a single source, indicating its 128
exact origin in the text, partly because, in the main, it covers one definite area, and even one definite hunting band, and partly because both Anne Putnam and myself benefited by the immense knowledge of Patrick Putnam, without necessarily being in complete agreement.

Apart from these two main sources, and a 127
[P.153-C]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

[P.154-A]

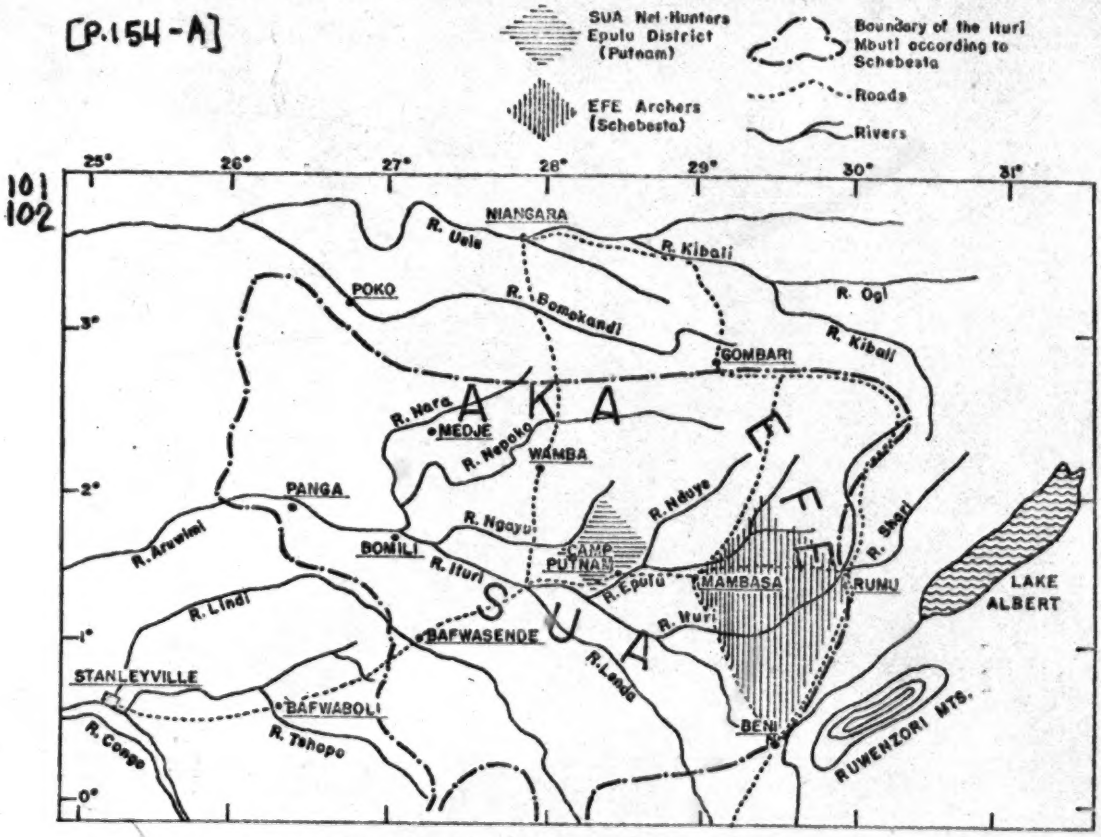

FIG. 3. Map showing distribution of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, Oriental Province, the Congo.

127 number of articles published in various anthropological journals, there is nothing that we can draw upon for the present work. We have, then,
101 two distinct groups—Schebesta's Efe Mbuti and Putnam's Epulu (Sua) Mbuti, archers and net hunters, respectively.

101 A word should be said about classification.
197 Schebesta's division of the Ituri Mbuti into Aka, Efe, and Sua is a linguistic classification and, at that, a division not according to Mbuti languages but to the villager linguistic groups—Mangbetu, Lese, and Bira, respectively. It thus corresponds to tribal groupings of villagers and does not seem to be particularly significant for the purposes of sociological analysis. (Schebesta is more concerned with problems of racial and cultural purity, and believes the Efe language to be of Pygmy origin; consequently, he considered the Efe Pygmies to be racially and cul-
turally the purest.

[P. 154-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 197
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.155-A]

127 related to either of these economic groups of
128 Mbuti—archers or net hunters. When sources cannot be related to our detailed study of these two types, we omit them, unless there is some special reason for their inclusion.

128 Now, before the survey itself, it is necessary
114 to evaluate briefly our two main sources, as certain deficiencies in each should be understood. The more properly critical section follows the survey; here such criticism as is presented is offered so that we can estimate the true nature and value of the facts presented by each source.

Schebesta

114 Schebesta, as a follower of Schmidt, is concerned with the over-all problem of "the pygmy races of the world" and their interrelationship. He began his study among the Semang Negritos in 1924. Then in 1929 he undertook the first of three trips to Africa on which he based his work "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri." The first trip, lasting a year and a half, was spent traveling through the Ituri "*sur des pistes caravanières . . . dans toutes les directions*" (Schebesta, 1952, 16) in order to get an all-over picture of all the Mbuti and to "*établir leur unité de race et de structure sociale*" (Schebesta,

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 1952, 16). This admission, I think, is sufficient to indicate one of Schebesta's weaknesses, his obsession with this notion of cultural unity. To set out to establish a unity of social structure among a virtually unknown people scattered through thousands of square miles of forest is hardly commendable as scientific procedure. It [101] results, as one might expect, in his loose usage throughout his works of the terms "Bambuti" and "Pygmy," thus always implying that there are no significant differences between the Mbuti of one part of the forest and those of another, or between Mbuti who utilize one form of hunt and those who follow another. Further, Schebesta is constantly concerned with differentiating the Pygmies from the villagers. He looks for original traits in Pygmy culture that will evidence their separateness from the villager as well as their unity among themselves. (Any similarities he then ascribes to assimilation.) Nowhere do we find Schebesta interested in a society as such; it must be related to his own problems of cultural unity and distinctness of race. He himself (1947, 181, footnote 1) writes, "The object of my explorations was to

[P. 155-B]

[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into 114
three linguistic groups is another result of his 197
preoccupation with the problem of the sepa- 101
rateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture 114
is the purest, being least affected by contact 177
with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it [194]
must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

1. [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

But there is a further and even more important criticism to be made of Schebesta's work, especially his field-work technique. His first trip was avowedly to make an all-over survey and to map the delimitations of Pygmy territory in the Ituri. He can then be excused the superficiality of his observations on social structure as published (Schebesta, 1933) in an English version and a German edition (Schebesta, 1932). He himself recognized the need for a more detailed and localized study, and his second trip, in 1934, was undertaken with this object in view. In his account of this trip (Schebesta, 1936b, 1937) in another work designed for the general public but nonetheless revealing, he tells quite plainly how he sets about making this study. The only way to get to know Pygmy life thoroughly, Schebesta (1937, 30) says is to live right in a Pygmy camp: " . . . the urgent problems to be solved forthwith, and as often as it was necessary to seek a new camp, were: a. Where would I find pygmies *in sufficient numbers;* b. Where would *I* find a suitable camping ground; c. What would I do to win the confidence of *my little hosts?* [italics mine]."

Evidently then the camps in which Sche-

[1] "*Relever ce qui est propre aux pygmées, tel fut le but de mes explorations.*"

[P. 155-D]

[P.156-A]

114besta worked are quite artificial, in that they grew up around him on a site of his own choosing. Further, he relies on neighboring villagers to send in "their" Pygmies to create "sufficient numbers." There is no certainty that the members of any of these camps even come from the same hunting band. He certainly gives us no comprehensive genealogies throughout his entire work, so we really have no idea of even the kind of kin groups he is dealing with. Further, while he moves about within a limited area, he combines all his material in such a way that, again, we lose sight of any particular society and find ourselves dealing only with an abstract model of "Efe" society.

One further criticism should be made of Schebesta's field-work technique, which considerably decreases its value from the point of view of the anthropologist. He not only establishes and works in the artificial camps already mentioned, but even within those camps he seems to have been unable to establish the kind of relationships needed for efficient anthropological documentation. This fact does not emerge in his academic writings but is evident throughout his writings for the more general

public. He interferes in matters of magico-religious importance with an insensitivity that is not likely to encourage confidence. To give a few examples from "Among Congo Pygmies" (Schebesta, 1933): He enters an old woman's hut, sees a charm lying concealed among the leaves, so seizes it and beats a retreat despite her protests. It is not surprising that "I barely managed to get out into the open with my spoil before all the women of the camp surrounded me with loud wails" (Schebesta, 1933, 77). Again he seems surprised that there should be some trouble because he went around the camp taking hair clippings (Schebesta, 1933, 229), and he quite proudly tells how he planned to rob a grave by building his hut over it (Schebesta, 1933, 222). It is hardly probable that this kind of attitude would have inspired the trust and confidence necessary to secure reliable information.

Schebesta also, not content with having a camp built to suit his convenience, is unwilling to let camp life go its normal (Pygmy) way. In "Revisiting my Pygmy Hosts" (Schebesta, 1937, 211–212), he is obliged to put an end to non-stop gambling by confiscating "not only the beans, but even arrows." He is also unable

[P. 156-C]

to allow quarrels to run their natural course: 114
When his night's rest is disturbed by matrimonial disagreements he "snatches up his gun" to restore peace and quiet (Schebesta, 1933, 96). Sometimes his methods are even cruder: a fight starts over a hen he had accepted without payment, though he intended to pay later. So Schebesta enters the dispute, and "my rattan cudgel crashed among the brown bodies" (Schebesta, 1933, 113). When a villager is reluctant to allow him to stay in his village, Schebesta calmly describes half-choking him with his bare hands (Schebesta, 1933, 118), and when there is trouble in one of his camps on yet another occasion, we find the most basic rules of good field work again being somewhat overlooked (Schebesta, 1933, 89): "At last I deemed it discreet to step forward in the interests of peace and come to his aid. My well meant advice was, however, utterly disregarded; in fact the women became more bloodthirsty and more voluble. At last I lost my temper and charged into the howling mob, knocking them in all directions. I even had to threaten to give one of the amazons a good hiding. This ended the squabble and a sullen silence fell upon the panting mob."

Finally, there is reason to suspect that some 114
of the facts presented with the certainty of an eyewitness account are actually the result either of only casual observation or even of information given by single informants. When dealing with totemism, Schebesta (1937, 143) states that Pygmies do not eat from a vessel that has touched their totem; he then reveals that this statement was based on information from a single informant, which even Schebesta himself thought to be unreliable. In "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri" (Schebesta, 1948, 475), when dealing with the *nkumbi* initiation, he admits: "*Ich habe persönlich nur Ausschnitte vom* Nkumbi *gesehen*"—that he has seen only parts of the *nkumbi* and those only among the Ngwana at Bafwasende, the Byeru, Bali, and the Forest Bira. "These fleeting glimpses ["*Diese nur flüchtigen Einblicke*"; Schebesta, 1948, 475], however, sufficed to confirm to me the information I had gathered from negroes and Bambuti."

Boelaert (1936a) makes the same criticism, as does Costermans (1938). Among others, Ivor Evans (1937, vi, 15, 16, 50, 153, 177) has similar criticisms of Schebesta's field work in Malaya.
[P. 156-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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114 All this amounts not to a criticism of Schebesta's work as such, but rather to an evaluation of it from the point of view of a social anthropologist. In his work, as in his presentation of the facts, Schebesta was motivated by quite other considerations than those of a social anthropologist, and accordingly we must use his material with care. His facts we can accept with some caution, bearing in mind the remarks just quoted. His theories we cannot accept at all, unless it is with the greatest reserve, in view of the motivation of his work and his admitted preconceived notions as to the racial and cultural autonomy of the Pygmies.

Putnam

We must also exercise caution with regard to the Putnam material. All that is published is an article dictated by Patrick Putnam to Carleton S. Coon, who published a condensed version of it (Patrick Putnam, 1948). I myself met Putnam during my first visit to the Congo in 1951.

114 He died just before my return visit in 1954, but later I had an opportunity of spending a summer working on all his personal papers. These, for the most part, consisted of manuscript notes written during his first years in the Ituri Forest, from 1928 onward. They cover northern and eastern stretches of the forest, as well as the central (Epulu) district which came to be his home. The notes were materially in bad condition, having been attacked by both damp and termites. Intrinsically their worth is not so great as might have been hoped, though there are valuable references to conversations with old Pygmies whose memories reached back another generation, giving some historical perspective. More valuable are his notes on the Mbuti relationship with villagers, and notes on these tribes themselves, particularly the Mamvu, Mboli, Bali, Rumbi, and Mangbetu.

Isolated notes and jottings concerning the particular hunting band in whose area Putnam made his permanent headquarters, near the junction of the Epulu and Nduye rivers, prove to be of particular value in giving some idea of the composition of this band over two decades, changes in leadership, and other matters. Also useful in this respect are medical notes which he kept of all the Pygmies he treated and on which he wrote down such kinship information as he could elicit.

Unfortunately, the bulk of Putnam's notes,

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 159-C]

with more detailed and systematic studies of the various hunting bands known to him, were lost when his canoe overturned. He would not be persuaded to write again but cooperated with his wife, Anne Putnam, and helped her to systematize her own observations during her eight years in the Epulu District. During his latter years he was crippled, and trained Anne Putnam to observe as an anthropologist. Some of these observations appear in a book compiled from her letters and some of her notes (Anne Putnam, 1954). Although Anne Putnam makes no claim to being an anthropologist, she became an acute and accurate observer and, under her husband's guidance, took some particularly valuable notes regarding the activities of the women's religious association, the initiation of Pygmy boys, marriage customs and ceremonies, and certain activities of the men's religious association. In addition she translated and wrote down some 200 legends as told to her by four members of the hunting group. Her notes also cover other aspects of the social, economic, and political life of this same band, but in less

detail. All her work has the indisputable advantage of being a factual record of personal observation of a single hunting band over a period of eight consecutive years. That she is not an anthropologist is to a great extent mitigated by the fact that her record confines itself to her observations, and by the training she received from her husband. Nonetheless this factor should be taken into consideration, particularly as her previous training was as an artist. This accounts in part for the detailed and accurate descriptions of what she saw, but it also accounts for her sometimes highly imaginative presentation of the facts. For instance, when she hears the *molimo* horn at night, she (1954, 84) writes: "Where the Esamba roamed, there went death. Its eerie, lowing voice was the voice of evil." In fact this, as well as being a statement of her own interpretation of the *molimo*, is also an accurate picture of the villager interpretation. It is also significant that she uses specifically village terms, such as "Esamba" (for the more correct *lusumba* or *esumba*). Living as she did among the villagers as well as among the Pygmies, Mrs. Putnam was influenced by many of their notions and not infrequently used the villagers as informants, though she always states when the latter is the case. We must then assume that

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[P. 157-D]

[P.158-A]
114 some of the "facts" she observes, she presents much as the local villagers would.

114 With regard to my own early material, which
128 I add to our sources on the Epulu net hunters, I must also add a caution. My first trip, in 1951, lasting about four months, was primarily concerned with the music of the Mbuti. I was, during almost the entire time, among this same hunting band at the Epulu. My second trip, in 1954, took me through west and equatorial Africa and the Ubangi district of the Congo, so I was able to see Pygmies other than those of the Ituri, but again I concentrated most of my time at the Epulu. I use my own field notes mainly to fill in gaps in the Putnam material and to add two detailed sections on initiation and the men's religious association, here called

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114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
128 taining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
621

[1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage
[192] of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 158-C]

the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a rela- 101
tively large one and shows some interesting 131
tendencies toward fission. It did not always 621
move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part
of the band would be several days' journey off
in the forest, while the rest remained at the
village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam 000
frequently visited the hunting band at its vari-
ous camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam
was more or less entirely confined by his illness
to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's 197
Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as
their camp language. They also use a great
many KiLese words, however, and the local
Bira affirm that they frequently cannot under-
stand what they call "KiMbuti," though they
recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the
Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some
KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

With regard to their "purity," it is difficult to 101
say much, particularly as it seems more satisfactory to study them for what they are without reference to their supposed origin. They stand 101
to the villager, however, in the general, ap- 177
parent client-patron relationship found among most Mbuti throughout the Ituri, though this varies in detail from one area to another. It would seem that they are a great deal less closely attached to their village patrons than the archers described by Schebesta, and spend far less time in the vicinity of the village. At the same time they themselves, and the villagers, report other bands whose association with village settlements is still less regular. The material to hand, however, does reveal some new facts concerning this relationship, and, although interpretation of these facts can be made only with regard to this particular band (the disadvantage of such a small-scale study), at least it is more certain for that specific instance and may indicate similar possibilities elsewhere.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 159-A]

ORIENTATION

LOCATION

101 THE PYGMY POPULATION of the world is di-
114 vided into two main groups, Asiatic and African, commonly known as Negritos and Negrillos, respectively. These terms originated in what is probably the first serious attempt to study the Pygmies as a whole (Quatrefages, 1887), and the relationship between these two groups has been an issue ever since. It does not concern us here, as our study is confined to the African Pygmies, but reference to this wider issue may be found in Quatrefages (1887), Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), and Gusinde (1942).

TRIBAL GROUPINGS

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101 We are concerned essentially with an ethnographic study of known Pygmy groups in Africa, but here again the field is generally considered in terms far too broad to be practical.

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tan-
[141] ganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly
[144] "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence
[184] it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb
131 at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

[P.159-C]

forest to the east. Their southern limit is 131
bounded by a line from the Ruwenzori, through Beni to Bafwasende. The western boundary runs north from Bafwasende to Panga and to the confluence of the Bomokandi and Uele. (See Fig. 3.) Apart from the Lindi and Ituri rivers, Schebesta says that Pygmies also inhabit the areas near the Epulu, Ngayu, Nepoko, and Poko rivers. Putnam makes no attempt to delimit Mbuti territory, but his notes show that he traveled throughout the area described by Schebesta, with the possible exception of the extreme south, and found Mbuti everywhere, away from the major rivers as well as along their banks.

Schebesta makes the threefold division al- 197
ready mentioned, of Twa, Tswa, and Mbuti, 101
and further subdivides the Ituri Mbuti into [619]
three major groups: the Aka to the north; Sua to the south; and Efe to the east (Fig. 3). These are linguistic groups, speaking dialects of Mangbetu, Bira, and Lese, respectively.

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P. 159-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe*." He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie*," the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [p.160-B]

[P.160-C]

among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps.

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided.

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Schebesta (1934) estimates the total population of the Ituri Mbuti to be more than 35,000, 161 in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies inhabited the forest for a distance of seven days' [621] march from east to west, and six days from north to south; and that there were 40 chiefs, each with from 40 to 200 followers, a few with as many as 500. There is no official count that can be drawn on, but Schebesta and Putnam both traveled extensively through the entire Ituri area, and the closeness of their estimates favors the acceptance of their figures as fair approximations. Lloyd's reference is interesting in that it gives some indication of what an individual Pygmy considers to be the extent of the Mbuti and their territory.

Reviewing his interpretation of demographic 163 data collected on his first two visits to the 165 Congo, as set out in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," Schebesta (1952, 50–53) later says that among the Efe archers the average number of children born to each woman is three, of which two survive. He also finds that there is a 162

[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

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[P. 161-A]
162 slight excess of females in the composition of the population. He gives the following figures, evidently from a population of 411 adults.

	Children Per Cent	Adults Per Cent	Total Per Cent
Male	48.0	48.9	48.4
Female	52.0	51.1	51.6

[165] Infant mortality (32.7 per cent)
Average age 27–30
9 widowers among 201 men
9 widows among 210 women
14 polygamous families (3.1 per cent)

16 Demographic data for the Sua net hunters is
[114] not available. Putnam kept detailed medical records for all members of the band for a decade, but many of these have been lost in the course of shipment to the United States, and the few that are available do not provide a
[184] representative picture. From such data as are available, there does not seem, however, to be any significant difference between the two groups.

563 There is no reliable detailed information as to
582 population movement, though the general opin-
[166] ion is that the population has remained static for some time; nor are there data on the frequency of intermarriage between Mbuti and villagers. Jadin (1936) and Costermans (1937) confirm Schebesta's (1952, 47) opinion that miscegenation is a one-way movement. A village male may take a Pygmy wife, in which case the children will be brought up in the village, but a Pygmy male will never take a villager wife. This holds equally among archers and net hunters (Putnam, 1948, 325). Information for the Aka is, as usual, conflicting and unreliable. Schweinfurth (1874) asserts that there is intermarriage between the Aka and the Mangbetu; Burrows (1898) claims that there is no such intermarriage.

Information as to the attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward miscegenation is also lacking. Schebesta says that certain northern tribes of villagers aver horror at the idea of intermarriage, but that in spite of this it takes place and is nowhere unknown. Both the Lese and the
[144] Bira tribes, with which the archers and net hunters are most in contact, are considerably modified physically owing to the frequency of miscegenation (Schebesta, 1952; Geluwe, 1956),
[P.161-B]

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[P. 161-C]
but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the 563
proportion of Negro blood passed to the 582
Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), how- [144]
ever, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare.

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the 197
question of Pygmy language. Some take the 114
view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira.

The Aka speak a Mangbetu dialect. Costermans (1937), who agrees with Putnam that the original Pygmy language has disappeared, even in the heart of the forest, states that everywhere the Pygmies use the language of the village population with which they live in symbiosis, though they retain their own accent. The Mamvu-Lese group, he says, are no exception to this rule. 197 114

Most Mbuti are polyglots, though Schebesta claims that the archers among whom he worked spoke only Efe, a fact that he takes to be additional evidence of the Pygmaean origin of this tongue, despite its obvious connection with KiLese. The Epulu Mbuti speak KiBira, KiLese, and KiNgwana. KiBira is used mainly as the camp language but in a dialectal form rendering it almost unintelligible to the Bira villagers. Whatever language the Mbuti are speaking there are certain similarities about the form it assumes, noticeably in the use of a hiatus (the "faucal gasp" noticed by Johnston, 1902, 1904, 532; see also Costermans, 1937) and of a curious singsong intonation. But for the present the question of originality in Mbuti language is still open, and we can state with certainty only that the Ituri Pygmies speak dialectal forms of the same Sudanic and semi-Bantu languages spoken by their village neighbors. 19

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.162-A]

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

174 Here again we are in a highly speculative field with very little data to work on. The present distribution of the African Pygmies and
[175] Pygmoids tells us little. Early sources, reports of nineteenth-century travelers (Schweinfurth, 1874), tradition, and current distribution all seem to combine to indicate that the northeast Congo has at all times been inhabited by Pygmies who spread out through the entire forest area of equatorial Africa. Both Schebesta and Putnam subscribe to this view, but others, such as Kerken (1944), state that the Pygmies and Pygmoids of the equatorial forest are *not* the ancient inhabitants of that area. This school of thought prefers to regard the Pygmies as a degeneration of the basic Negro race, a view contradicted by contemporary physical anthropologists and geneticists (Jadin, 1936; Gusinde, 1948; Schebesta, 1938).

172 Archeological sources tell us nothing concerning the origin or history of the African Pygmies. Putnam reports that neolithic axheads are frequently found throughout the Ituri, often revealed when a tree is split by lightning. The [321] Mbuti, however, do not appear to recognize their origin or use, and refer to them as "turds of lightning" (Patrick Putnam, 1948, 339). Haene (1949) reports the finding of round stones with holes, which might have been currency, in the Ituri Forest, and appeals for engineers and others concerned in exploitation of the forest to be made aware of the possibility of such finds. Soors (1950a, 59), commenting on this appeal, writes that he met an engineer who, in the course of excavation in the Rega Forest, had found a large flat stone bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Asked what had become of it, the engineer replied: "*Nous l'avons cassée en mille morceaux—nous ne tenons pas d'être dérangés dans nos traveaux par des amateurs d'antiquités.*"

174 175 Recorded history is, of course, nil, so any reliable historical reconstruction is ruled out for the moment and must remain so until there is much more physiological, demographic, or archeological evidence. Even the date and direction of migrations among the various village tribes are uncertain, though a considerable amount of research has been done in this direction (Moeller, 1934, 1936). We have 174 merely traditions of origin and history, and even this material is scanty and unenlightening.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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For one thing it is often difficult to tell whether 174
a particular legend is of villager or Pygmy origin. Even from the remoter groups of Pygmoids in the central Congo, legends of origin among both villager and Pygmy agree that the Pygmies are the original "people of the forest." Verner (1902) refers to legends from the Wissman Falls area, told by both peoples, that give a purely practical account of how the Pygmies were driven before villager tribes invading their country, and how some retreated farther into the forest and others were captured and brought with their captors. Torday (1925b) gives a Luba legend attributing the origin of the Pygmies to Woto, Father of the Luba, who brought them out from the trees of the forest by singing. Torday (1925b) also mentions an interesting [648]
custom on the accession of a Luba king, the ceremonial for which requires the Pygmies of the kingdom to come to the capital to act as bodyguard for the new king.

bodyguard for the new king. Such isolated 174
references indicate a long-established associa- 177
tion between the two peoples, and that the 571
original nature of the association was a military one. Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Ward (1910), Schweinfurth (1874), and others, write of the employment of the Pygmies by the villagers as spies, scouts, mercenary soldiers, and guides. Putnam in his earlier notes mentions frequently coming across references among the older Pygmies to this relationship, which of course came to an end when the Belgian authorities stopped intertribal warfare.

Legends from the Epulu area (Turnbull, 174
1959) show scant interest in the questions of origin and history, but that here also both Pygmy and villager agree that the Pygmy is the original inhabitant of the forest and is, to a certain extent, feared and respected as such by the villager. No legends from this area of the Ituri or from any other so far reported (Schebesta, 1936b, 340; Joset, 1948, 25–56, 137–157) show that the Pygmies or villagers have any concept of the Pygmies' originating elsewhere than in this northeast corner of the Congo, nor do they reveal any doubt in the minds of these people that the Pygmies were the original inhabitants of that forest.

Socio-cultural change has been taking place 178
ever since the first villager invasions, several hundred years ago, but most rapidly in the past half century. The progress of this change can be

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studied both from the material available and by further field work and should make an interesting contribution to the study of acculturation and plural society problems. This change, still taking place, is likely to increase in depth and speed as the Ituri Forest is further exploited by a central government. The Pygmies have constantly been thrown into closer contact with the villagers, and both have been brought into more immediate contact with the European. As the Pygmy becomes more and more economically dependent on these alien groups, the last remnants of his earlier social system will become modified and finally disappear. Up to the moment of Congo independence, the Mbuti were not subject to taxation, a fact that did not meet with their uncritical approval. The "pros and

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 163-8]

cons" were not infrequently discussed around the campfires; the decision, however, was generally in favor of maintaining the *status quo*. 178

PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Physical anthropology is not treated here, partly because it is a highly specialized field and partly because, again, there is not sufficient material. The work of Schebesta (1938), Jadin (1936), and Gusinde (1948) is notable but still has produced no conclusive results other than to point out the undoubted genetic difference between the Mbuti and their village neighbors. 128 14 [114]

There is no published study of nutrition among the Mbuti, and nothing in the existing anthropological studies from which one can draw any conclusions on this subject. 146 114

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ENVIRONMENT

[P.164-A]

136 BOTH SCHEBESTA AND PUTNAM AGREE on the
137 profound importance of the environment,
182 which is the same throughout the Ituri, in determining to a great extent the life and thought of these forest people. In the primary rain forest there is little seasonal change. Different species of fruits, edible fungus, nuts, roots, and vegetables may flourish more abundantly at one time than another, but there is ample food of this kind at all times. The game is not migratory, except within very small areas, and
182 is always plentiful. The combination of warmth and humidity that produces this lush environment, with its plentiful supply of food for the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, also adds directly to their material comfort. In the absence of climatic extremes the Pygmy is little troubled by problems of clothing or shelter. All his basic needs are attended to for him by his environment, a fact that, writes Schebesta (1952, 42) does not favor "cultural evolution," but the hallmark of hunting and gathering communities is in any case one of "*la primitivité conservatrice*."

182 114 [15] [81] [84] *trice.*" Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes that the forest environment induces fear, suspicion, and guile, and limits the intellectual horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 825 Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." [P.164-B]

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

The environment that so favors a hunting Z
and gathering economy also allows the adapted 241
form of cultivation practiced by the villagers 361
who now live in the forest. These village tribes, 262
generally highly segmented and living in rela- 182
tively isolated communities, cut large clearings P
and make plantations, the main products of 182
which are plantains, manioc, peanuts, corn, rice, beans, and various kinds of squash. Plantains seem to be the staple food throughout. But the cutting of large clearings opens these villages to the intense heat of direct sunlight, from which the Mbuti never suffer in the uncut forest.

The Ituri is full of all kinds of game, the most P 136
important of which for the Mbuti are elephant, various kinds of antelope, forest pig, and mon- P
key. The okapi is also hunted occasionally, [224]
though the Pygmies know that to do so is prohibited by game laws. It is in any case a difficult animal to catch and is pursued only if an easy opportunity offers. Danger comes in the form of forest buffalo, leopard, and a number of poisonous snakes such as the Gaboon viper and the horned viper.

There is a profusion of wild flowers and or- 000

[P. 164- D]

[P. 165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The Mbuti make great use of various species of *Ficus* for the manufacture of barkcloth, and certain vines are used to make string and hunting nets. There are also trees that give a sap
[314] which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another, can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of effective medicines prepared from plants and roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no culture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to their remarkable adaptation to the forest environment. The level of their culture may not be high, but, even though primitive and "conservative," it is distinctly a forest culture and distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw material is abundant. The striking thing is the minimal extent to which they utilize this material. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the environment itself which, making minimal de-
ooo mands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his
[789] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further
[252] states that he has never known these Pygmies
[262] to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that
41 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by
237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of
[291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion-
[301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which
[184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P. 165-B]

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber: From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 [342] [445] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

221 [p. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965. FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

182
121

It is also significant in considering the relative systems of values of the Mbuti and the villagers, in so far as it develops certain qualities in the Mbuti that further accentuate their physical difference from their village neighbors. Just as the forest itself stands out in sharp contrast to the plains, so the forest people stand out in contrast to the plains people—even those who have made a notable adaptation to a forest environment such as the Ituri village tribes. The value in emphasizing the importance of environmental considerations lies not in any causal explanation of material culture or social structure offered by such considerations, but in creating an awareness of this very fundamental opposition.

[P.166-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.166-C]

According to Mbuti opinion the villager is deficient in the senses of sight, smell, hearing, and touch. There is little doubt that the Pygmy is extra-sensitive in these respects, but no scientific investigation has been conducted as yet to determine the exact extent. But if the environment favors a certain type of physical development, it also favors a certain type of emotional development. We must think of the forest not only as a place of abundance, offering a sufficiency of food and shelter, relatively free from danger, but also as a closed world, very unlike the open world of the plains dwellers. Not only has the Pygmy little incentive to develop beyond his diurnal economy, each day taking care of itself, but also he has little to make him think except in terms of the present. 182 [829] [51]

The past and the future pale into insignificance when compared with the moment. To understand this isolated, self-sufficient Pygmy world of the moment is also to understand something about the Mbuti relationship with the villager living in a very different, expansive, and uncertain world of change. 182

It seems worth mentioning the environmental factor also because the Pygmy himself takes it into consideration. His myth and mime, both important mediums of expression of the Mbuti, accentuate the opposition between the forest and the outside world, and between their peoples. They show a constant effort on the part of the Mbuti to effect a satisfactory relationship with the forest world that dominates their lives with such certainty and inevitability. It is not necessary to consider the environment further, but we must go this far in order to begin to understand the people whose society we are studying. 182 078 [538] 182

[P. 166-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE ARCHERS (AFTER SCHEBESTA)

[P.167-A] THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL UNIT is formed by the economic association of individual families as hunting bands (*Lokalgruppen;* Schebesta, 1948, 304 ff.; 1952, 210) which vary in size. Schebesta (1952, 208) gives the range as between two and 12 huts, averaging six huts per
621 band. They are said, in effect, to be patrilineages, but Schebesta stresses the importance of
613 the economic rather than the lineal ties; in his German publications he uses the term "*Sippe*," in French "*Parentele*." In German, he distinguishes the *Sippe* from the *Grossfamilie*, the latter being more properly the lineage regarded in its kinship context. The elder, who occupies
621 considerable prestige and has considerable per-
613 sonal authority over the *Grossfamilie*, is only
888 *primus inter pares* for the *Sippe* (Schebesta, 1948, 290). The prerogative of the elder depends on age, and these *avi-tiri*, or old ones, according to Schebesta, are endowed with the authority and dignity of the ancestors. Their power is limited by custom and tradition.

[ARCHERS]

613 A number of lineages are associated into
614 clans, but these are widely dispersed and have
neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to
the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of
small villages, but still in the shade of the
forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936)
says that only some Efe archers make their
camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–
133) finds that the exact location of the camps
depends on the food quest, and that the pres-
ence of water and shade is a major considera-
tion.

HABITATIONS

361 The huts are built in a circle around a clear-
342 ing by the womenfolk of the individual families.
[462] Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to
[341] form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered
with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of
hut described by most sources. Schebesta also
describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a
crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More 352
often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on
the ground to make a bed. There may also be a
wooden stool, given by or stolen from the vil-
lagers, or a rough chair made from stout sap-
lings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying 417
racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires 251
to preserve meat for barter.

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy 415
wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers 412
(Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by 177
the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many [439]
archers now make mortars for themselves.
There may also be wooden plates of village
origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays.
All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also 412
come from the villagers, and, like the cooking 177
utensils, these foreign importations are said to [439]
have become indispensable to the archers.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.168-A]
B
352

B
412

[426
685]

FIG. 4. Household utensils carved from wood, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Stool. b. Mortar. c. Pestle. d. Stirrer. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti frequently borrow or steal wooden utensils from the villagers. These may be found in hunting camps close to villages.

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]
301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (Efe: *ebo*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and
237 vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of fire itself is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light.
[373] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry
[416] firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows
[114] (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped

[P. 169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[p.169-c]

B
276
323

B
415
323

FIG. 5. Household utensils made from clay, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Pipestem and clay bowl. b. Cooking vessel. The Mbuti obtain their major pottery artifacts, as luxuries, from their villager neighbors.

P
[439]
323

[ARCHERS]

with metal points. Schebesta believes that a 411
number of different poisons are used, apart from the poison described in detail by Parke (1891). The poisoned arrows are used against tree- [224]
dwelling animals, particularly monkeys, and hardly ever against antelopes or larger game. Schebesta contradicts, in the light of his own [114]
experience, Stanley's (1890) assertion that Mbuti hunt buffalo and elephant with poisoned arrows.

Mbuti use of antidotes is not known to 278
Schebesta (1941, 65).

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting 224

Schebesta (1941, 86 ff.) describes the various hunting techniques used throughout the Ituri. The Efe among whom he did his most detailed work are primarily archers. They do not know the net hunt and seldom practice the communal beat (Efe: *beghe*). Schebesta (1941, 86) ranks the ambush as most important. This method of hunting is used by the older men no longer able to track game successfully. They lie in wait and imitate the call of the game, attracting it until it is within range of their iron-tipped arrows.

The daily hunt, however, is the track hunt

[P.169-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 171-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.170]

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284
184

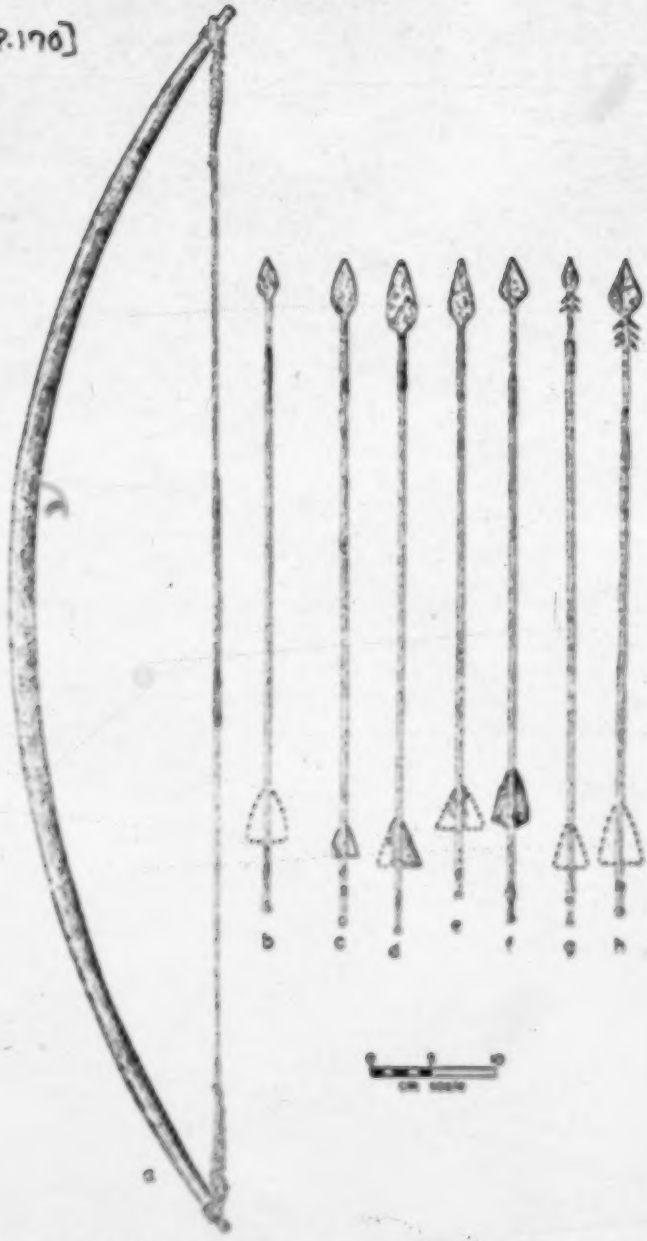

FIG. 6. Hunting equipment, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. a. Bow. b-h. Arrows. These are typical of the eastern archers and similar to the bows and arrows of the neighboring Nyari villagers.

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

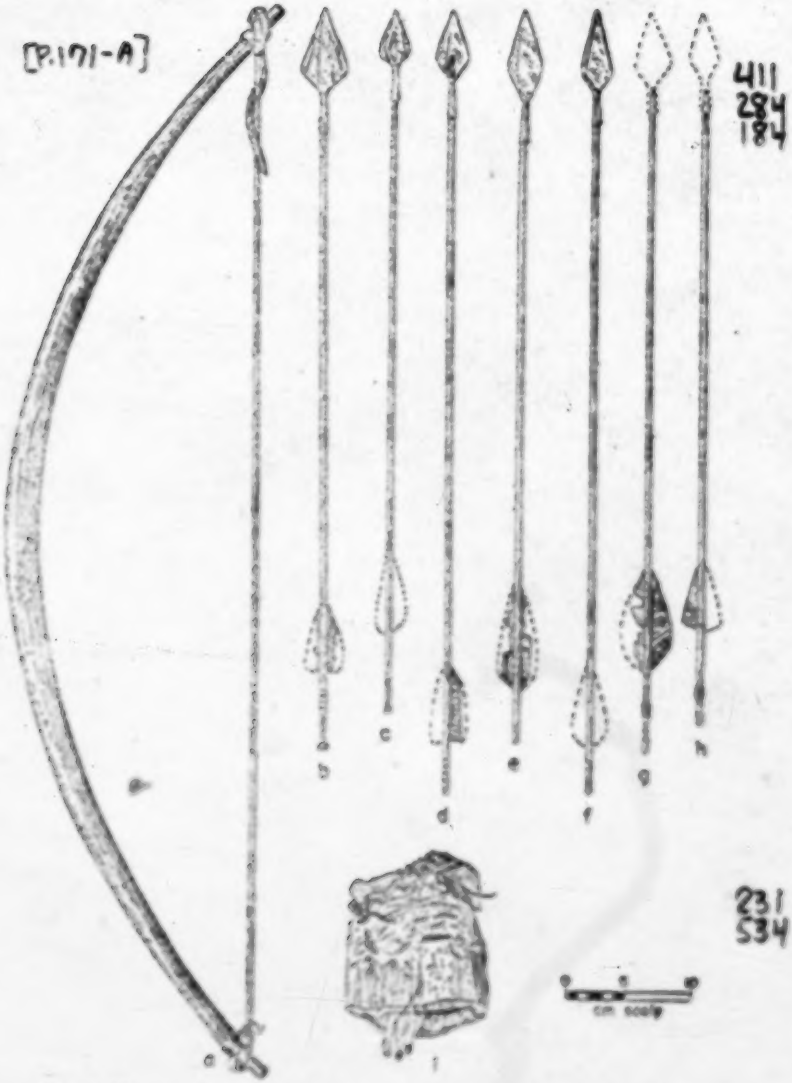

FIG. 7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Nduye District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. i. Dog bell.

[ARCHERS]

224 (*Hetzjagd*, Schebesta, 1941, 89; Efe: *motá*) in which the male members of the local group take part. Five or six men go out when the sun is high (and the undergrowth dry) accompanied by hunting dogs. Schebesta mentions a hunt leader (Efe: *aetasi*) who gives the signal for departure and follows the dog, guided by the sound of its wooden bell. He shouts encouragement to the dog, and the other trackers, guided by these sounds, spread out on either side of the hunt leader. When the dog puts up game, the hunters all stand rigid, bows flexed, ready to

[P. 171-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 172-B]

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Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.172-A]

411

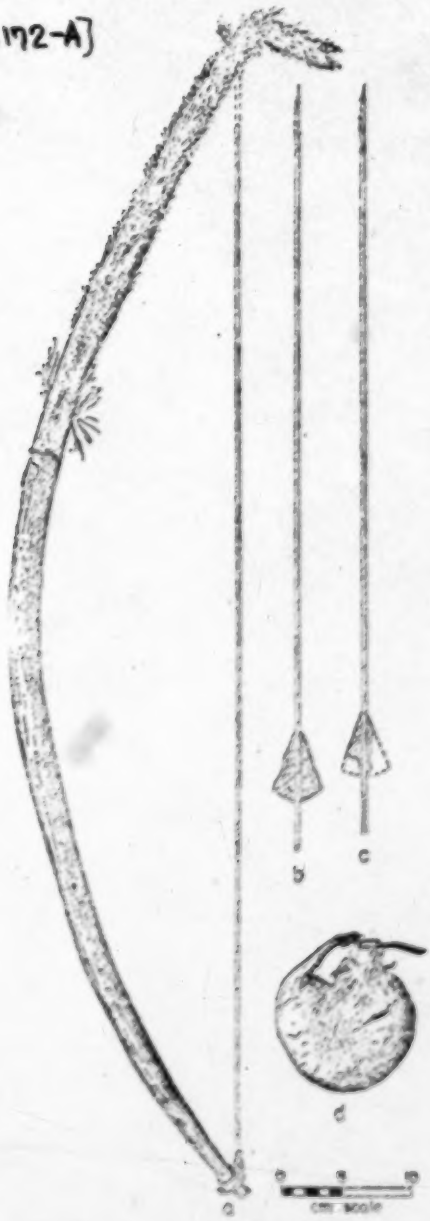

FIG. 8. Hunting equipment, archers, Oysha District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–c. Arrows. d. Wrist protector. Bows and arrows and wrist protectors of the archers seem, on the average, to be approximately 3 to 4 inches longer than those of the net hunters.

[184]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 172-B]

shoot if the animal passes their way. Sometimes 224
the animal is killed by the dog; sometimes it escapes or is only wounded and must be pursued. It may happen that the dog itself is wounded, a major catastrophe for the hunters.

The rewards of this type of hunt are varied. A group of five or six hunters may be able to bring back an antelope each day, or may fail completely for days on end. The hunt seldom strays far from the camp and, with or without game, returns by late afternoon. According to Schebesta, the game caught is usually gutted on the spot and divided among the hunters, who bring back their shares wrapped in leaves, nothing being left unused. This division of game is according to traditional usage. If the game is [554]
brought back whole, only the elder with the aid of an assistant can divide it. It is laid on leaves, then skinned with sharp metal arrowpoints and gutted. The sharing is theoretically only between members of the band, but in fact is between any who took part in the hunt directly or indirectly. Thus the owner of the dog, or of the bow and arrow (if borrowed) that killed the game, may claim a share. An animal killed in [628]
the territory of another band belongs to that band, but Schebesta says that normally neighboring bands overlook this unless it happens frequently, when hostilities may ensue.

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *begbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magbo*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p. 173-A]

411
[237]

FIG. 9. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver. b–i. Arrows. Quivers are not generally carried by either archers or net hunters; by both groups the arrows are usually held in the left hand, together with the bow.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

224 [824] stems in a special way they form cylinders which, when struck on the ground, make an effective clap. The women then go ahead and by the loud beating of their petards put up game for the men to shoot with their metal-tipped arrows. This form of hunt is usually successful in killing a number of animals, which are shared among the various hunting bands that took part in the beat.

Elephant hunting takes place only among those Mbuti who use spears (Fig. 10; Schebesta, 1941, 106); bows and arrows are quite incapable of doing more than blind an elephant, despite the reports of imaginative travelers to the contrary. Those archers who use only bow and arrow do not hunt elephant. Wild boar, similarly, are killed only with spear, especially when they appear near the camp. Monkeys and [P262] chimpanzees, considered as delicacies, are pur-

[P. 173-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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sued and shot with bow and arrow whenever the 224
opportunity arises but are never the object of [262]
organized hunting. Other smaller animals and birds are hunted individually; those that take refuge in holes in trees are smoked out.

Schebesta's account suggests that, despite his 224
proficiency at the hunt, the Pygmy takes care 789
to protect himself against its attendant dangers [776]
and disappointments by securing the coopera- [769]
tion of the God of the Forest, and of his ancestors, and by making use of magic. He carries charms, observes various taboos, and performs certain rites—mostly sympathetic. It is not clearly stated, however, exactly which rites and charms are used by which particular Pygmies; there is obviously a great deal of variation. Schebesta clearly indicates, however, that among the archers there seems to be a considerable amount of hunting magic and ritual, witnessed by their use of the special whistles (Efe: *segbe*), magic formulas, invocation, and ritual practices he describes.

[P. 173-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-A]

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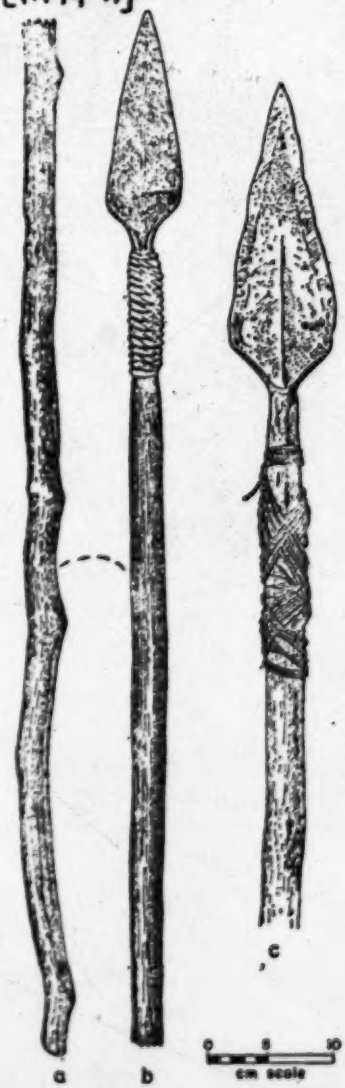

FIG. 10. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a–b. Spear, of village origin and villager hafted; probably Bira. c. Spear, hafted by Mbuti. All blades for spears come from the villagers, though Mbuti frequently rehaft spear, ax, and adze blades, to suit their needs.

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[197]
[434]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P.174-B]

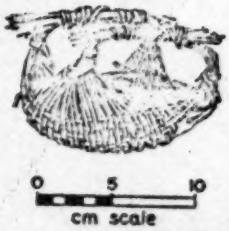

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FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent 262
of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' [462]
staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is pro-
vided almost exclusively by women. First place [439]
goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and pea-
nuts acquired from the villagers in return for
meat or service. But the forest itself provides an
abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and
edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses.
Schebesta gives no details as to the exact pro-
portions of these various foodstuffs consumed,
so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics
of this group. He also mentions the place of
snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and
certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form [226]
only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk
catch crabs and small fish in the shallow
streams, using their hands or small nets.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Honey Gathering

Honey gathering is of particular importance 222 [221] and is seasonal. The equipment consists of fire,

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 175-B]

251
417

Fig. 12. Meat-drying rack, archers, Central and East Ituri. Meat drying takes place only when the [439] Mbuti intend to trade with villagers and is by no means a part of every hunting camp.

[P. 174-C]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

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[P.175-A]

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222
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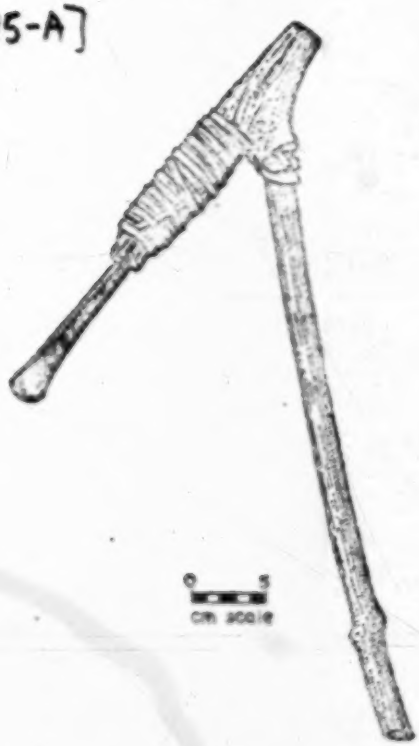

FIG. 13. Adze, Bira villagers, rehafted by Mbuti archers, Central Ituri. A villager utensil, useful but not indispensable to the Mbuti, for the extraction of honey from hives in tree boles.

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 22 The direct contribution of the children to the food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 175-C]

way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262

* [TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Bira FO11

[P.175-D]

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412

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p.176-A]

262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the
439 alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a
177 day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty
22 of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the
[613] trading is carried out. He says that there is, however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P 176-B]

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each woman regards this part of the camp as her property. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women may all be strangers to one another. In some cases most of the women come from the same neighboring band, so their communal interest is greater, but generally they come from widely dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

592 [462] 621 628 609 582 591 [613] [594] [578]

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
individual family and only indirectly with that
592 of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[B54] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a village custom.

[ARCHERS]

593 861 Both parents have an equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively, 514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from 364 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimination takes place close by, two factors favoring 361 the frequent moving of camp.

[P. 177-8]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in front are kept clean. 000 356 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes in which children and adults may take part, the dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *palienghe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well. 52 [535]

The dance takes place on every possible occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes. 53

Legend telling and mime are other important means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo. 538 536 513

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, 512
with the exception of termite hunting which is 222
conducted at whatever time of the day or night
termites are found to be swarming.

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninter- 844
rupted throughout the year, except when camp [512]
is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant
on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these
occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account
that birth arouses the least public interest. The 844
band welcomes each birth gladly but at the 621
same time accepts it as no more than its due.
The wives of its menfolk are expected to pro- [562]
duce children; it is their primary function in the
eyes of both the band and their husbands, and
even in their own eyes.

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual 842
blood is an important factor in conception 833
(Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the [841]
connection between coition and conception
(1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hear-
ing the opinion expressed that repeated coition
would hasten the hour of birth.

[P 177-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.178-A]

000 would hasten the hour of birth. Pregnancy is
843 recognized by the cessation of the menses and the discoloration of the breasts. During pregnancy a woman is subject to various alimentary taboos, but otherwise lives her full, ordinary life, including the carrying of heavy loads of wood, carrying all household goods when moving camp, going in search of food, and other specific activities of women.

844 Customs attending childbirth vary from region to region, but Schebesta concludes that, although archers have no effective method of dealing with complications, the women normally give birth easily and without any particu-
[184] lar preparation. Although this account does not specifically relate to the Efe archers, Schebesta (1948, 402) writes that, from his observations throughout the forest, certain generalizations
844 are possible. Women alone are admitted to
412 assist in the childbirth. The father cuts the umbilical cord with an arrowpoint, or, among some bands, with a sharp piece of bamboo. Before metal blades were available, Schebesta (1948, 404) says that there is evidence that bamboo knives or sharp leaves were used.

[ARCHERS]

553 Schebesta reports that the child is not named for some weeks after birth. To name a boy is the father's prerogative or that of the oldest male members of his lineage; to name a girl is the right of the mother or her oldest relatives. There is no uniform custom, except that naming is primarily the privilege of the parents. It is a Pygmy custom to fasten the umbilical cord to the child's elbow and later to bury it in some swamp. Schebesta found no evidence of the truth of Johnston's statement (1902, 1904, 539) that Pygmy women sever the umbilical cord with their teeth. Abortion is known to the Pygmies, but plays no part in marital life.

844 846 [114] 847

Twins

845 847 The birth of twins, among the archers, seems to be considered abnormal and inauspicious. Schebesta frequently heard that following the birth of twins one had died. He was told by an elder that, when twins are born, the elders are immediately informed, and they advise that if both infants are strong and healthy they be allowed to live, otherwise the weaker of the two should be killed. The mother herself smothers the infant by covering its nose and mouth with her hand. The body is immediately buried in the house, which is promptly abandoned. [P. 178-8]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 178-C]

Dances are organized by the women to celebrate the birth of twins, whether or not both live. Schebesta (1948, 409) mentions the fact that, although the neighboring village tribes have similar feelings about abnormal births, they content themselves with evading unhappy consequences by magical dances and other rites. Schebesta (1948, 409) suggests that superstitious terror and fear of attendant sanctions drive the Pygmy mother to the more violent way of avoiding danger. He writes that all abnormal infants are also put to death immediately following birth, either by the mother or by her female attendants; the men are never permitted to see these monsters. They too are buried in the house, which is immediately abandoned. 845 [535] 845 847

Postnatal Care

The mother surrounds her child with every care and attention until she again becomes pregnant, and even subsequently if the child is not yet able to look after itself to some extent. 846

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 546
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [325]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pokalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[p. 178-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

858 Only when children approach the age of
573 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the same age (and older). During this period there
[84] is no formal training (Schebesta, 1948, 415 ff.), but boys and girls alike learn all there is to be learned by simple emulation and by assisting their parents and elders in various tasks.

At puberty the boys break completely away
882 from their mothers who have no more to do
883 with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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179

Initiation

Schebesta (1948, 467 ff.; 1952, 265 ff.) gives no information concerning the initiation of girls among the archers. He does, however, describe at some length the initiation, accompanied by circumcision, of boys, according to the villager rite known as *nèumbi*. His earlier account, in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," is, by his own admission, drawn largely from Mbuti and villager informants throughout the forest. He was able to have only fleeting glimpses ("*flüchtigen Einblicke*"; Schebesta, 1948, 475) of parts of *nèumbi* festivals among the Ngwana, Byeru, Bati, and forest Bira, but his observations, he says, confirmed what he had been told. In 1949 he had an opportunity to see more of a single *nèumbi*, details of which he records (Schebesta, 1952), but this was among net-hunting Mbuti. Consequently, we lack precise information concerning the *nèumbi* among archers. Opinion among different groups of Mbuti varies as to the origin of the custom; some claim to have practiced it before the villagers, some say that they have adopted it only recently. There are

[P 179-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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[P. 179-C]

even Mbuti groups in which apparently it is practiced among themselves but without circumcision.

The *nkumbi* takes place approximately every six years, says Schebesta, and each initiation has a specific name, usually connected with some outstanding incident connected with that particular occasion. It is inaugurated on the decision of the village lineage head who invites the Mbuti to take part. An essential feature of the *nkumbi* throughout the Ituri is this joint participation of Mbuti and villager.

The *nkumbi* (Efe: *ieku*) takes place in a special camp in the forest, some distance from the village. A large conical hut is built (Schebesta, 1948, here follows a description of a southern Lese initiation), on one side of which is the raised sleeping place of the initiates (Efe: *hemu*), and on the other, the fireplace and quarters of the elders who will guard and teach the boys. All the arrangements are in the hands of the villager lineage head (*avitiri*).

3 881 177
Z [613]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *karé* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *seghe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *karé* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

Zp 881 177 608

Zp [534] [202]

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nkumbi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *karé* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

Zp 881 177 608 534

[P 179-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P Z 881 177 608 534 Z [563]

[P, 180-A]

society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments particularly associated with *nkumói* (and the secret society) among the south Lese, namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part in the *nkumói* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Z P 881 177 P [578]

Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish two elements in the *nkumói*: the villager element of initiation associated with circumcision and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element of initiation into the men's secret society (*turi*).

Marriage

P 381 584 621

Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult to determine which is the stronger, the interests of the hunting band or the interests and mutual affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

[584 62 58] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

[613 62 232] The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [336] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [68] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as [77] a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofoni*), homosexuality (*ai kopa*), and adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [339] (*dawa kopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such be- [338] havior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[p. 180-8]

[ARCHERS]

[P.180-C]

Marriage, however, is not necessarily preceded by a period of courtship. Schebesta (1952, 233) attests to the betrothal of infants by their parents but does not know how frequently these betrothals result in marriage. The ultimate essential is agreement between individuals and their respective lineages. The qualities in a man appreciated by a girl are courage, decision, prowess in the hunt, and ability in the dance. Her hunting band also appreciates these qualities and receives favorably any suitor who brings presents of game that he has killed, but it is said to be more interested in the suitor's band. There is no formal adult betrothal; the boy visits the girl's camp and spends some days there, giving her small presents. Her acceptance of the presents and reciprocation of his attentions constitute betrothal; it remains only to secure the agreement of the two bands and to overcome the obstacle of exchange price. If a youth fears that his prowess as a hunter or dancer is not sufficiently impressive to prove his manliness, he will resort to various love philters. Philters are also used by Mbuti girls.

584 [581] [431] [832]

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[1] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band.

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1968, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Ebo-ebo* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of

[1] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage.

[P 180-D]

[ARCHERS]

[C.P. 181-A]

583 the forest, pay a dog, five spears, and five arrows. Schebesta also cites the third possibility: a youth lives with his wife's band for some years, "pays" for his wife by his service to that band, then returns with her to his own band. If the payment or service proves to be insufficient, the girl's lineage claims the children, which otherwise belong to the father's band. Marriage by capture is unknown, and there are no indications that this practice ever existed.

583 585 [77] Nuptial ceremony is lacking among most Mbuti, but Schebesta says that in imitation of the Lese the southern archers practice a form of double ceremony in which the two bands formally meet and exchange their daughters. Normally, however, the archers seem to have, if anything, little ceremony. A youth, having secured the agreement of his betrothed, takes her back to his camp, with or without the permission of her band. There she lives with his mother, who teaches her the customs of the camp. Shortly afterward members of her band arrive. They demand their side of the bargain, either a bride in exchange or a gift of arrows,

[ARCHERS]

583 axes, and other implements. If the young man is
585 unable to produce these, they take the girl back to her own camp, but cannot prevent her from returning to her betrothed. The process is then repeated. The youth exhorts his betrothed to return to her own camp until he can find the necessary wealth, but if she insists on staying with him, her relatives will leave her and the matter will be settled later. The girl builds a house, and the two live together. There is no ceremony, although the youth's band will, if possible, arrange a feast and dance to celebrate the event. The marriage contract, such as it is, is essentially between the two bands concerned.

583 Marriage by exchange, by which two hunting bands exchange girls, has its complications. The girl received replaces the girl given, not only in her capacity for work but as a child bearer. If either girl falls short in these respects, the double union is nullified. Similarly, if either of
[584] the parties willfully brings about the dissolution of one marriage, the contract is void, thus possibly breaking up the other perfectly happy and fertile union. This dissolution can be avoided either by making another exchange or by substituting a payment.

595 Marriage by exchange is not conducive to the practice of polygyny, and Schebesta (1952, 244) estimates that 6 per cent of Mbuti marriages are polygynous; 10 per cent, in the border re-

[P 181-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objections to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to polygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment. 595 [177] [582]

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band. 587 587 589

Relations between husband and wife and their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride. 593

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 837
body and birth of twins are, among some 825
[P. 181-D] 827

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 182-A]

832 Mbuti, considered as signs that adultery has
[845] taken place. An offended wife has the right to
[827] leave her husband; an offended husband may chastise his wife and attack his rival, possibly leading to a feud between two bands. If he finds his wife *in flagrante delicto*, he has the right to kill her lover. However, Schebesta cites no case histories.

Separation

586 A husband's justification for separation is based on the constant infidelity of the wife, her sterility, her selfishness leading to neglect of her husband, sickness, or suspicion of sorcery. On the woman's side, separation is justified by ill treatment by her husband, neglect of his hunting duties, and his infidelity. Separation is achieved simply by each band's reclaiming the daughter it gave in exchange, or effecting compensation. It does not necessarily involve hostility between the two bands, in which case the children may remain with their father, without their mother's becoming ostracized from the community. Also, a child may remain with its mother, even if she returns to her own band or remarries into another. Only when a child marries is there a necessity to settle the question of its economic allegiance.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Widowhood

589 In any hunting band one may find divorced men and women between two states of marriage, and also widows and widowers who have had no chance to remarry. Widows, as mentioned, may remain in their late husbands' bands with their children or return to their own band. Aged widowers, no longer able to provide for a woman by hunting, remain single, as do the infirm, and both are provided for by their relatives.

589 177 Mbuti girls who have married villagers return sooner or later to their parental band; almost certainly when they are no longer fertile and cease to be of interest to their villager husbands. [587] If still young they may take a Pygmy husband; if too old to remarry, they live the life of a widow. These "widows" do their own cooking and receive frequent visits in the forest from their children who otherwise remain in the village. Sometimes one or another of the children will remain with her in the forest.[1]

[1] Such a practice is contrary to what I was told among all Mbuti groups, namely, that such children are never accepted in the forest as Mbuti and may make only short visits, like other villagers.

[P 182-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 182-C]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

764

Several early travelers mention burial customs among the Pygmies of the Ituri. Stuhlmann (1894) describes burial, with the corpse either stretched out or doubled up in a circular hole. Burrows (1898, 197), referring mainly to the Aka, says that, when a Pygmy dies, he is buried "and there is an end to him and his memory." He reports that there is no mourning and no memorials to mark the graves. Johnston (1902, 1904, 539) also mentions burial and says that important Mbuti are buried with supplies of food, tobacco, and weapons. [84]

According to Schebesta, although burial in some form or another, generally following the villager pattern, was in common usage at the time he wrote, the northern archers formerly abandoned the corpse, placing it with its back against a tree. If someone died inside a hut, the corpse was left there for about two weeks, until decomposition had well set in. Then, without burying the remains, the camp was abandoned.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1958) 1965 P04 Pygmies P04
Mbuti
Mamba P031
Lese

(ARCHERS)

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by village women, are unknown.[1]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *kawi* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

[1] This statement, again, is totally contrary to our experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P 121 - D]

183 (A)

[ARCHERS]

[P-183-A]

P M 764 177

nent among the many archers who had hastened to attend the funeral took charge. He measured the corpse with his stick and drew the outline of the grave on the ground. His son, assisted by others, opened a grave, using pointed sticks, a hatchet, and a bush knife, and cleared the loosened earth with their hands. The crying

P [152]

of the women became louder, calling "*Afae!*" (father). A few women sat nearby, singing dirges. Not only the relatives mourned, but all

P M [801]

present. With the help of the Lese *harl*, the floor of the grave was covered with sticks, then leaves. The womenfolk hurried to the edge of the grave as the corpse, decorated only with an arm ring, was brought through a hole in the side of the hut and placed in the grave. The wailing

P [152]

reached its climax; the wife, children, and even the eldest grown son, threw themselves on the ground as the men began to fill in the grave. One man had to hold the eldest daughter to prevent her from throwing herself into the grave. The earth was stamped down, and the mourners moved away, women and children and some of the young men crying. One daughter remained near the grave as the house was pulled down to cover it (after the household goods had been removed).

Shortly after the burial some men went off hunting. By three o'clock the entire camp was deserted, and a new one had been built by evening.

183 (8)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 179 171 E [521] [528] [613] S [182] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *kari* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 179 439 608

The relationship between the *Efe* archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

kari relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *iowi*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The *tewi* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *aeyote*, *mewili*, *molimo*, and *lusombe* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *tewi* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *tewi* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

The meeting place contains the hut of *tewi*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

[P. 183-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1955 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Zaire PO1

[ARCHERS]

CP.184-A

P Z times called *Aremba* in Schebesta's account. All
575 these instruments, he claims, however, produce
346 sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers
524 do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those
P worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of
[304] a leopard's claw.

A further inquiry made among the archers in
P 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta,
Z 1952, 279) and added some supplementary
575 facts. The *ioni* hut is to be found near or in the
[346] camp itself. Women and children may attend
the *ioni* ceremonies organized by the men. The
"presidents" are an old man and an old woman.
P The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God
Z of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, im-
[316] plored for help in the hunt. The society, Sche-
besta concludes, has a religious aspect. This
P same study revealed the use of three wooden
Z trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodua*), in
[534] fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through
which the performer sings into it (*lowa*); and
three small whistles (*ililada*).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association *of toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

[p. 184-87]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1961-1965) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[p.184-c]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *lewi* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

Z P 575 596 594 [535] P Z [533] P Z [562] [558]

[ARCHERS]

[EP-186-A]

622 leadership among the Mbuti except very rarely.
622 He himself discusses the lineage elders ("*Sip-*
613 *penälteeten*," Schebesta, 1948, 332, 559) and
888 states that lineage authority lies with these
648 elders alone. Under villager influence these elders may assume the characteristics of a chief (cf. the "Sultani" of the Pygmies, mentioned by Geil, 1905). Encouraged in this by the villagers, who see a way of extending their authority, the lineage elders may appear to become headmen or chieftains of Mbuti bands, representing the band to the village chief.

622 As mentioned above, the authority of the
613 elder derives from his age, by virtue of which he
888 represents the lineage ancestors. Any offense
[769] against the elder is an offense against the lineage. He takes precedence in all matters: the best part of the game is his, whether or not he took part in the hunt; he presides at various ritual offerings; he is responsible for settling disputes with other bands or with villagers; he leads at the head of the dance. Succession by age is strictly observed. This much Schebesta (1952, 221–223) reports, but without citing examples in sufficient detail to enable us to make a valid comparison between different groups or bands.

[ARCHERS]

628 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
629 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages.
[171] Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[114] [1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and confusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship composition of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and so descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[P 185-8]

L Turnbull E-4 3 (1951-1955) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti.
Zaire FO:

[ARCHERS]
CP.185-C

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *bagbo*.

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Cornermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

1: Turnbull E-4. 1 (1951-1953) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 677 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *kand* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their *kase* neighbors. P 2 439 197 571 [114] P 2 [881] [608]

[P 185-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]
000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

Legal System

671 421 There is virtually no evidence from which any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 621 628 The district hunted by the band, together with all the vegetable and animal food contained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is [224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[ARCHERS]

422 Certain objects that by their nature are col-
222 lective property, however, are considered to be-
long to the finder. This applies mainly to vegetable products, a honey tree, a termite nest, or a nest of grubs or caterpillars. All who help in the gathering are due their share of these products, but the major part goes to the finder.

422 All personal objects made or acquired by an
[423] Mbuti are private property. Thus not only the utensils, but the homestead itself, is the property of the wife, who may, if she wishes, pull the hut down as a gesture of defiance. Weapons belong to men; clothes, to each individual. These objects can be disposed of in any way, at will. Petty pilfering is considered as theft, and
[685] theft is both forbidden and punished; but Schebesta does not describe any system of punishment.

428 With regard to succession, generally the brothers or the sons, says Schebesta, inherit from a father; sisters and daughters, from a mother.

000 Schebesta (1948, 533) argues that, as the
[P. 186-B]

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 68 621 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards find that they receive no share when game from the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does not share any of her gathering products with others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and above all those suspected of sorcery, who are considered the worst types of antisocials, are punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp, and left to die if they are not executed by some means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta cites neither examples in detail nor enough cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He seems, however, to be generally in accord with what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, except with regard to the position and authority of the elder and the alleged "system" of law and punishment.

613 689 626 [685] [754] [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

802

There is little information on division of time and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives the result of his work among five Mamvu-

[P. 186-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187-A]

802 speaking archer bands in the northeastern part of the Ituri, near Gombari. He finds the only common characteristic to be the habit of counting in pairs and the use of the term "many" for anything over five. Finger signs for numbers up to five and a separate sign for 10 are used also by the Mamvu villagers. Thus 15 arrows would be "many times two arrows and one." Some of the examples that he gives show either the disinterest or lack of skill of these archers in exact numeration—such as the woman who for totals of four and seven arrows (the article used by Maes for his tests) gave, respectively, the numbers 40 and 10.

278 824 The use of effective poisons is well attested. Geil (1905), who reported reliably on other aspects of the life of Efe archers, mentions their knowledge of antidotes. Schebesta (1941, 65) denies having come across these. He (1941, 228 ff.) does, however, give details of various effective medicines prepared from forest plants. In [755] some instances these medicines, or the methods of application, have magical significance. They [757] seem unable to cure such afflictions as certain types of fever, leprosy, advanced dysentery, and gout.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965-FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

75 Cuts, wounds, and sores are treated by rubbing the medicine, prepared with water or oil, into the wound. To cure headaches, rheumatism, and mental and other disorders, the skin may be scarified with an arrow and an herb rubbed into the wound. An effective though painful remedy against frambesia is widespread among the Mbuti. Mbuti and villagers both claim that it not only cures but prevents any recurrence of the affliction: Two species of vine are used, or, if the frambesia is malignant, a decoction is made with water and the earth of the nest of the ant (*ti'i*).

The Mbuti claim to know how to reduce fractures, says Schebesta.

Dysentery, diarrhea, and constipation are treated by enemas prepared from various lianas, barks, and peppers.

Various leaves and plants are applied or rubbed externally, without any scarification, against headache and stomach-ache, or inserted into tooth cavities.

759 Schebesta says that he has encountered no evidence of specialization in the field of medi-
75 cine. There never seems to be any need for one
628 band to apply for help or advice from another,
[P. 187-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187- C]

nor do the archers seem to rely on the villagers for any medical help. 75 628

Rationalization

Speculation on problems of life and death are dealt with under Religious Life (p. 188). Here we can say only that Schebesta does not give a special account of legends or legend telling. However, from the legends that he quotes, and from those given by Joset (1948), it appears that among the archers this is an important means not only of reinforcing a system of values, or of commenting on individual behavior in the band, but also of rationalizing the strange and unknown. 538 82

Joset divides his collection of legends into four categories: (1) the Pygmy and his life; (2) animals: happy and unhappy relations between animals and Pygmies; (3) legends concerning the stars and sky; and (4) legends revealing individual psychological traits. Schebesta (1936b) says that legends tend to be spontaneous creations of individuals; there is no formal body of standard folklore.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Art

There is no evidence of any plastic or graphic 531
art among the archers, other than designs used 532
in body painting, described by Schebesta (1941, 217 ff.), some of which he says are of magical significance and some purely esthetic. In this limited field there is no evidence, either, of specialization.

As means of artistic expression, music, dance, 53
and drama are evidently of great importance. Schebesta (1941, 243 ff.) describes these art forms and lays particular emphasis on the dance. Other, earlier sources (Schweinfurth, 1874; Burrows, 1898; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924) frequently mention dance and also the importance of mime among the Mbuti. Of the form and function of music, Schebesta has little to say. He mentions the use of villager instruments, particularly the drum, sanza, and zither, also others such as the musical bow, rattles, flutes (Fig. 15b, c), and pipes, and resonant sticks used by women for beating time to dances. He merely mentions the existence of singing, apart from the dance.

Of dance Schebesta (1949, 252–259) gives 535
more detail. He writes (1941, 243): "The principal, if not the daily entertainment of young

[P 187-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 188-B]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies
Mbuti
Bira FO11

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534

FIG. 15. Miscellaneous items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Comb. b–c. Notched flutes. These luxuries are not an essential part of hunting life but seem to be gradually becoming more common.

[ARCHERS]

535 and old, men and women, is the dance, which is accompanied by music and song." Most of the instruments Schebesta (1941, 244–253) describes serve to accompany dance. He makes three classifications: sportive, mimetic, and erotic dances. The former are not mere exuberant acrobatics, but follow certain choreographic rules; he does not give the rules. The usual form of dance is circular, he says: an outer circle composed of women and an inner circle of men, with the drummer in the center. If there are only a few dancers, the men may dance solos, leaping one by one in toward the drummer, then back to their places in the still-moving circle.

[372] Schebesta also mentions the existence of fire dances, one of which he witnessed on the occasion of a birth in the camp.

535 Erotic dances generally involve two lines of
83 dancers, one line male, one female. Each woman comes out of the line in turn and makes an

[P. 188-B]

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[P 188-C]

obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 [83]

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion. 774 114

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a
religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 189-A]

000 this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

114 Schebesta (1950) bases his detailed study of Mbuti religion on an eight-month sojourn among the southeast archers on his second visit to the Ituri. He also mentions other information collected during his two visits which is of relevance to the net hunters and the Kango farther west. Here we are concerned only with his archer material.

The Chthonic God

776 Among the Efe archers Schebesta found the
192 name Toré, applied to what he designates as
184 "*Buschgott*," or God of the Undergrowth. Other names frequently heard are Muri-muri, Mbali, Muku, Kalisia, Bi'i, Ba'atsi, Epilipili, Puchopucho, Matu, and Lodi. Like Toré, Muri-muri is found among all archers. Those to the north describe both Toré and Muri-muri as a small, Mbuti-like forest dweller, to meet whom is death because he is the destroyer of all. The central archers distinguish more clearly between Toré and Muri-muri. The latter, who is short in stature, is sometimes termed Toré *bo'ichu* (Costermans, 1938, Toré *bo'iko*). The former is,

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776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
76 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

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[P. 189-C]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates 776
the presence of Toré: mental confusion or dis- [827]
order, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad [828]
luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is [777]
absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and
human beings, of life and death. Everything
belongs to him because he created everything,
but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is [782]
offended by failure to make him offerings from
the chase, by quarrels within the band, by dis-
respect for elders, by infraction of lineage exog-
amy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices.
He punishes such actions or omissions by caus- [784]
ing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards
on the community (or individual) concerned,
by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

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ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore. 776 177 [114]

Schebesta believes that, though different groups of archers give precedence to one name or another, there is only one God of the Undergrowth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning. 776 82 [184] [825]

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good. 776 [171]

Cult Practices

776 782

A number of practices are associated with the

[P. 189-D]

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[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *toré* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
82 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
534 blowing of the *segbe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *segbe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his
782 "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
224 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
372 the apparently ancient *begbe* beat hunt, as is mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

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782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as *"Mugu! daó a iye!"* (*"Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in- [224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to 769 Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the 782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *sulia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190 - B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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some individual among Toré's children. In his anger he closes the forest so that the hunters can kill no game. Under the circumstances all the weapons in the camp are brought out and placed in a pile in the center of the clearing. The hunters stand around in a circle, each with an arm held over the weapons. As described by Schebesta, the transgressor, who had divided game he had caught without waiting for the elder, brandished a live chicken over the center of the circle praying for success in the hunt. In the invocation he mentioned Bali (local name for the God of the Undergrowth), "fathers," "grandfathers," and the name of his own father who had apparently been an outstanding hunter. Then the elder cut off the head of the chicken, sprinkled blood on the weapons and the arms of the hunters, and threw the fluttering carcass onto the ground. Everyone watched which way it moved, and when it finally fell with the stump of its neck pointing toward the forest, this was taken as a good omen and there was a

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[789]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P.190-D]

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776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
192 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[177] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *èda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[775] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[776] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

[ARCHERS]

795 The soul, the word for which designates the
261 pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the
[174] sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital force mentioned, *megbe*, changes into the totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

794 Dreams are events that actually befall the
828 soul during sleep, according to the archers. While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and wander at will. In this way God and the dead can manifest themselves during sleep.

795 The northern archers think of a realm for the
[177] souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves, and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the dead and their god are, like the God of the Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of properly Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult
[769] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one of the vital principles takes the form of a star, living with the celestial divinity, remote from the Mbuti world.

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[P. 191-C]

the Mbuti world. The other principle becomes one of the forest sprites, the *befe*, living with the earthly divinity, Toré, and assisting him in his lordship of the forest. Far from representing the dead, these sprites are regarded as knaves, to be fought with as such. In legends they are concerned principally with the hunt and frequently try to trick the Pygmy out of his prey to which, as *befe*, they have a right themselves. If they represented the souls of the dead, suggests Schebesta, the Mbuti would hardly be able to take the attitude toward them that they do. 775 776 [761]

Death may also be regarded by the Pygmy as a punishment visited on man for one of three sins. God forbade his children to look at him, but one of his daughters was overcome by curiosity, and death resulted. (This legend is actually found more frequently among the net hunters than the archers.) God forbade his children to follow him on a certain path, but they became impatient and followed, and death resulted. God (Muri-muri) left fire in the care of his mother, Matu; but a Pygmy stole it from her and she died from cold, so Muri-muri condemned all men to die. This curiosity, impatience, and greed are severally cited as causes of death. 761 773 [184]

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The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

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[P. 192-A]

613 hunting band, or, if the latter becomes too
614 large, both clan and band may split into two or more bands. The relationship of several bands or lineages as members of the same clan is generally designated by the use of a common name,
[621] ancestor, and totem. One band is distinguished from another, regardless of relationship, by individual territorial names, but apart from identity of ancestor and totem there is no effective structure binding together the clan, if dispersed. There is no clan chief, and no clan territory (except for a very small clan that happens also to be a hunting band). Even clan exogamy cannot be said to be rigidly enforced; the invariable rule, rather, is exogamy of the local lineage or hunting bands.

Totems are generally animals, rarely plants, never natural phenomena. Schebesta cites the
[825] leopard and the chimpanzee as being the commonest totems. A man and wife observe each other's totemic restrictions in each other's presence or when with each other's group; simi-

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé-*
[784] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[262] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[753] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[761] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[778] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

Magic

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[P. 192-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[p.192-c]

notions and practices of the archers and their 761
totemism in their belief in *megbe*, the vital force 778
dispensed, in part, by the divinity. It is one of the life principles, distinct from that which becomes a star or a sprite after death. *Megbe* is transformed anew into the totem when the body dies. The divinity possesses it in totality; astral beings are endowed with far more *megbe* than mortals; hence, their greater power and strength which derive from *megbe*. Mortals, then, have to reinforce their store of this vital force to give themselves additional strength and power. There are certain practices by 778
which this may be achieved, notably by the use 761
of bells hung about different parts of the body. 789
When a man dies, his son may put his lips to those of his father to capture the *megbe* as it passes from his body.

By increasing his store of *megbe* the Mbuti can place himself on the same level as supernatural beings with whom he must have dealings. Schebesta cites legends showing how the [773]
Mbuti managed to steal fire from Toré by the use of bells to increase their *megbe*.

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Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 193-A]

114 sion, based as it often is on data provided by unreliable informants but passed as certain fact (Boelaert). According to Costermans, Schebesta's conclusions result from his selection of data to suit his (admitted) preconceived theories. Further, Schebesta relies, as he himself says, on the evidence provided by legends which he accepts without exercising any of the caution necessary for the proper use of such material. Possibly many of the legends and the associated concepts are indeed of Lese origin.

The Godhead

771 776 The Chthonic God of the Undergrowth plainly does not stand by itself, not even when supported by an embryonic "*Totengottheit*," which Schebesta finds among the archers but believes to be of little significance. From an examination of Mbuti mythology and a comparative study of religious terms, Schebesta concludes that there is a third, and important if vaguely conceptualized, "*Himmelsgottheit*."

[ARCHERS]

776 Mbuti religion thus resolves into a dualism, if not so neatly as it would were Toré, as Costermans (1938) believes, always associated with misfortune and death. For Schebesta the dualism is manifest in both the sky God and the earth God, but not between them.

776 He finds Toré, as we have seen, to be associated with both life and death, good and bad, fortune and misfortune. Even in his most benevolent moments, Toré seems to be necessarily associated with Matu, personification of menstrual blood and its connotations of sorcery and death, if not the personification of the dreaded rainbow itself.

The earth God is addressed as "father" or "grandfather," but the names used for the sky God, despite their diversity from one area to another, all have one common characteristic—their linguistic association with words connoting brightness, movement, or creation. The sky world is thought of as being much the same as the earth world, though much embellished in mythology. The celestial God is an old man,

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[P.193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses. 776 [821] [761]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.) 776 772 761 821 [372] [841]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There is no attempt to rationalize the fact that the force emanating from the sky God works both good and evil; it is just accepted as a fact. But it is exactly this fact that is the thread binding the various notions that form the Mbuti magico-religious system. Magic itself, good or bad, can be practiced only through the use of this force. The personal sky God himself is, for Schebesta, the supreme magician, manifest in different and opposing ways, whose power is everywhere. He is too remote to be the object of any cult but is, in a sense, represented among human beings by the lineage elders, inasmuch as they inherit the power of the original ancestors; hence, the respect and obedience that is their due.

If the outward manifestations of Pygmy religion mainly concern the God of the Undergrowth, if the cult practices seem overgrown with magic and superstition, and if there is any appearance of polytheism in the Mbuti rationale, all is resolved (for Schebesta, at least) into a consistent monotheism by the basic Mbuti belief in vital force.

[P 193-D]

THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

62 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patriclan, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by
361 Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20
and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man,
[592] his wife or wives, and a few children, so the
[162] total number of Pygmies to an average camp is

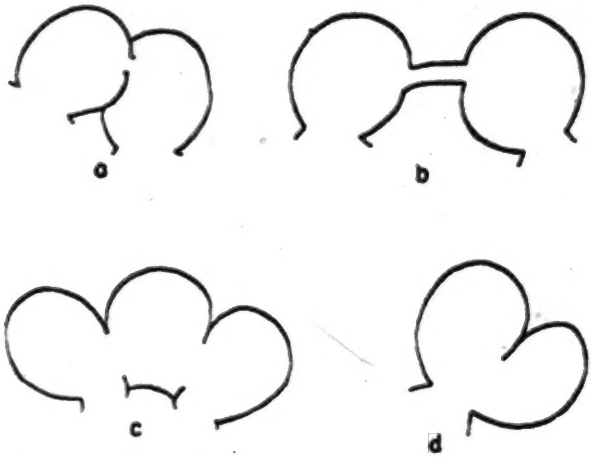

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 194-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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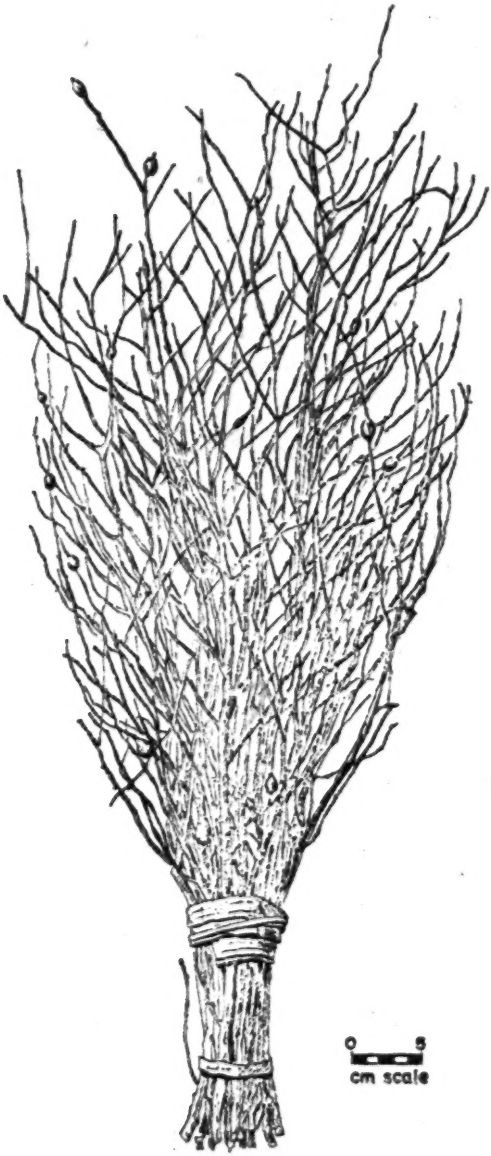

FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net [512] hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with [356] leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner.

[P. 194-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

[NET HUNTERS] **The relation of the huts to one another in the** circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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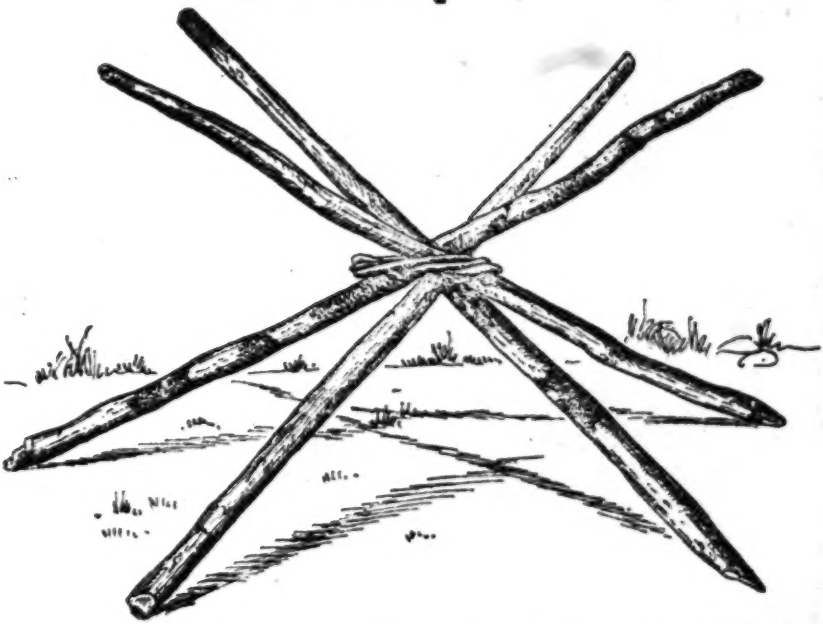

FIG. 19. Chair, *ngbanga*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 195-C]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.196-A]

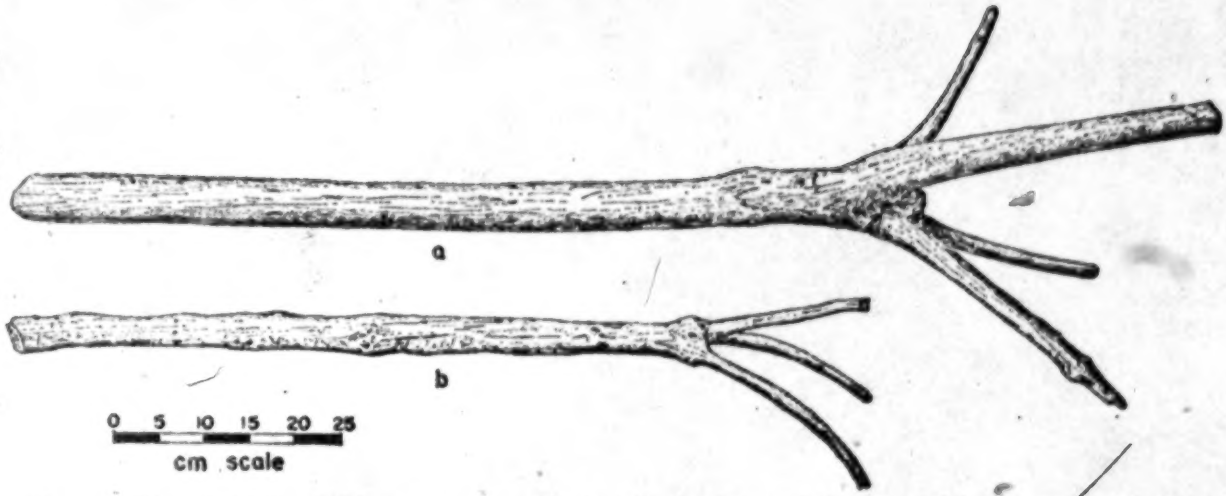

FIG. 20. Household furniture, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a–b. Benches, *mbakati*. Such forked branches are used for reclining as well as sitting, possibly in imitation of the large versions used in nearby villages.

1: Turnbull E-4.8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

[P.196-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are
285 Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are
439 made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

291 Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to
[1789] that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne
287 Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and
286 repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
287 only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
412 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those of the archers; the beating ends may have one of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

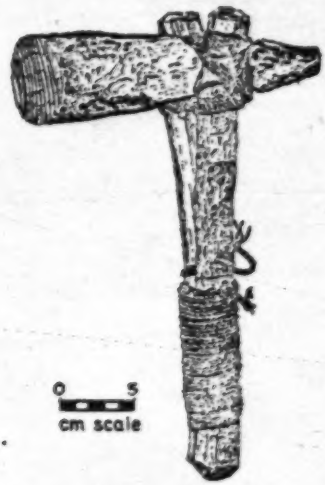

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[462] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity
[476] calling for cooperation between men and women.
[P.197-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-C]

287
412
[284]

FIG. 23. Types of grooving found on ivory bark-beater heads, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

mond grooving being the commonest. There are only about two bark beaters to a camp.

There are two main ways of preparing the cloth. Strips of the bark of *Ficus* are peeled off the trunk between two horizontal and one vertical slit. Before the beating, the outer bark is scraped off, then the inner bark is softened either by being soaked in water from half an hour to 12 hours, according to the type of bark, or by being heated and smoked over a fire.

287
[824]

[NET HUNTERS]

or by being heated and smoked over a fire. The resultant barkcloth may be worn in its natural color, dyed red or blue, or be painted with simple designs (Figs. 25–27), The dyeing and painting are done by women, using a special mud for an over-all blue dye, the juice of a citrous fruit for blue line designs, and *nkula* (elsewhere *ngula*) bark, scraped with another piece of bark (Fig. 24), with water added while scraping, for 287 386 531

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 200-A]

[412]

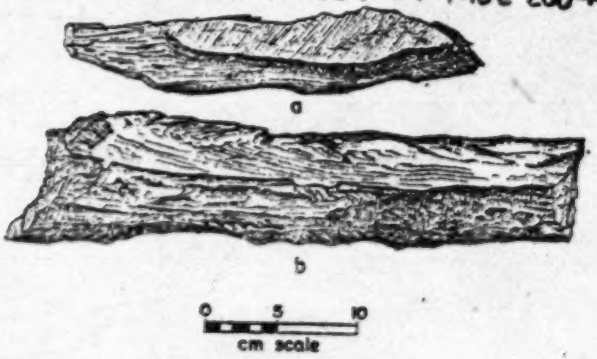

FIG. 24. Block and scraper of wood, *nkula* (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri; used with water for the extraction of the red dye most commonly employed in the decoration of barkcloth.

[P.197-D]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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[NET HUNTERS]

[P.198-A]

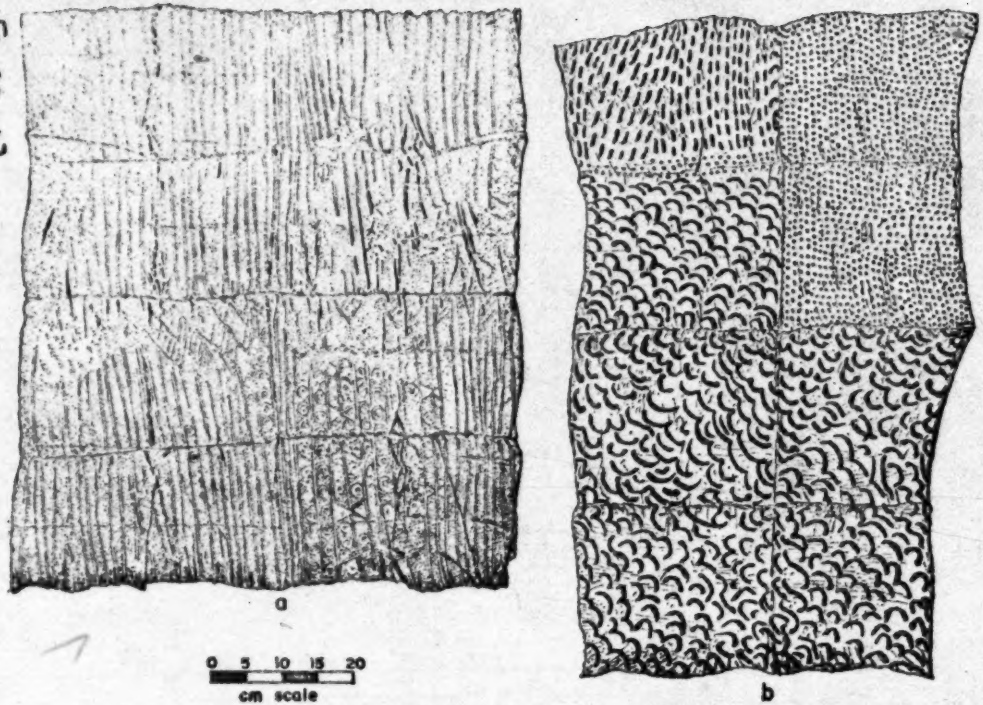

FIG. 25. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *epo'u* vine. b. Made of *esele* vine.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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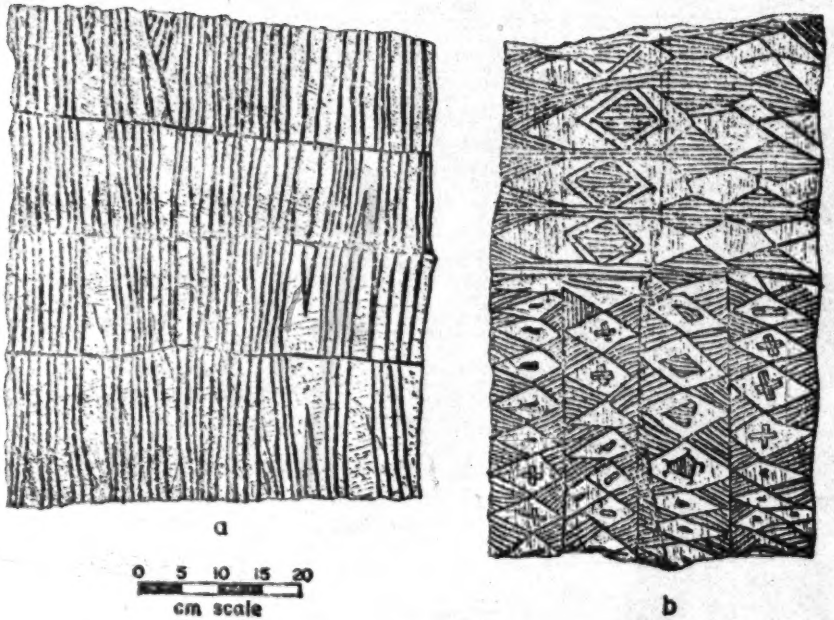

FIG. 26. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *akoko* vine. b. Made of *esele* vine.

[P. 198-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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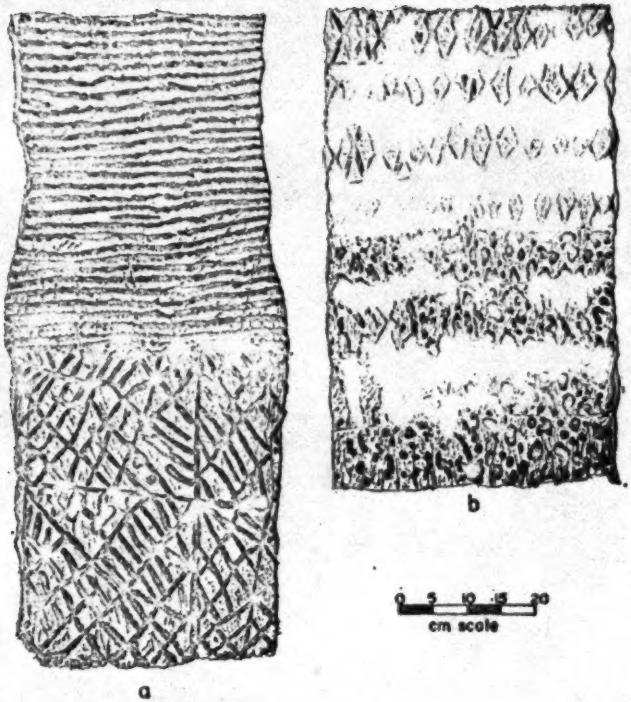

FIG. 27. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *le'engbe* vine. b. Made of *akbanda* vine.

[P.199-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

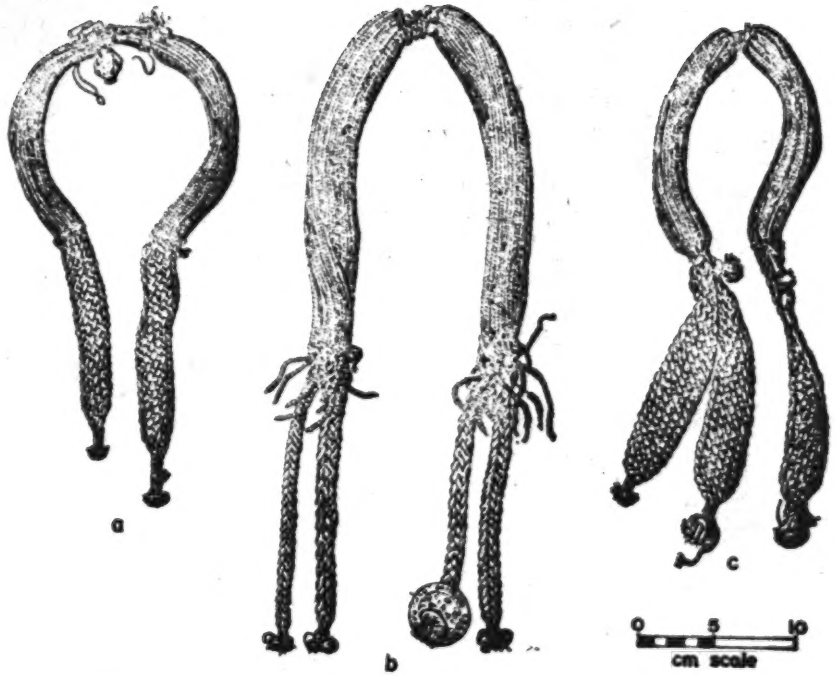

FIG. 28. a–c. Belts, *mokaba*, for barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Plaited by women from strips of vine around a vine core.

[P. 199-B]

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtapo-
sition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

291
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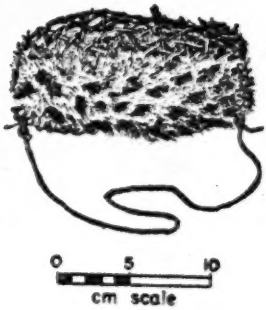

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] 84 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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301
B
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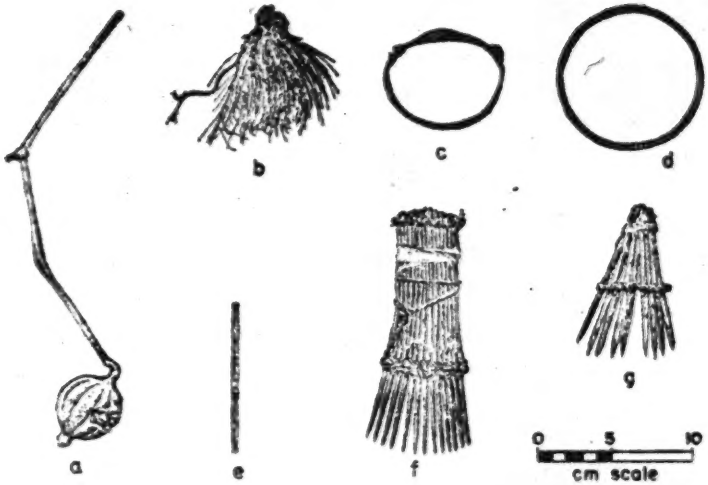

FIG. 30. Personal adornment. a. *Kangay* (gardenia) seed, used by women for extraction of a black dye for painting the body, also for painting designs on barkcloth; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Hair decoration, *mongele* antelope hair; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. c–d. Bracelets; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. f. Comb, *kisanoa;* Bira villagers, Central Ituri. g. Comb, *kisanoa;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. As everywhere among the Mbuti, metal objects are of villager origin. Many of the wooden objects of personal adornment are made in imitation of villager artifacts (compare f and g).

P
[177]
[P. 200-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-A]

Care of Body

515 According to the Putnams, the net hunters
302 take much greater care of their bodies than
[184] Schebesta's archers. They bathe frequently in the shallow streams near the camp, inspect each other carefully for bugs and lice (acquired inevitably when sleeping on the ground), and shave their heads for purposes of cleanliness rather than for esthetic satisfaction. Oil, when available, is rubbed into the skin. On ceremonial occasions, when they visit the Bantu village, palm oil is used, often mixed with *nkula* paste to add to its natural deep red color.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The only domestic animal, as with the arch-
184 ers, is the hunting dog, but this, although highly prized, is not so important to the net hunter as to the archer and tracker. Even among the larger net-hunting bands there may be only one or two dogs.

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [373] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [252] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam [463] is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

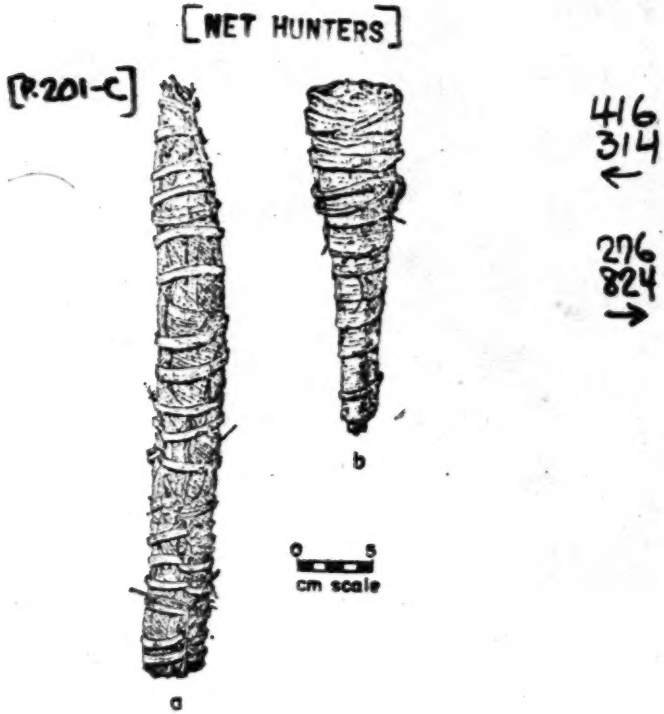

FIG. 31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, made of *kasuku* resin and wrapped in leaves; used when necessary to move from the hut at night. b. Bark pipe, *mbende*, used when village pipestems and bowls are not available.

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[P. 201-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.202-A]

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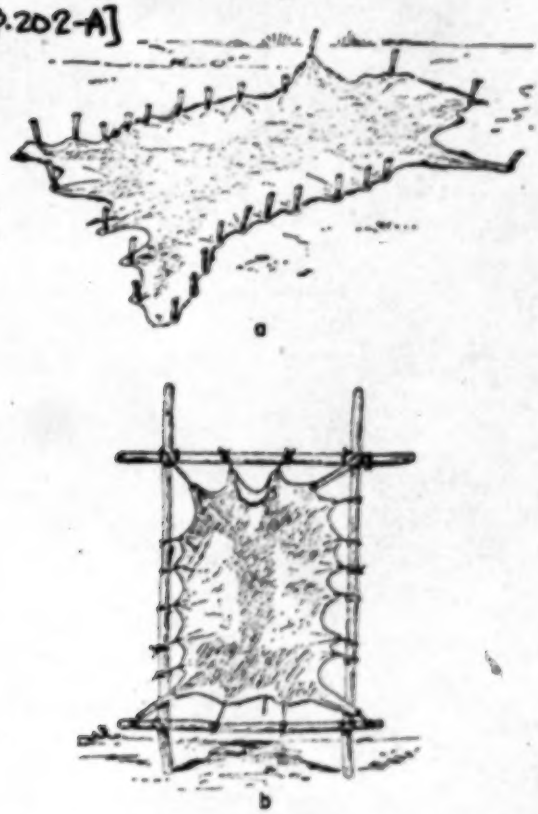

FIG. 32. Methods of stretching hides to dry, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Hides, little used by the net hunters except as baby slings and, more rarely, as quivers, are good trade items that are needed by villagers, among other things, for drumheads.

[237]
[439]

[NET HUNTERS]

224
184 The Pygmy has no use for traps or pits. These require too much work and are, by his standards, inefficient. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti can be classified as net hunters or non-net hunters or, conversely, as archers or non-archers. Putnam states that this adherence to either hunting technique depends on the prevailing villager custom, as the villagers supply the Pygmies with both nets and arrowheads. Later, he modified this view because the Pygmies are, in fact, making nets all the time by adding to and subtracting from their existing nets, as mentioned above. [Schebesta (1933) refers to the Pygmies as making their own nets.]

[621] This division into archers and net hunters is also
[476] significant with regard to social organization, says Putnam (1948, 328), since "The degree to which co-operation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band."

[P. 202-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 202-C]

The net-hunting technique is similar to that of the *begbe* described by Schebesta (1952, 133 ff.) but with the notable absence of the leadership of an "elder." The decision as to when and where to hunt is made during the evening preceding the hunt, in conversation among all the hunters around the campfire. Whereas rain puts an end to both net hunting and tracking, lack of rain (causing dry leaves to crackle underfoot) is disadvantageous only to trackers. Like the beat hunt, net hunting relies on the *amount* of noise that can be made. 224 184

The net hunt calls for a minimum of seven nets, each married man owning a net. Unmarried men may also own nets if they have proved their prowess as hunters. It is usual in a normal camp of about 17 huts for the majority of men, women, and children to join the hunt. If the camp is large, some members stay behind and perform their various subsidiary chores such as the repair of nets, the manufacture of bark-cloth and twine, gathering, and so forth. The women joining the hunt carry their babies on their backs; boys and young men are armed with bows and arrows or spears; and the heads of families carry their nets and spears. Various 224 [422] [512] [854]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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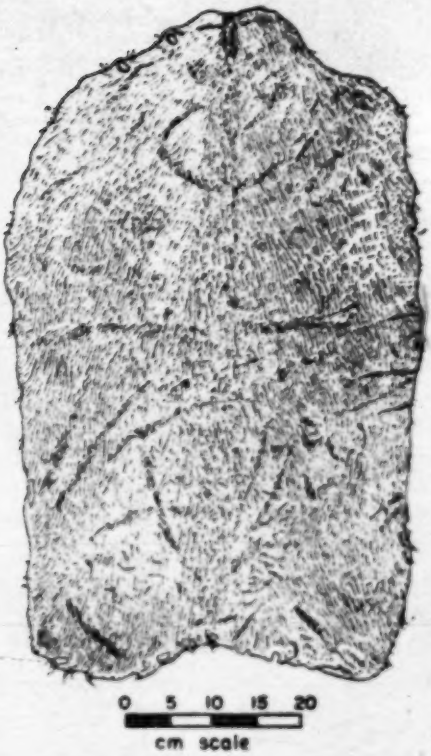


FIG. 33. Prepared antelope hide, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 202-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.203-A]

224
286

0 5 10 15 20
cm scale

FIG. 34. Hunting net, *kuya*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Coiled and bound for carrying over the shoulders.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224 [114] Various early travelers describe net hunts in similar terms (Parke, 1891; Lloyd, 1899; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924). Parke (1891) gives a detailed description of the nets, which corresponds to that given by Putnam, and records their length as from 100 to 200 feet. He gives the height of the net, however, as 5 feet, while the nets used by the Epulu net hunters are barely 4 feet high (Figs. 34–36).

When a suitable place is reached, the women make beaters of twigs and branches, and go off into the forest, while the men set the nets up end-to-end, in a large semicircle. The women carry their babies, but the young children are left with the men.

Putnam indicates that there is a difference in the value of different positions in the circle of nets; the central positions are the most likely to catch game. There is a definite system in set-

[P. 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.203-C]

534
224

FIG. 35. Magic whistle, *mamambamamba*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such magic is rare, though pipes and whistles are sometimes blown before a hunt in the belief that the sound will attract game.

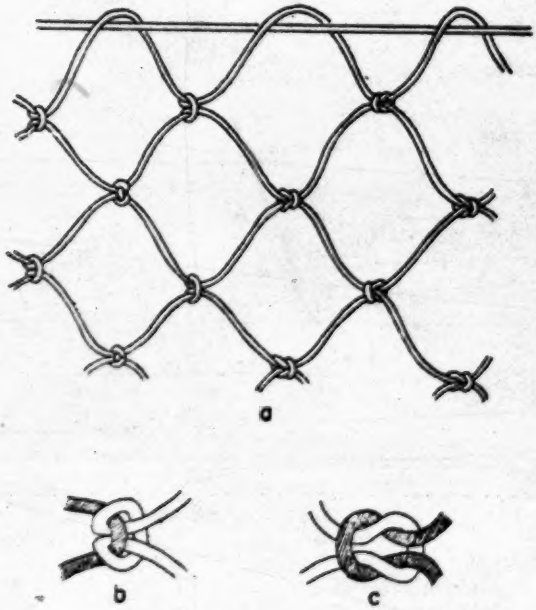
ting up the nets, with a special vocabulary of 224
technical terms to deal with it, but he does not give the details.

When all is ready, the women, who have spread out in an opposing semicircle, start beating into the nets, calling and shouting, beating their sticks on the ground. If they see any slow game heading their way, they dive for it and

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

catch it with their hands, put it in a basket, and 224
continue beating. Their main object is to put up game and drive it toward the nets. There, the men are in readiness, motionless until some animal is tangled in the meshes. Then they seize it, and the owner of that particular net kills the



224
284
286

FIG. 36. Details of knotting used in hunting net, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 203-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-A]
224 [201] animal with his knife or spear. He claps his armpit to signal his success to his companions. The women by the tone of their shouting and the men by their arm-clapping (KiBira: *kombo*) can indicate not only when and where game is put up, but the kind of game.

In a day's hunting this process may be repeated as many as seven times, if the rain holds off. But if the first few casts of the nets are successful the Pygmies return to camp. They make no provision for the storage of meat or any other food.

If large game, such as buffalo, is driven toward them, the Mbuti try to lower the nets to avoid their being damaged; otherwise, the buffalo will probably tear its way through, though it may be delayed long enough for the hunters to spear it. Antelope is the game normally [483] caught. The hunter carries the dead animal around his neck back to the camp for division. If a larger animal, such as an okapi, is caught, it is cut up on the spot and carried back to the camp in the women's baskets. There all the meat is spread out and the division takes place

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 621 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

411

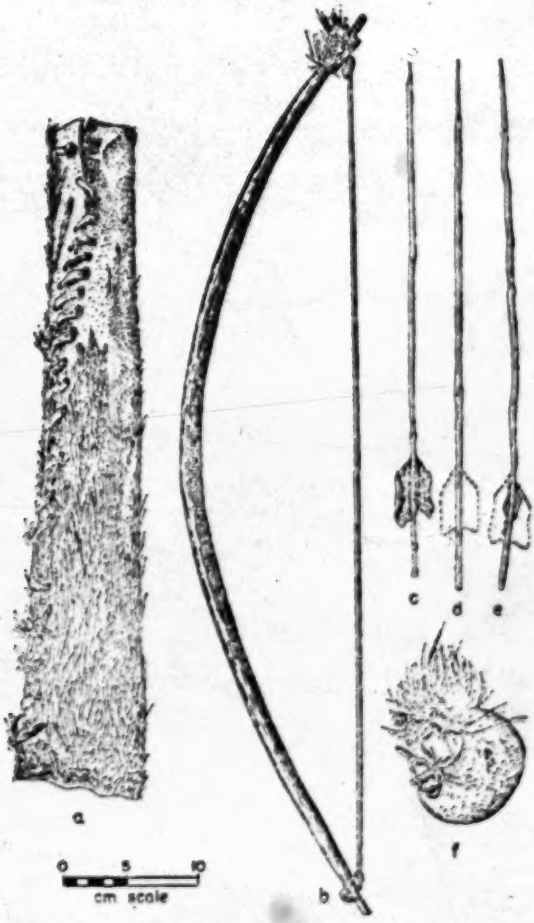


FIG. 37. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver, *baba*. b. Bow, *mangé*. c–e. Arrows, *api*. f. Wrist protector, *asuba*. The bows, arrows, and wrist protectors of the net hunters are notably shorter than those of the archers but are only of secondary importance in the food quest. The net hunters prefer poisoned arrows to those with metal tips (see Figs. 38–39).

[192]

[184]

[P 204-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.205-A]

224 hit the target. At tracking, however, the Mbuti
411 are excellent, being able to move swiftly and silently through the forest. They can, in Putnam's estimation, catch game with their hands, and often do so, as successfully as by using their bows and arrows. Iron-tipped arrows are used on larger game, and untipped, poisoned arrows
[278] are used mainly for monkeys and birds. The poison is prepared individually, strophanthus being the vital plant acting as a heart stimulant.

224 Hunting dogs are used both during the net hunt and by individual owners for hunting wild boar.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 205-B]

Elephant hunting is important in the Epulu 224
District. Certan bands of Pygmies are specialists. Among the local net-hunting band from which the most detailed information is available, however, four out of 12 or 15 hunters are elephant hunters. Putnam says that the present [178]
form of elephant hunting is a recent development in answer to the needs of the villagers whose plantations were continually being ravaged by elephants and who encouraged the Pygmies to kill them off. In the early days the [237]
villagers had little use for the tusks, other than [439]
as barkcloth beaters, but with the advent of

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 206-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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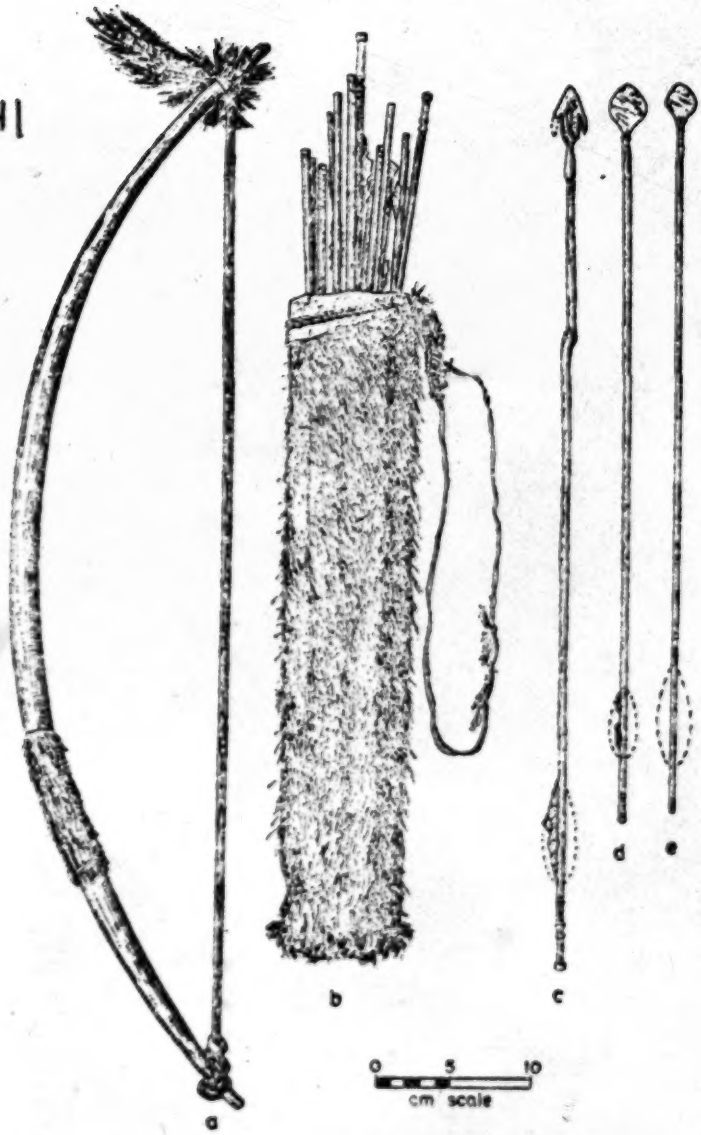

FIG. 38. Hunting equipment, net hunters. a. Bow, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Quiver, Central Ituri. c–e. Arrows, Central Ituri.

[P. 205 – C]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 206-A]

411

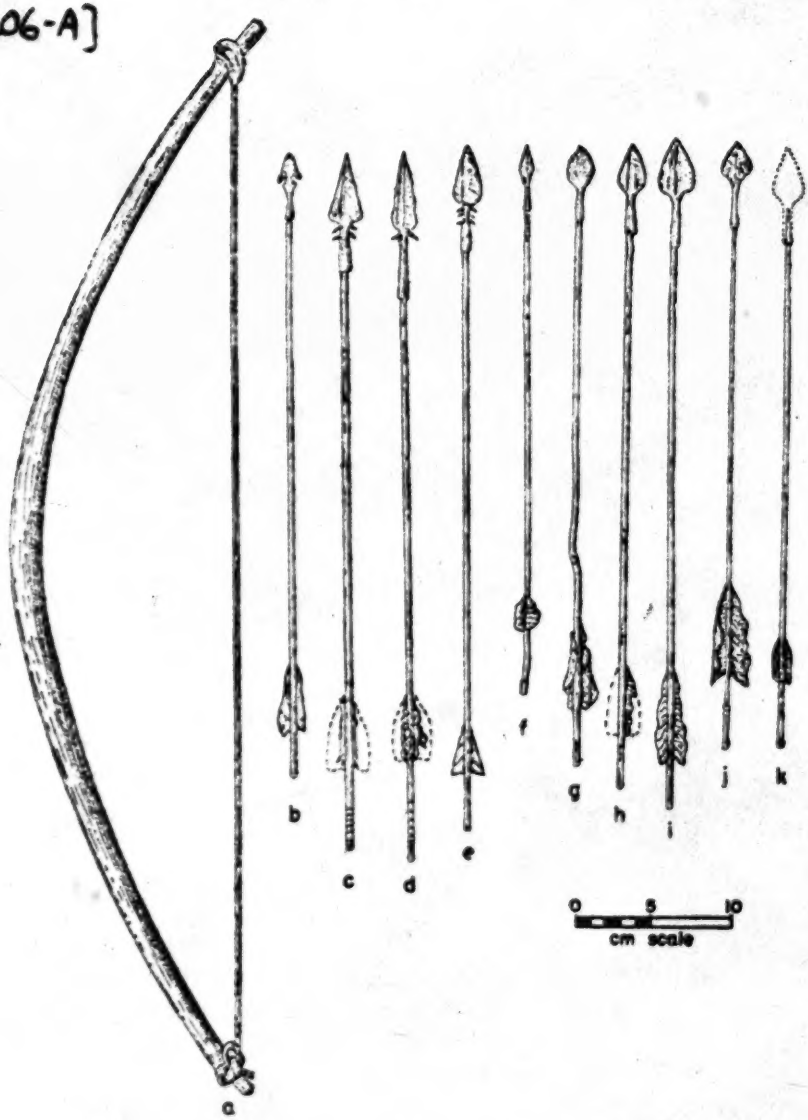

FIG. 39. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–k. Arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Arab traders ivory became a most precious
[237] commodity, and the Pygmies were doubly in-
[439] couraged to kill elephants. For the Pygmies themselves, a slain elephant was a source of great satisfaction, providing them with meat ample enough to obviate the necessity of hunting for several days.

[157] The killing of the animal was, and still is, a matter that inspired the normally audacious Mbuti with some caution. Putnam says that elephant hunting is a specialist occupation; not every Pygmy is brave enough, and the tech-
[171] nique itself takes great skill. The villagers use spear-falls and elephant pits (dug so as to trap

[P. 206-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

the elephant's forefeet and head only), but this method of hunting is foreign to the Mbuti. Travelers such as Parke (1891) who observed spear-falls and pits almost certainly saw those made by villagers, not Pygmies. Casati (1891), Lloyd (1899), Geil (1905), Christy (1924), and others mention the fact that Pygmies are able to kill elephants with their bows and arrows, a technical ability strongly denied by Schebesta, Putnam, and the Pygmies themselves. Schweinfurth (1874, 65–66, 70) was told by a villager informant that the northern Mbuti are able to kill an elephant either with bow and arrow or by thrusting a spear into its belly. The latter

224 [171]

[P. 206-C]

i: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 207-A]

224 method was known to Putnam, who says that a special spear, with a long wide blade of soft metal, is used (Fig. 40). The shaft is about 4 feet long and stout; the blade is carefully sharpened on a stone (as the Pygmy sharpens all his [825] blades). The hunter, who may make use of elephant droppings to cover his scent, tracks the elephant, approaches it silently up wind, and thrusts the spear as far as he can into the belly, just behind the ribs. Putnam says that the Pygmy then stands absolutely still (but presumably having jumped into the cover of the bush), and that the Pygmies themselves said that if you "as much as wink at this moment you are a dead Pygmy" (Putnam, 1948, 331). He may, if the opportunity offers, repeat this process. When he returns to camp the others examine his spear and decide, according to the distance the blood has reached down the blade, whether the wound is fatal and justifies tracking or not. If they decide the wound is fatal, the entire camp sets off, leaving only an old couple to look after the camp. They track the elephant for two or three days until it dies of peritonitis.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Putnam describes a ceremony that takes place at that time. A man other than the hunter cuts off a section of the skin, a little at a time, distributing it for all to eat. When he has cut down to the inner wall of the abdomen and everyone has had a piece, he stands aside for the youngest son of the successful hunter to bite through the wall, whereupon the bloated ele-
[262] phant bursts. Putnam says that this ceremony is repugnant to the Pygmies, who dislike raw meat, and particularly repugnant to the child, but he does not explain the practice.

251 Following this ceremony, the animal is
252 quickly and completely butchered, and the
261 meat is cooked. The Pygmies eat as much as they can. They partly boil and partly dry some (the only form of preservation of foodstuff ever practiced by them) and take this to the village.

224 In 1951, Putnam gave me another version of this form of hunt, in which the Pygmy thrusts the spear into the bladder of the elephant, and, if he sees that the urine is released, he returns to camp knowing that it will die within a few days. The procedure is then as above. Anne Putnam (1954, 93) mentions a net hunter who tracked and killed an elephant at a time when there was no shortage of food, simply because he felt the urge to do so.

Schebesta (1941, 106 ff.) mentions two types
[P. 207-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 208-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.207-C]

411
284

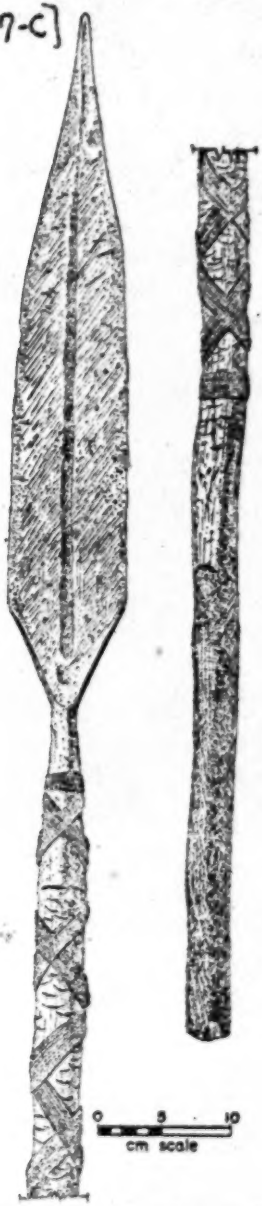

FIG. 40. Spear, *ekonga*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Used throughout the Ituri, except possibly in parts of the north, primarily as a weapon of defense and secondarily for the hunting of large game, including elephant. Mbuti hafting. [184]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 208-A]

224 of elephant hunt known to him. The first makes use of a spear such as that described by Putnam, but the Pygmy, instead of thrusting it into the belly, creeps up behind the elephant and cuts the tendon above one of its heels. The elephant spins around, at which a second hunter, waiting for this action, leaps out of the bush and cuts the tendon of the other heel, thus bringing the elephant down, at which point it is easily killed —often by blinding it and then cutting off the trunk and leaving it to bleed to death. The second method makes use of a harpoon, and according to Schebesta, this is the method used among the net hunters. Here the harpoon is thrust into the belly, as described by Putnam, after which the Pygmy leaps clear. If thrust far enough, the elephant dies from lacerations caused by the dragging on the harpoon head as the attached cord snags on trees and undergrowth during the animal's flight.

[223] Men may individually kill monkeys and birds with their bows and arrows, supplementing their individual family food supply, and women out gathering may catch slow game with their 226 hands. Children, and occasionally women, fish and catch crabs. Fishing seems more highly de- [184] veloped among the net hunters than among Schebesta's archers, as the net hunters know of certain grubs that make good bait and can be found in the *kukumu* tree, and also understand the use of poison for catching fish.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

222
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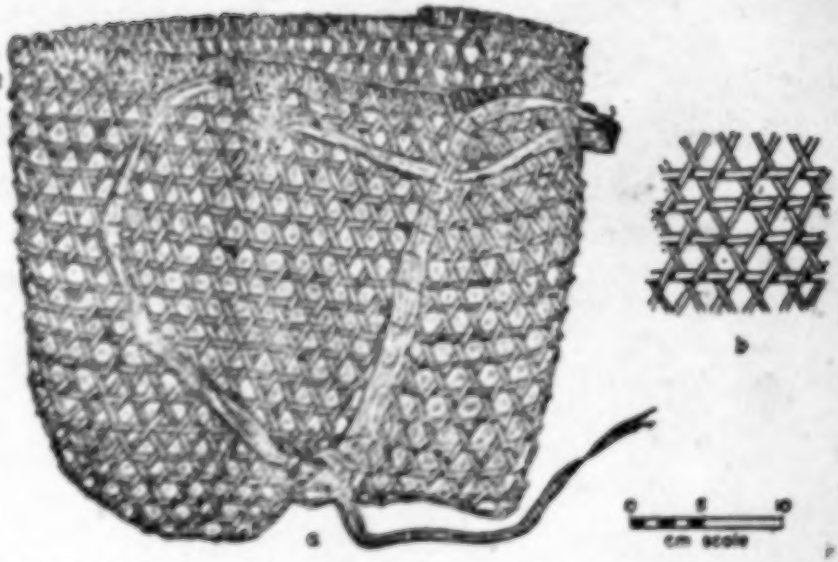

FIG. 41. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Basket, *se.* b. Details of construction. Open-mesh baskets, of strips of dried vine, are made and used by Mbuti women among both net hunters and archers.

[P 208-C]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P209-A]

222
285

FIG. 42. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a–b. Baskets, *so*. Close-mesh baskets are obtained from neighboring villages and may be offered by vil-
[439] lagers in exchange for forest produce.

[NET HUNTERS]

222 Putnam says that, for most of the year, gather-
221 ing can be said only to supplement vegetable
439 food obtained from the villager plantations, although during the "dry season" (January–February) certain seeds and fruits ripen, and forest foods become so plentiful that the Pygmy can live entirely by gathering.

222 Particularly important among the fruits is
[137] the *ibambi*, a large fruit somewhat resembling an outsized pineapple. When ripe it can be heard falling to the ground, at which there is a

[P 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

race between Pygmies and chimpanzees to get 222
to it first. Pygmies say that chimpanzees, if they [825]
are already well fed, will take a fallen *ibambi*
and hide it in the fork of a tree, but an obser-
vant Pygmy will find it. The *eseli* nut is the [137]
most important of the nuts and is too tough for
chimpanzees to open, and the *itaba* is the most
important of the edible roots. Following the dry [221]
season comes the season of termites, and then
that of caterpillars. The honey season, however,
is the only season of real significance.

[P. 209-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.210-A]

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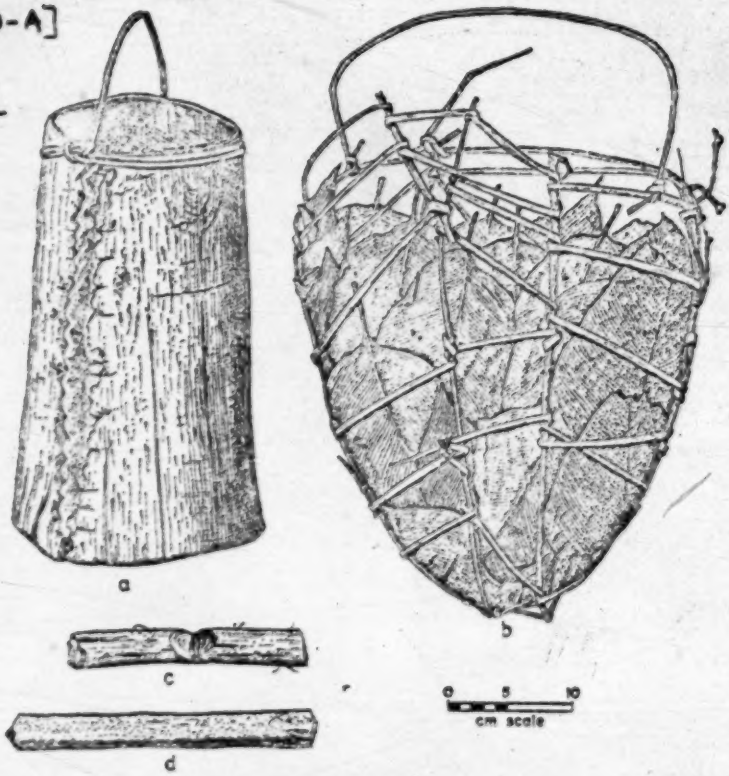

[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *ebimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayabisi*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *ngbengbe*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[184]
[22]
[533]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Honey Gathering

222 This is an important and festive season, com-
[221] ing toward the middle of the year. The method
[184] of collection is the same as that described by Schebesta (1952, 143–144) for the archers, and is undertaken by men. Women may accompany them, mainly to be sure of getting their share of honey. On such expeditions, and on any other occasion when they are going from one place to another, the women carry baskets on their backs and leave the right arm free to cut roofing leaves and gather mushrooms and roots and other vegetable foods in passing. In the left
[P 210-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P. 210-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 211 - A]

276 lagers, but the net hunters also make a pipe by twisting a bark strip into a cone, lining the end with fire-resistant leaves (Fig. 31b).

Food Restrictions

262 614 [84] Putnam's information on food restrictions differs from that given for the archers. While there are clan names and clan totems,[1] opinion among the net hunters themselves seems vague as to the exact extent of the restrictions arising from these totems. Probably, if the occasion arose (though the commonest totem animals in this particular group are the leopard and the chimpanzee, not important features of the local diet), a hungry Pygmy would turn a blind eye to the rules of totemism. Putnam says that these rules call for avoidance not only of the animal as well as of its flesh, but also of its favorite food. The animals are not regarded as representing the ancestors themselves but are associated with them in some myth.

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal [825] of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

Trade

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by 177 Putnam on the present dependency of the net [184] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent values other than mutual satisfaction. But the vil- [571] lager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.

[P. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]
alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of intervillage warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] 648 184 177 571

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

648 184 177 571 [439]

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

621 562

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[582] [184] 621 476 184 562

[p. 211-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [P.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[562] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the pri- 512
mary concern of daily life among the net hunt- 22
ers. The net hunt is considerably more reward-
ing than the other form of hunt, although it
probably occupies as much time. Care and [286]
maintenance of the nets are also laborious and
time-consuming. Women gather not only as
they accompany the hunt, but also on those
days when the hunt stays behind in the camp.
The children make a not inconsiderable contri- [857]
bution to the family food quest. A common 512
occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and 283
women to assist each other in the making of
twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used pri-
marily in the repair of hunting nets.

As with the archers, elimination takes place 364
not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried 514
away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. [184]
These practices not merely create an unpleas-
ant smell after some weeks, but also attract
armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, how- 515
ever, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and
the favorite recreation of the children is playing
about in the shallow streams. The men assert [481]
that they can all swim but are never seen doing [823]
so; they are certainly much afraid of deep wa-
ter.

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [184]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, [P 212-D] 535 [831] [372] [184]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-A]

535 the dance through fire, is reserved for special re-
[372] ligious occasions among the net hunters. Secular
[84] dancing takes place at any time of the day, any day, but nearly always there is dancing in the evening, and, when the moon gives enough light, the dance may continue through most of the night. Except for the religious dances, men, women, and children take part in the dancing together.

533 Song is even more important to the net hunters. There is not much information in the Putnam material, except that different types of song exist for men and for women and for different occasions, but from my own observations among this group there are, as with dance, clearly two major divisions. One is between secular and sacred, and the other is between songs proper to men and songs proper to women. Certain songs are sung only by members of the men's religious association, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*), and those proper to members of the women's association, the *elima* (Schebesta: *elimo*). Then there are songs for hunting and songs for gathering. Each of these

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84 CONCEPTION AND CHILDBIRTH

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also.

845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and

[177] Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-C]

nose with leaves (Pygmy), making slight cuts 845
on the stomach, arms, and knees and rubbing [177]
in herbal medicines (villager), and rubbing the stomach with cold water (both Pygmy and villager). While these activities were going on, children were playing about and running in and out of the hut where the pregnant woman was kept. Finally, the woman in labor, who, though in great pain, had never uttered a word of complaint was made to sit on a log, while one woman sat behind her and held her up, and another in front massaged the infant out. During the whole period of labor the woman's father and her husband were with her constantly. It [843]
was agreed that her difficulties resulted from her having broken a food taboo and eaten the flesh of an anteater.[1]

Another aid used by the Pygmy woman dur- 844
ing childbirth is described by Anne Putnam (1954, 165). The girl in labor is given one end of a liana to hold; the other end is tied to a tree. Each time the pains start, the girl pulls on the liana as her friends massage her stomach.

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 [853]

A woman who has given birth is not allowed to leave her hut until game has fallen into her husband's net. If the camp is moved before this happens, she is hidden in the bush and taken separately to the new camp where she is kept hidden until her new hut is built for her by relatives (not stated which relatives). The husband himself may not join the hunt but sends his net with another member of the group.

The father keeps the arrow that cut the umbilical cord, and the cord itself, until the child is old enough to throw them both away into the forest.

If no animal falls into the husband's net (the rule is extended usually to include some close relative's net) for some weeks, the mother and infant may be brought out of seclusion by the giving of a feast to her relatives. The baby is then shaved with an arrowpoint, bathed, rubbed with oil and red *nkula* paste, and bands [851]

[1] Note that this took place in a village, where such supernatural explanations are always sought by villagers. It is doubtful that the same explanation would have been given in the forest context. [77] [71]

[P 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions
[77] are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old 597
enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and 85
adoption may also take place if a mother is without milk, or if one woman is childless and a baby is born to a friend or relative who already has a large family.

Twins

There is no information available, except 845
that twins have been born and survived, and that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is known. It is believed that to separate them is to kill them.

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net 854
hunters are given every care and attention. [184]
They are breast-fed until after they can walk [853]
and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of this group are much more prone than the archer women to leave their children with sisters or close friends for short periods. A great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and trying to climb trees before it can walk. When a camp is moved, an infant is carried either on the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide sling (Fig. 44) across the hip.

The children, as they grow older, tend to 857
play together, frequently away from the camp.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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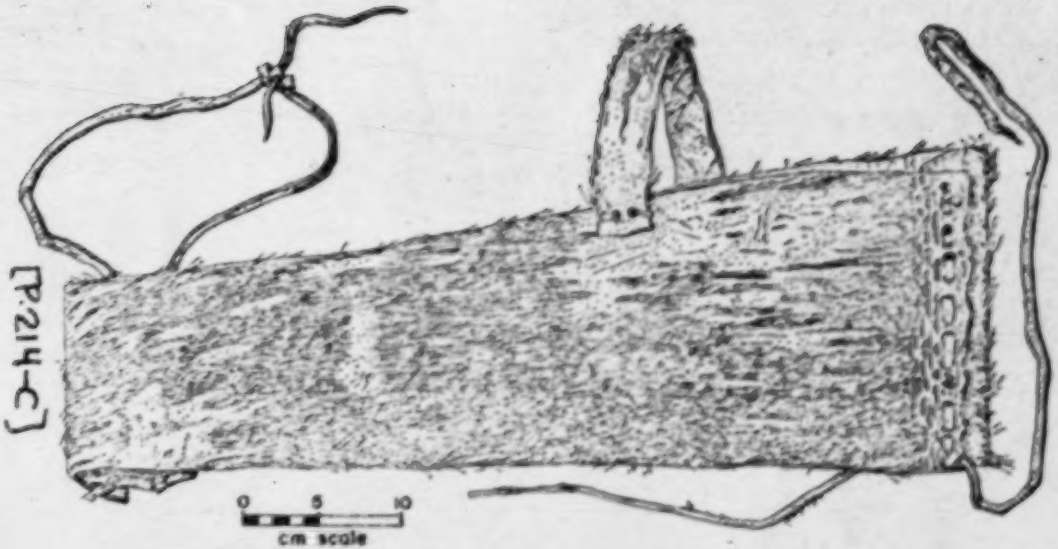

[P.214-C]

FIG. 44. Baby-carrying sling, *koko*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. The sling is used relatively rarely and usually only on long treks on which the women will also be carrying loads. Otherwise, the baby is sat on the hip and is held loosely by one arm.

[NET HUNTERS]

FIG. 45. Toys, net hunters, Epu'u District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ekenge*. b. Fire spear, *irumakamakoki*. c. Castanets, *kalokkenje*. d. Top, *mbiya*. e. Baby sling, *koko*. f. Bark beater, *kaine*. g–h. Seed whistles, *pile'a*. i. Wrist protector, *ezuke*. j. Basket, *ro*. k. Bow, *mangy*, and arrow, *epi*.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 216-A]

857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp.
881 Even at this age, however, and after under-
882 going the *nkumbi* initiation, they are still under
593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumbi*.

868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's mate-
[184] rial and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta
[114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison.
881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl,
[346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this
[302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At

[P. 216 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C]
sundown they return to their hut, which they 881
enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533]
taught to the new initiates by the old woman in
charge. The women of the camp sit outside and
also sing, having armed themselves with whips
made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to [613]
her lover, who may be of the same band but
must be of a different lineage. He must fight his
way into the hut, through the women armed
with whips and against the shower of missiles
hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the
old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be
serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881
young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836
had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering
his maiden. He remained with her all night. The
next day he was bound with vine and kept a
prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was
then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed
to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [831]
(i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [613]
try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [837]
of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

[NET HUNTERS]

claim compensation from him. The women guardians also could make it easy or difficult for the candidates, according to their inclinations. Any man, having fought his way through, had to secure the girl's permission before he slept with her. But reliable Mbuti informants reported that a large number merely fought for the prestige acquired and sought no intercourse with the girls. Outwardly, there is no change, except that instead of firing arrows from their bows the men fire fruit peel, and the fighting is less severe than that described in the tales of olden times. Exactly what happens inside the hut is not known, but the festival is evidently an opportunity for young men to prove their valor, and for young maidens to prove their womanliness, each one attesting to his or her readiness for marriage. There is unfortunately no evidence as to how far the opening of the *elima* constitutes a betrothal, nor how frequently it is followed by marriage. 881 836 [554]

During the course of the *elima* the girls are under certain food restrictions, which include a prohibition on all meat. *Elima* singing goes on all night. Presumably, as with the *nkumbi* initiation of boys, this is a period of discipline as well as of education. Apart from the special *elima* songs, apparently special dances are 881 [533] [535]

[P 216-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.217-A]

881 taught to the *elima* initiates. In one such dance
[535] witnessed by Mrs. Putnam, the girls held arrows and cut one another, and the women struck them with whips.

There is no information from the Putnam material as to any particular ceremony to mark the end of the *elima* (but see Turnbull, 1960a, 198 ff.).

Initiation: *nkumbi*

Putnam's notes on the initiation of boys concern a net-hunting band and are particularly interesting, as they describe an initiation that occurred in the Bira village of Kokonyange in 1935, 14 years before Schebesta witnessed an initiation among the same group. It is significant that Putnam makes no mention of *karŧ*
881 608 brotherhood between Pygmy and village boys.

For male initiation among the particular Epulu net hunters we are dealing with, I have only my own field notes,[1] and here again there is no mention of *karŧ* brotherhood (Turnbull, 1957). The full details of the ceremony do not concern us, as they vary from one village to another. It is important, however, to compare
[184] the relationship between the net-hunting Mbuti and the Bira villagers with that between the archers and the Lese, with regard to initiation.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

88 The first *nkumbi* of which I saw something
114 was in 1951 at the village of Effundi Somali. I
saw only a part and the final closing ceremony.
608 Although I may well have missed much detail, it is unlikely that I would have missed anything of the nature of a *karé* relationship had one existed. There was certainly no sign of it. The next *nkumbi*, which took place in 1954 at Camp Putnam, was exceptional in that no village boys of the right age were available, so only Mbuti boys were initiated. Thus, there was no question of *karé* relationship between them and villagers, but also, during the entire course of the *nkumbi*, I heard no mention of it. This, together with Putnam's own silence on the subject, would seem to indicate that this relationship is either not so widespread or not so important as Schebesta assumes.

881 The peculiar circumstances of the 1954 *nkumbi* are given briefly here. Though exceptional, they contain some interesting points for

[114] [1] These covered my visits to the Ituri in 1951 and 1954–1955 only.

[P. 217-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers.

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates.

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp.

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

P N 8 3 0 4 1 7 7 [346]

Z P [759] [301]

P N 8 3 1 1 7 7

[P 217- D]

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-81

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.218-A]

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P
881
177
751

FIG. 46. Initiation whip, *mbaka*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were made to move about continually by the villager instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present at all times, frequently comforted their sons, apparently to the annoyance of the villagers. There was, however, no question of the savagery implied by Schebesta. During the following two months the boys were strictly disciplined. There was a process of physical training that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only one of the major purposes of the *nkumbi*, namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti fathers, however, obviously had different ideas as to how far this discipline should be carried and criticized the villagers when they carried it too far. Further, when there were no villagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite openly and showed by their speech and their behavior that they had no respect for the taboos associated with the festival. It seemed quite evident that they consciously underwent the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious significance, but because it gave them status in villager society, in which any uncircumcised youth is a laughing stock. The important thing, then, was the circumcision, for this specific purpose.

P Z 881 177
P Z 881 881 177
P Z [571]
P 881 829 177
Z 881 177

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

Z P 881 534 [114] [575] Z P 881 Z P [532] [292] P 881

[P 218-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-A]

P
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292
301

FIG. 47. Initiation items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Raffia armbands, worn by "doctor" during *nkumbi* dances; at other times, hung from the roof of the initiation hut. b. Grass skirt, worn by initiates at final presentation dance.

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do not participate fully in the proceedings of the [575] *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and [304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkumbi* 199 serves merely to give status in villager society. 17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation [554] into the religious associations of their own men and women; the *molimo* and *elma*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

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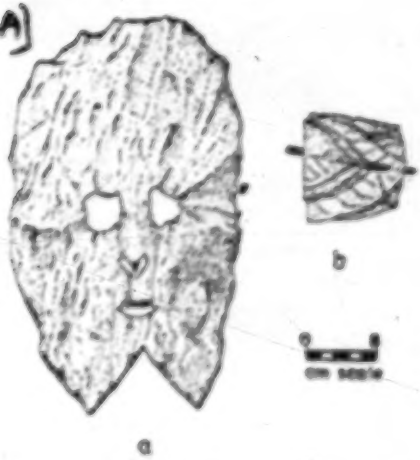

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

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fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

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613
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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

532

FIG. 49. Wood carvings, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Carving of standing male. b. Carving of tree. Such carving is done by the Mbuti extremely rarely and only in direct imitation of the villager carvers.

[PM]

[P 220-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved. 621 582 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor. 621 58 [591]

[P 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p 220-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Z 585 628 563 P 172 585 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). P [533] [535] Further, even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 57 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P 221-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-C]

married life free from the normal household chores.

Unlike Schebesta's description of passionate lovers who, as married couples, in no way exhibit their affection in public, both premarital and postmarital sexual relations among the net hunters seem equally open, if not quite equally free. Flirtations among unmarried boys and girls of the same band, providing again they do not openly flout exogamic convention and do not result in childbirth, arouse no interest among the adults other than casual gossip. Married women, while as incorrigibly flirtatious as ever, are not expected to have sexual intercourse with any but their husbands. On the other hand, no social convention prevents the husband from having sexual intercourse with unmarried girls, though he does so with care to avoid unpleasantness with his wife.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives. P 593

Divorce

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost certainly involves the village patrons, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride. P 586 P Z [177] [571] Z [563]

[P 221-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.222-A]

595 Polygyny exists but is almost as inconsiderable as among the archers. It sometimes
587 comes about through the very informality of
[586] divorce. A husband who has been deserted, having made every effort to retrieve his wife, seeks another. After remarrying in this way, he may find that he still misses his old companion and will try to woo her back, or she may return of her own accord. There is no information as to the relationship between the two wives, except that they have separate huts and that there is no open friction.

Widowhood

589 Information on widowhood, though not given in detail by Putnam, seems to correspond to the general information given by Schebesta for the archers. Widows tend to remain in their late husbands' band and are cared for by their children unless they remarry.
589 Aged widowers are similarly provided for. But
887 even widows and widowers too old to remarry can play a useful economic role by attending to various chores in camp when the entire band is out hunting, helping in the constant manufacture of *nkusa* twine and barkcloth, and by looking after small children.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

264 [184] [768] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [761] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[p. 222-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger.
It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed
by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous
snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and
diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd
gummed to one end) is administered, with the
use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro*
bark for the former complaint, and *teboo* liana
for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755]
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch
doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their
efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's
account for the archers, cited examples of wail-
ing. The following instances taken from the
notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

[NET HUNTERS]

1. A Pygmy who had been visiting another band returned to his own camp and reported that a cousin of his had died. A wailing, suddenly started, was taken up, mostly by women but also by men and children, all over the camp. It lasted for 10 minutes and was repeated several times during the evening for five minutes at a time. Everyone went to sleep as usual; there was a final wail on waking the next morning. 763

2. A newborn infant (son of one of the most important hunters in the band) died at night. Only its father and mother wailed. Early in the morning the parents dug a pit in the house and buried the baby, wrapped in a small mat, with no ceremony. The next morning the couple dismantled the house and, using the same material, rebuilt it on the other side of the clearing. That night the father danced as usual. 763 764

3. An old Mbuti woman died while visiting the village. She was the mother of three of the male members of the band. Most of her relatives were with her when she died, and they wailed. When the news was received back in the hunting camp, such of her relatives as remained there wailed. Only one of them, one of the great hunters of the band, left to attend the burial. 763

4. There was an epidemic in a hunting camp, 763 731 165
[P.222-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.223-A]

763 and two people died. After burial and wailing,
731 camp was broken. On the march to another site a
165 woman who had not contracted the illness died, although she was not "ready to die." Within two weeks a woman gored by a buffalo (an extremely rare occurrence) died from her wounds. Following this last event, there was a consultation, and it was suggested that the band should disperse as there was some strong influence at work.[1] However, the dispersal did not take place.

763 5. A very well-liked hunter died while in the
[754] village. There was some talk that a half-paralyzed Pygmy, also a member of the band, had put a curse on him; but this in no way impaired the friendship between the accused and the children of the deceased. When the Pygmy was dying, his son wanted to take him back to the forest but was persuaded to let him die in the village in peace. His family and friends were present; those in the hut wailed occasionally, those outside were busy cooking. When he died the wailing broke out anew, and relatives started coming into the village from the forest. His villager patron could not come, so he sent his brother, the headman of a village a few

[NET HUNTERS]

764 miles away. There was some suggestion that the Mbuti should be buried in the village of his patron, but the eldest son refused and said that the forest was his father's "earth," and this was where he should be buried.

The grave was dug by Mbuti and villagers, about 4 feet deep, with half of it 1½ feet deeper. The body was placed in the deep section, on its side, facing north, covered with sticks and phrynium leaves. Then everyone threw in earth and filled the grave. The women at the funeral became hysterical at this point, falling to the ground and beating themselves. The dead man's second wife tried to throw herself into the grave on top of the body. When the grave was filled, everyone sat down and talked and smoked. The youngest son of the deceased had been playing around quite happily all the time. After smoking, villagers and Mbuti all washed their hands and feet in a nearby stream.

152 Both Patrick and Anne Putnam claim that there is, among the Epulu Mbuti, formal and controlled wailing, also wailing as a manifestation of genuine grief among both men and women. Men and women will weep apart during

[177] [1] Suggestions of this kind are sometimes made by the Mbuti in their village context, in imitation of the villagers. They by no means necessarily indicate Mbuti belief.

[P 223-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.223-C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *tori* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

P 177 571 881 Z 563 571 881 P [554] P 3 [575]

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *kari* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

P 575 571 P 2 [608] Z [575] [571]

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

P 575

[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

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[535] FIG. 80. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters,
[575] Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and
[71] feathers, at will, and worn during *maline* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

575 special *elima* songs by initiated girls and women, to mark any event of special importance to the womenfolk of the camp. The *elima* is an association that serves to bind women of otherwise different backgrounds together. It not only emphasizes their unity as a group opposed to the group of men, but also emphasizes their identification with the hunting band as a whole. [D81] It serves as a means of religious expression for the women just as the *molimo* does for the men. It operates separately, but simultaneously, on occasions of common religious significance. Unfortunately, details are lacking in the Putnam material as to the exact occasions on which each of these associations functions.

[P. 224-B]

i: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-c]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill [554] [224]

575 561 88

[P 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.225-A]

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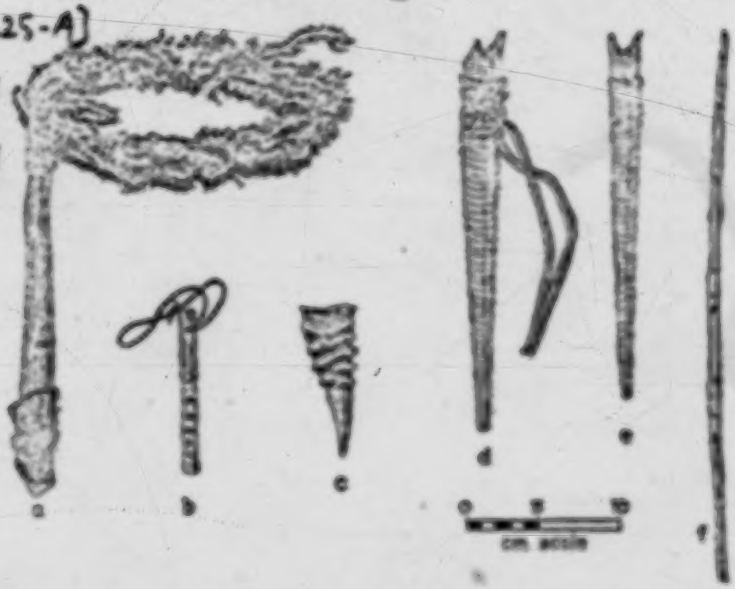

FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akbeba*, attached to fur headband; worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbela*. c. Antelope horn, *anje*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, *madi*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madi*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyangi*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing in the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[237]
[228]
[222]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 561 88 [594] [224] to status in the band and the fact that young men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed particular prowess as hunters may take a prominent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 796 With regard to the proceedings of the association, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 [192] The word *molimo* is used to denote the association, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-8]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

ble then that there may be different types of instrument, but evidently not used in conjunction. Anne Putnam further mentions having heard sounds that she took to be animal sounds but that may in fact have been singing pots as described by Schebesta (1952, 279). The only instrument that she or her husband mentions, however, is the trumpet, and no description of it is given. 534

This instrument is an essential part of the proceedings; its use marks the difference between two grades of *molimo* meeting. A meeting in which the trumpet is not used does not carry the significance that one with the trumpet does. There is no information as to exactly when it is used and when not, but it is recorded that the trumpet is heard during meetings following death, during serious illness, or during some crisis affecting the welfare of the band as a whole. It is frequently associated with song, accompanied by split-stick clappers, *hanja* (Fig. 52) that are apparently peculiar to the *molimo*. 534 575 796 [533]

A third grade of meeting is that from which women and children are not excluded, during 533 575 796

[P 225-C]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P226-A]
534

FIG. 52. Split clappers, *kwija*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung.
535 Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in
537 that it is known by all that the songs effect
[P76] some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

[NET HUNTERS]

533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
796 treat. They know that certain songs have more significance than others, and, on hearing these, they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordinary meeting of the men to develop to this extent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
533 The women in any case have been aware of
796 whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet, they take their children and shut themselves in their huts. None will come out, even to cross the clearing. The men sit close together around one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trumpet echoes their song, sometimes coming close, sometimes going far away into the forest. The *molime* may come right into the camp itself and install itself, unseen, close to where the men are sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly [535] start dancing through the fire, scattering the ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly afterwards the participants go to bed. The singing may last only two or three hours, or may con-

[9.276-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

[P. 226 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 227-A]

575 reached a climax (drums were being used, un-
533 usual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*),
533 the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one
534 of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a
782 present tonight." Another said that there was
796 nothing to give. Then one of the more impor-
tant but younger hunters said, "We'll give it
water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out
and saw water being thrown over a figure that
seemed to be white and that was playing the
trumpet. The figure did not flinch and contin-
ued playing, while the hunter who suggested
throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward
the trumpet left, and the men sang without the
drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

[NET HUNTERS]

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

796 Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at that time.

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not clear and which took place down near the village. One villager took part. The trumpet and the performer, covered with a cloth, were carried in from the forest on a crude litter and disappeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have witnessed were of the more serious kind, following the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally a period, early in the night, during which the men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [965]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 325
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D7]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, "... there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." According to Putnam, the Mbuti re-
[157] spect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"

[P 228-B]

[P. 228-C] [NET HUNTERS]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [59]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families. 628 574 [584] [613] [184]

Occasionally two or even three bands join to form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each 628 476 361 [578] [621]

[P. 228-D]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 476 301 578 621

[P 229-A]

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571 ? Z 628 Z 628

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, in some form, is not lacking among the villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumói* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P 229-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 229-C]

lage for any length of time, as when the villager needs help in the cutting of new plantations, then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly awaited by the villagers. P Z 535 177 571

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, when there is a case of poaching by one band within the territory of another, instead of one lineage head or "elder" consulting the other (the process described by Schebesta for the archers), the bands probably just inform the villagers involved and leave it to them to settle. P 628 648 Z 648

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, there is no question of any one Mbuti representing his lineage or band; such of the more important hunters as are available, and usually a number of the younger men and even older boys, come in a body to argue their case together. The villager is always at a slight disadvantage. While the Mbuti can easily move and find another village patron, it is not so easy for a villager to find more Mbuti. P 648 Z 649 563

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 177 571 574 2 573 571

LEGAL SYSTEM

There are no data available on property law, and there is no clear distinction between collective and private property, as far as can be learned from the material that is available. Most items of personal possession, except used barkcloth, change hands at some time or another, temporarily or permanently, with or without any immediate exchange. There is certainly no scale of values by which any item of property may be assessed in relation to another. The question of whether personal goods, such as cooking utensils for the women or weapons and hunting nets for the men, are P 421 P 422

[P 229-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

(P. 230-A)

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the 428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

It seems, first, that the forest and both its 421 animal and vegetable produce are considered by [186] the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien [621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

[NET HUNTING] A

421 lazy hunter and his family go without meat; an
224 idle woman goes without vegetables and has no roof to her hut. The division of game obtained during a net hunt is the only division that includes everyone in the band, whether or not they attended the hunt. Even then we do not know whether those who did not attend had any arrangement with any of the actual hunters. Nets are frequently lent, as are spears. It may well be that absentee members of the hunt participate by proxy and in this way entitle themselves to a share. The division itself, as is mentioned above, is said to be subject to complicated rules.

594 Apart from the net hunt, which is essentially
292 collective and cooperative and concerns the
421 band, other forms of food quest are familial. A woman is entitled to what she finds, for herself and her family. Similarly a man, hunting
594 individually with bow and arrow, may claim as
224 his own anything that he may bring in, though
421 in such a case there is some doubt. Using bow and arrow he would be likely to bring in only small game, and rarely, these Mbuti being very poor shots. If however, he killed or found large game, such as an okapi, on his own, it would be

[P. 230-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of division would not apply. It seems therefore to be a question of surplus. Every family is entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

FO4 FO4 42

576

Ir Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

In the absence of any "elder," it is difficult at first to understand the legal system and how it functions. From the examples cited, however, it appears that one of the first rights of every Mbuti is the right of self help, but because of the nature of the band in which he lives it is unlikely that any serious dispute will remain restricted to the original participants and left to them to settle. Such can happen, and has, but usually the dispute is widened, involving more and more of the others and, finally, the whole band itself, until a settlement is reached. 627 578

Thus in a case of incest between members of the same lineage, the first act on the part of the girl's family was to pursue the boy, threatening him with knives and spears and driving him from the camp. There, they said, he could die. He would get no shelter and no food. Returning from this chase, they promptly tore down the house of the boy's "father" (actually his father's brother, with whom the boy was staying). As far as the offended family were concerned, the matter was finished, but the "father" thought otherwise and threatened to take counteraction. At this point, while the womenfolk on the girl's side were making the usual demonstrations of grief (throwing themselves on the ground and beating themselves) and the men on both sides were brandishing spears, knives, and bows and arrows, the dispute degenerated into the practical consideration of where the houseless "father" was 627 284 [52]

[P 230-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 231-A]

627 to sleep and how he was to rebuild his house.
684 His wife, who would normally have undertaken this task, was sick. He was offered hospitality for the remainder of the night by other relatives, and early in the morning the offended family were themselves assisting him to rebuild his hut. During this dispute no mention was made of the fate of the transgressor.

621 This particular band was composed of two
627 major segments. The dispute was confined to
684 one segment and almost exclusively, though not quite, to the two families concerned. Other
[613] members of that lineage came forward only to appease and compromise.

The other segment, separated by a few hundred feet (the band was in the process of fission), listened eagerly to the dispute, making comments among themselves, mainly to the effect that the boy was a fool to have allowed himself to be found out and deserved to be beaten. When the pursuit of the boy led through their part of the camp, they hid. The older men carefully shut themselves up and refused to take any part in the proceeding.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly
578 heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
627 monial squabble may well become enlarged
[593] until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P. 231-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, listening and making loud comments, is not insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions. 578 622 562

Apart from the driving of the incestuous youth from the camp, there is no record of even temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere. 627 [684].

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, 761
though it has been known for the aged and 888
infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for 734
those suspected of being possessed of super- 754
natural powers, to disappear or to die of some
strange sickness, under unusual circumstances.
It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths [114]
might have been occasioned deliberately, but
he had no means of verification.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in 802
counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in
pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they 802
are able to assess quantity accurately and 525
speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in
their favorite gambling game in which beans
are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw
depends on whether or not a combination of
four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance
whether he has to throw in an extra bean or
slip one out in order to make the necessary
adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans
are checked in pairs of pairs.

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the prepa- 278
ration of poisons used by the net hunters on 411
[P 231-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.232-A]

278 their arrows but seldom achieved the same
411 effect. The ingredients were known to him, and he concluded some special skill was used in the actual preparation. There is no mention of antidotes to these poisons.

278 Putnam knew of the existence of effective medicine among the net hunters, but no details survive in the notes. Anne Putnam's notes, however, mention a number of cases in which she observed the use of indigenous medicines and treatment.

752 During a fight a boy was knocked uncon-
757 scious by a blow from a piece of wood. He was immediately propped up; the main concern seemed to be to prevent him from lying flat on the ground. Even when semiconscious, the boy was not allowed to lie down. This possibility seemed to frighten the Pygmies more than anything else, and for a while no other treatment was given. Then some incisions were made on his chest, and a leaf was applied.

757 Against toothache a certain leaf (not identified) is chopped fine and mixed with water. This mixture is poured from a leaf cup down each nostril.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

854 304 757 Newborn infants are scarified on the stomach, chest, and leg, and the wounds are treated with herbs, often mixed with goat manure if the net hunters are near a village.

757 The Mbuti in this area claim to have a method which they have practiced for a long time for the treatment of paralysis. Examples given, however, describe this treatment as being given to villager or Pygmy children by villagers. The treatment can also be given to an adult. For paralysis of the legs, it consists essentially of standing the patient in a pit, filling it, and stamping the earth down hard. Only the upper part of the patient's body, which is continually washed with warm water, is left above ground. The stem of the *atumba* (a small plant resembling a dandelion) is cut and cooked with manioc and rubbed into a light incision in the affected limb. The patient may be kept in the pit for four hours a day for a week; each time he is taken out he is washed with warm water. It is claimed that after this treatment the patient will be able to walk, however crippled he was beforehand.

A similar treatment is reported for sprained back or arm. The patient is laid flat in a shallow pit. He is covered from knees to chest with a mixture of earth and leaves, about one

[P 232-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 232-C]

inch thick, packed tight. The top layer of dry leaves and kindling are soaked with oil and set on fire. The fire is kept going for about four hours, then the patient is taken out and hot leaves are applied. This treatment may be followed by hot baths, scarification and insertion of herbal medicine into the wounds, and resting on a bed, but none of this is said to be absolutely necessary. 757

A young man, given to being seized with trembling fits, is calmed by having incisions on his stomach rubbed with a black powder. A liquid is poured down his nose from a leaf funnel.

A certain type of bark, *ikanya*, extremely poisonous, is used to procure an abortion by making a decoction from it and giving it to the pregnant woman to inhale. It appears that even inhaling the dry bark might be effective, but is not certainly so. 847 278 824

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 536 177 157 811

[P 232-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
179 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

538 114 with origin, but rather with dissociating the insignificant from the significant, regardless of origin. A collection of legends as told by four men of the Epulu net hunters, then, is something of great value but to be used with care. Mrs. Putnam made such a collection, totaling some 200 legends. Its very size, coming from a single hunting band, adds to its value. To a person knowing the band and the men who told the legends, the significant can often be easily distinguished from the insignificant. But source material of this kind needs much fuller documentation than is available for use to be made of it for purposes of sociological analysis (see Turnbull, 1959).

538 [626] [1] Similar caution is needed with legends, which, as with the archers, are an important means of expression for the net hunters. The legends are also effective means of social control and illustrate attempts to rationalize the unknown. If we talk about "Mbuti legends," we not only open ourselves to questions as to whether particular legends are of villager or Pygmy origin, but we also imply that the legends necessarily have traditional significance for the Mbuti. The Mbuti like a good story; they will retell it whatever its source. A legend may have had some particular significance for the people to whom it originally belonged, but for the Mbuti its only importance may lie in the scope it offers their histrionic talent.

[P. 233-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-C]

The general observations that can be made from this collection of legends are: 538

1. The Mbuti of the Epulu are remarkably little concerned with matters relating to origin and tradition.

2. Their legends can be classified under three main sections: legends concerning their social life, legends relating to the animal and human kingdoms, and legends concerning the supernatural. In fact, the second section falls in part into social relations and in part into supernatural relations, but we mention it here to show the correspondence with Joset's (1948) classification for the archers.

While there are no professional storytellers among the Epulu net hunters, there are individuals who have a greater mastery of the art than others. They seem to hold an important position in the community, especially in relation to the activities of the *molimo* society. The storyteller and the clown seem to occupy a privileged position and to have a definite role to play in the men's society. Whether this also applies to the women of the *elima* is not known (p. 216). 538 564 [575] [522]

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 199

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-A]

535 net hunters. They have not only social but
[533] also religious meaning. Schebesta's (1941, 252–253) classification of dances as sportive, mimetic, or erotic would also apply to the net hunters, with the addition of religious dances about which we know little. Also, like the archers, the net hunters separate the sexes in dance. There are circular and erotic dances which correspond almost exactly to Schebesta's (1941, 253–256) description of those of the archers.

53 If the band is near a village, they may borrow or steal drums, but the drum, resonant sticks, and handclaps are the only accompaniment (apart from song). A style of dance which uses an orchestra of eight or nine single-pitch bamboo pipes, much in vogue among the villagers, is sometimes copied by other Pygmies in the district. The players stand in a circle. Each player blows his pipe after his opposite number, forming a melodic line. The melodic line and the rhythm are altered by changing both the order of playing and the time lapse. The performers dance as they play and are joined in the dance by others. It is essentially the same style of dance as the *makata* (musical stick) dance seen at the time of *nkumbi*.

[NET HUNTERS]

534 Normally, however, and when drums are not available, short resonant sticks are used. These are either smooth, giving a sharp hollow sound, or else they are split and shaved at one end to provide a totally different accompaniment. These sticks, handclaps, and leg stampings provide the rhythmic background to the dance.[1]

535 224 825 Mrs. Putnam has seen a dance in which a mask made from a leopard skin was used by the Mbuti. She also describes fully (1954, 296 ff.) a dance performed by them following the killing of a leopard. The body of the leopard is strung up to a branch or a tall stake. All the men, armed with liana whips and whips made from plaited antelope hide, gather around it. The men who are responsible for killing the leopard dance by themselves, approaching the stake. As they do so, they are attacked by the others, and have to fight their way to the leopard's body and cut it down, at which everyone gives a shout of triumph. In the

[1] It is most notable that for religious song and dance such is the only form of accompaniment, even if drums are available.

[P. 234-B]

1^Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-C]

dance observed by Mrs. Putnam the man who 535
first speared the leopard was wounded but 224
nonetheless took part in the dance. The other 825
two men involved in the killing protected him as much as they could from their attackers and guarded him as he cut the leopard down. Onlookers said that he would not have been thought a coward if he had not taken part, because of his wounds, but he had chosen to do so.

Song, used in conjunction with dance, as 533
described by Schebesta, also has a separate function and operates as an art form in its own right. This, at first, Schebesta (1933, 301) denied, but later (1936b, 27; 1948, 259) he conceded the greater importance of song over dance. Among the net hunters there is a very clear division of song into four main categories, each of which can be distinguished by style and technique alone, and a fifth subsidiary category of play songs. The main categories are, as briefly mentioned above (p. 213), religious songs and secular songs, each subdivided according to sex, i.e., songs of the men's

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

religious association (*molimo*) and of the women's religious association (*elima*); songs of the men's main economic activity (hunting) and of the women's (gathering). It is perhaps not quite justifiable to make the subdivision according to sex, as, in hunting and gathering among the net hunters, both sexes hunt. Most of the gathering songs concern honey gathering which is primarily a male occupation. Nor, in fact, does the classification into sacred and secular stand up to full scrutiny, as, in a sense, all songs are sacred as all are related to forest activities and the forest itself is sacred (pp. 258–259). 533 [178]

Unlike the archers, the net-hunting Mbuti make extremely little use of musical instruments of any kind, except for the resonant sticks used in accompaniment to their forest songs. For one thing, a truly nomadic group with only the most basic means of locomotion and transport, namely, the human body, can hardly afford to accumulate possessions beyond the absolute necessities—even less so with bulky nets as an additional item to be carried when camp is moved. Some net hunters know how to make and play notched end-blown flutes, with even greater skill and precision than the neighboring villagers, but they are rarely made. A *lukembi* (*sanza*) is the only instrument 534 [184] [48]

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 235-A]

534 that a Pygmy would think of carrying with him, as it is light, portable, and most easily concealed from the villagers from whom he probably stole it. There is no record that the net hunters make any instruments other than the flute and the resonant sticks, and possibly a special musical bow which is made just as is their hunting bow but larger and with a larger section of vine as the "string." Ordinary hunting bows are sometimes used as musical bows.

533 From the material on net hunters it seems that music is virtually exclusively vocal and that, apart from lullabies and some play songs, song involves chorus rather than solo work. Men and women join in song; sometimes they merely double each other's parts (as in the "secular" songs); at other times each takes different and complementary parts (*elima* songs). Certain *elima* songs and all *molimo* songs are sung only by adult women and men, respectively.

533 Merriam (1953), in an examination of music
171 from the Congo and Rwanda, writes that Congo music has four main characteristics: (1) lack of emphasis on percussion; (2) variety of instruments and styles; (3) heavy Arabic influence; and (4) considerable change currently in process.

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531 191 This account of music among the villagers in the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each one of these four points. Though the music of the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifically considered, it appears from all the known material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme percussive effects are obtained by resonant sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted, there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

533 191 184 533 534 184 [191]

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 235-C]

latter little is known in detail. Song is sometimes used when legends are told and is frequently mentioned in them. Dance and mime are even more closely connected. 53

The subject matter of Mbuti drama seems to correspond, as might be expected, with our classification of the subject matter of legends, but the former places greater emphasis on events of the day, particularly hunting. In default of detailed and accurate accounts of dramatic art and all attendant circumstances, the only generalization that seems permissible is the evident lack of interest in personal problems and a preoccupation with the maintenance of the relative status of the human (Mbuti), animal (villager), and supernatural worlds. 536 [81]

With reference to specialists in song and dance, as with other art forms, some individuals who have greater skill than others achieve a measure of renown for their skill. A mediocre hunter who is a good singer or dancer or legend teller is a far more important person than a moderate hunter who is none of these things. 555 53

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *tori* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 236-A]

P
789
177
824
B
789
824

FIG. 53. a–b. Fetish sticks, *amati a oni ganza*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. "The tortoise saw the circumcision" is the name of the stick, but neither villagers nor Mbuti can give a coherent explanation of either the stick or its name. The villagers use it for protection against theft; the Mbuti net hunters on rare occasions may idly place it in the ground near a *molimo* hearth as an indication of spiritual presence.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

789 theft, but among the Mbuti is used as indication
177 of spiritual presence during the *molimo* festival.
824 For this section we follow the same outline as
128 that for the archers, but a fuller account of the net-hunters' magico-religious complex is given in the final section (pp. 248–259). It is excluded from the present survey because the lack of
[P. 236-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of his Sua material are net hunters or archers. But, except for his remarks on the Kango and "village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the extreme west of the Ituri forest, he seems to have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti. His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184] greatly from that for the archers. The names 176 given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti, Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neighboring villagers. According to Schebesta, Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [224] owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benevolent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt, guiding their weapons and assisting the beat, preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187] is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes known to the elder, telling the hunter where to find game.

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776
close the forest to them, until they make the 782
propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are ex- [778]
pected to make offerings to Kalisia from their
food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and
Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this
purpose (*ende kela*). The hunters may less cere-
moniously throw offerings of food into the
forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right
mind would fail to make these propitiatory
sacrifices: "*à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira*"
(Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Sche- 114
besta does not always identify his source of
information. However, from a number of ad- [124]
missions such as that noted above, we must
assume that his informants were frequently
villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied
on the question-and-answer technique among
both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933,
171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776
forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171]
villagers, who regard him in no way as benevo-
lent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity
Songe (the moon), with its own remote world,
as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.237-A]

776 God and lord of the *ba-keti*, the dead. Schebesta (1950, 23) says that among the "Sua" he was not able to discover any association of the rainbow, lightning, thunder, or death, with the benevolent "*Jägergottheit*" (Kalisia).

The Putnam material does not attempt to interpret the Mbuti notion of a chthonic God. Among the Epulu net hunters, Kalisia is apparently unknown to the Mbuti, who use the term Mungu both among themselves and when talking with villagers. This God is benevolent, though in some mysterious way that does not detract from his benevolence he is associated with death.

776 Disaster, ill fortune, and lack of success in
775 the chase are usually attributed to *satani* (also *sitani*, *shaitani*), forest sprites akin to the archer *befe* (Schebesta gives the Sua word as *beki*). It seems that Mbuti may become *satani* when they die, but it is not clear by any means that all *satani* were once Mbuti. They are never
[761] referred to as though they had been Mbuti, though at death the word *satani* is sometimes used in connection with a vital force leaving

[NET HUNTERS]

776 the body (p. 238). There is also some confusion
775 among the net-hunter Mbuti between the terms *mungu* and *satani*, which at times appear to be interchangeable. Schebesta (1948, 493) says that the local Bira refer to these forest sprites as "*molimo*," the name they also give to their secret association of men.

776 As with the archers, abnormal conditions of the physical world denote the presence of the chthonic God. At such times the net hunters are careful not to expose themselves to his sight, which would bring death, nor to attract his attention by unseemly behavior. He is a benevolent God but one best kept at a distance. There is no evidence of any connection between God and the lineage through the elder, but each hunting band seems to regard Mungu, while God of all Mbuti everywhere, as being particularly concerned with them.[1]

Cult Practices

788 In so far as ritual is a response to uncertainty
182 or crisis, the net hunters have far less need of it than many other peoples. As we show above, their forest environment provides them with

[1] In view of the extremely loose usage of the term *mungu*, I interpret net-hunter expressed attitudes as indicating a belief in a local deity, not necessarily named Mungu, somehow related to the over-all God.

[P 237-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788
involves them in any significant change of 182
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224]
hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184]
steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena. 731 821 [823]

As might be expected therefore, such ritual as exists is most often connected with the storm and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. However, cult practices are far less common, and he mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offerings may be thrown into the undergrowth, though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or 788 [821] [778] 788 782

[P. 237-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

788 any other god or spiritual being for protection
[782] or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A
number of symbolic actions performed as parts
[224] of technological operations in order to smooth
over the disturbance caused by some kind of
change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in
which the youngest male descendant of the
hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and
opens the operations dividing the meat for
consumption (cf. p. 207).

771 Putnam, further, was never convinced that
[776] the Mbuti had any notion similar to the Euro-
pean notion of God. He disagrees strongly with
Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious
practice as indicating a belief in a personal god.
[789] He suggests that the ritual practices described
by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sym-
pathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct
cause and effect in their magical practices is the
only kind of "religious" belief that can safely
be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or
villager.

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The dividing line between magic and religion, according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

The net hunters believe that death is caused by the water animal that is the rainbow that is, sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-C]

the water animal is the cause of all death or whether it causes only unexplained deaths. It seems that it may not be connected with "normal" deaths—deaths that do not, in fact, cause any particular crisis as far as the community as a whole is concerned. 76 M

According to Mrs. Putnam's notes,[1] the water animal that is the rainbow is also the *molimo*. She asked a direct question as to whether this was so or not and was given an affirmative answer by one of her most reliable informants. She says that his manner seemed to indicate further that she had asked the right question. According to the same informant the *molimo* comes out the day following the death of some important person, regardless of whether the death was by natural or other means. The informant also referred to a dance in which the men "chased" the *molimo*, but this evidently was not one of the serious *molimo* dances as it was not fatal for women to see it. It seems certain that the water animal and the rainbow are [535]

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two manifestations of the same spiritual being 761
and that both this being and the *molimo* are in 776
some way connected with death. The former
causes death (whether in some or all cases is not
known), but the latter seems to be different in
that it appears only the day following death
and can restore normality to the community in
crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis.
The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo*
"animal" in times of crisis and brings it physi- [782]
cally into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's
notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings
of food, which is consumed by members of the
molimo, and by dance and song.

No information is given as to any belief in 761
the origin of death, or of any human failings 784
that might cause it other than violation of the
molimo by a woman or of the *elima* by a man.
Infringement of rules of exogamy and other
taboos may or may not cause death; individual
opinion among the net hunters varies consider-
ably on such matters.

According to local informants, the only vil- 776
lagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, 171
Ndaka, and Bali.

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but 821
not necessarily of death. When lightning comes
at night, campfires may be covered so that the [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esamba* for *lusumba*.

[P 238-0]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-A]

821 flames will not be seen, then the lightning will
372 pass. Mrs. Putnam reports that on one occasion a particularly large and bright fire was built during the night because, according to the Mbuti, a Lese woman who had died recently was "tapping in the trees." Fire is reported to be extinguished in one of the *molimo* dances, among the net hunters as well as among the archers.

Totem and Taboo

614 Putnam distinguishes four kinds of taboo for
825 the net hunters. The first is related to what he calls the clan totem.[1] Each clan, he says, has its own private totemic animal. This is believed to be not the clan ancestor but, rather, connected with that ancestor in mythology, as having rescued him from danger or helped him in some enterprise. Putnam mentions seven species of antelope and 12 species of monkey that appear as totemic animals among the Mbuti bands in his area. Other animals, not important as food to the Pygmy, are also totemic animals but, according to Putnam, less frequently. Slow game and vegetables, that is, food collected by women, are never used as totems.

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614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 562 [262] The second kind of taboo mentioned by Putnam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this [825] [823] difference is probably connected with the association between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patriclan or gens.

[P. 239-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

[NET HUNTERS]

Magic

The Putnam material contains no information on any vital force corresponding to the *megbe* of the archer Mbuti, but the various practices of the net hunters indicate a belief in some form of force associated with the individual, which can be utilized by him during his life and which is released at death. It is by no means clear that this force can be acquired by magical means, such as by the use of bells and charms among the archers, or that it can be passed on from father to son by the latter's breathing in the breath from the dying man's mouth. There is mention in the Putnam material of this being done only once. 789 769

Putnam mentions magic in connection with the hunt and with the weather that might affect the hunt. Magical practices are not mentioned in other contexts, such as protection against one's enemies or, conversely, as aggressive action against them, or for the prevention of imminent disasters such as the falling of a 789

[P. 239-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

789 tree limb on top of a hut. Such contexts evoke a
[184] different response, it seems, among the archers who actively influence the outcome of any critical situation by the use of their *megbe*, often by their *segbe* pipes. The magic described by the Putnams is essentially sympathetic and does not involve any belief in spiritual assis-
789 tance. Thus stones may not be dropped in the
821 water, or they will cause rain; a bright fire should be smothered until it is a mere glow during a storm, lest it attract the lightning (according to one informant) or in order to drive the lightning away (according to another, in the same discussion). All the magic that Putnam observed among the net hunters was connected with the weather and the prevention of rain, though he does not deny the possibility that magic might be used to stop the rain, once begun.

789 Mrs. Putnam describes a number of magical
224 practices, most of which are connected with either rain or the hunt. The latter simply involve the use of villager witch doctors to perform a ceremony to improve the hunting. The ceremony is never conducted by a Pygmy, nor is it clear on whose initiative it is usually per-

[NET HUNTERS]

789 224 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *segbe* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Segbe* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 534 222 *Segbe* are not to be confused with *madé* (Fig. 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the honey season.

789 821 372 Rain magic involves the covering of the campfires with leaves but evidently without much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P. 240-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

CP. 240-C

leaves to cover fires is an effective way of keeping them burning during a rainstorm, is not always accompanied by the production of smoke (thought by some to be an offering), and is never described as being accompanied by any invocation. As far as the descriptions and my own observations go, it could be a simple precautionary measure taken to preserve the all-valuable fire. 789 82 372

Mrs. Putnam was told that barkcloth should not be beaten if it is going to rain, but this may also be for purely practical technological reasons. She once saw an old Pygmy blow a *segbe* pipe a number of times, looking at the sky, in an avowed attempt to avert the rain. When it rained the old man simply shrugged his shoulders and took shelter. 789 82 [287]

On another occasion, when it threatened to rain and spoil the dance one evening, the young men and boys all seized leaves and ran down to the stream and back, beating the leaves on the ground. They evidently did not wait to see if this magic would work, and all retired to their huts.

[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *uda* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulozi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulozi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *lozi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulozi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled. 761 754 888 [192]

In legend the *lozi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *lozi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *lozi* is not seen at his (or her) 761 754 266 [713]

[P. 240-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 754 266 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 754 177 This belief seems associated with death and with people who are near to that particular crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 114 [184] The Putnam material does not support any theory of a celestial God such as that described by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-8]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

776 714 771 [788] [811] [776] [821] [172]

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 242-A]

EVALUATION

128 THE SURVEY that is given above of the available reliable material on the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest does not claim to be exhaustive. Every opportunity has been taken to follow up any references that promised to bring to light information, however slight, to a point where the quality of such information is so poor that further search becomes uneconomic, not justifying the further expenditure of either time or energy. It is possible, then, that isolated pieces of valuable information have escaped our scrutiny.

The survey as it stands, based on a careful selection of the most reliable information available, is in itself anything but satisfactory and falls short of the standards of authenticity and completeness of detail that are a *sine qua non* for proper anthropological analysis. The historical sources were, for the most part, not sufficiently well documented to be acceptable as fact; contemporary sources (with particular reference to the field of social anthropology) are virtually limited to Schebesta and the Putnam material.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 material. These each have their drawbacks.
114 Schebesta gives a more complete picture than Putnam of the Ituri Mbuti but in such generalized terms as to be, in effect, no more than a disjointed anthropological gallimaufry. It is evident from his own statements concerning his field-work technique (Schebesta, 1932, 1936b) that the "facts" he presents are sometimes no more than hearsay, perhaps confirmed by "*flüchtigen Einblicke*" (1948, 475). In addition there is often no certainty as to which particular Mbuti he means. It is equally evident from his admittedly preconceived notions and avowed objective that his theoretical work is more than a little biased.

The Putnam material does not provide such over-all detail as Schebesta's account and is regrettably lacking in information on kinship systems (as is Schebesta's work), legal system, and even on the more observable manifestations of the relationship between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors. It is, however, localized. We know exactly to which Pygmies he refers. It is unbiased by any personal prejudices or preconceived theories. It is based on more than two decades of intimate contact with the Mbuti throughout the forest in the case of Patrick

[P. 242-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 242-C]

Putnam, and nearly one decade in the case of 114
Anne Putnam.

The vital gaps in this combined material, 128
together with its general nature, render any at- 121
tempt at systematization fruitless. As it is presented, however, it stands as a body of facts, more or less reliable, related to two specific types of Mbuti society—archers and net hunters. We can use it initially, then, to test the validity of this classification. Second, the survey suggests a new approach to the relationship between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors. Incidentally it throws a clearer light on Schebesta's notions as to the cultural unity of the Ituri Mbuti and on the irrelevance of his division of the Mbuti into linguistic groups which correspond only to villager groupings, and not directly to any significant structural differences among the Mbuti themselves. Here we concern ourselves with a brief comparison of our two major sources, section by section, with reference mainly to the classification of the Mbuti according to hunting technique.

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

[P. 243-A]

190 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently.
[177] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[128] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[144] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

ENVIRONMENT

P 182 184 The importance of environment in this particular study cannot be overestimated. The forest environment throughout the Ituri is much the same, so it cannot be held responsible for such differences as we may find between one Mbuti group and another. Such differences seem more likely to be due to the human environment, that is to say, varying degrees of Pygmy association with different villager tribes.

P 182 The forest environment is important, however, in favoring the specific way of life followed by the nomadic hunting-and-gathering Mbuti communities. That it certainly does not compel Z [182] this mode of existence is witnessed by the very different and equally successful adjustment made to it by the other major group of forest P 182 177 inhabitants—the villagers. But by enabling the Mbuti to continue their nomadic way with comparative ease and to their almost entire satisfaction, the forest enables them to preserve their independence in the face of technologically superior and politically more organized villager opposition. By virtue of their particular response to the forest, the Mbuti retain their individuality socially, economically, politically, and intellectually.

P Z 182 The environmental factor sharply divides the forest people (Mbuti) from the non-forest people (villagers)—the true forest hunting-and-

[P 243-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 243-C]

gathering economy of the former from the adapted forest cultivation of the latter. Perhaps, above all, it distinguishes the values of the forest people from those of the villager invaders from the plains. The Mbuti adapt themselves to their environment; the villagers adapt the environment to their own way of life in so far as they can, compromising when they cannot. It is not difficult to see the possible psychological implications of this attitudinal difference and the profound difference in religious and social values that either rise from it or are strengthened by it. In the opposition between forest values and non-forest values we find the highest degree of opposition between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors.

P 182 P 181 182

THE SOCIAL UNIT

P 184

At this elementary point in our survey of Mbuti society, we begin to find significant structural differences between one group and another. These differences are not related to linguistic differences. Moreover, we find that, with the possible exception of the archers described by Schebesta, the Mbuti are polyglots.

P 184 197

While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

184 197 184 224 621 182

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

[P. 243-D]

[P.244-A]

184 remain in camp to guard it and perform other
224 duties. When the band falls below seven fami-
621 lies, it can no longer exist. Similarly, when it
182 rises above a certain number (between 20 and 30) it becomes too unwieldy to function as a single hunting unit and must, of necessity, split. Under these circumstances a compromise is reached, and very conveniently so, by the hunting from a forest camp by one section of the band, while the other section lives a more or less parasitical life near the village.

184 The composition of the bands of archers and
621 net hunters seems to be similar, though Putnam lays more emphasis on the presence of visiting families. The archers live in considerably smaller bands, some interconnected through kinship ties and also allegedly through common allegiance to a villager lineage. In the larger net-hunting band there may very likely be no single villager attachment.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
496 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

[p. 244-c]

mutually dependent and equally important role 224
in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Arch- 476
ery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a 621
familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, 562
with the cooperation of two or three men. It is 184
not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close coopera- 184
tion and lack of specialization, is associated 554
with a more egalitarian political system than 561
that of the archers. While Schebesta described 224
an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful line- 621
age heads, Putnam vigorously denies the exis- [114]
tence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

A fourth factor might be added: While the 184
net hunt quickly scares animals away from the 182
area around the hunting camp, necessitating 224
frequent changes of site, the archery technique 361
neither depletes the game so quickly nor
frightens it away. An archer band can therefore
remain confined to a smaller area, near the
village, while the net hunters sometimes must
wander several days' march away from their
patrons. The more nomadic group also has [262]
constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at
its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is
apparently felt by the more settled archers, for
plantation products.

Thus at once we can see the possible eco- 184
nomic, social, and political implications of the 182
difference in hunting technique and how these 12
implications follow in fact. 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of 222
social and economic importance in each type of 184
community. It is regarded primarily as the 462
work of women, though, wherever it calls for
tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among
[P 244-D]

[p. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
221 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[182] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P. 245-B]

[P. 245-C]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

[p.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more fre-
551 quently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Biṣa names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the
[602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them-
[614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246-B]

[p. 246-C]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initia- 177
tion of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between
Pygmy and villager initiates among the net
hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers,
probably because of his insistence (1952, 281)
on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an ini-
tiation into the religious association of *toré* for
both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is con-
tradicted by my own experience among the net
hunters. In any case, if there is a difference be-
tween the two groups over the significance of
nkumbi initiation (and it may well be only a dif-
ference of interpretation rather than of fact), it
does not seem directly related to any difference
in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 796
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more
directly with prevailing differences in villager
custom rather than with any inherent differ-
ences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the
nature and function of the closed associations,
are more properly the subject of discussion of
the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the
difference between net hunters and archers,
which is our main concern here.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 578 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p. 247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

554 The fact that men go through the not inconsid-
881 erable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

555 Male status depends primarily on skill in the
224 hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by individual exploits such as elephant hunting.
[439] Among certain bands elephant hunting is a specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do
[825] so. This compulsion may have arisen in part by virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

224 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the
825 ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954,
[p. 247-B]

[P. 247-C]

296 ff.), following the killing of a leopard. The 224 825
dead leopard is tied to a stake, which is surrounded by the men, armed with liana whips and plaited hide thongs. The hunters involved [535]
in the killing of the leopard perform a dance, in the course of which they have to fight their way through to the stake and cut down the carcass of the leopard they have already killed once. In the instance cited the most prominent of the three chief actors had been wounded by the leopard but insisted on taking part though his fellows said that none would call him a coward if he did not. The other two men protected him from the attackers and guarded him as he swung his spear and cut the leopard down. The cutting down is acclaimed by all with a shout of satisfaction. Unfortunately the information does not carry essential details such as which of the men or how many of the band held the leopard as their totem, or as to what relationship, kinship or otherwise, existed between participants in the dance. Possibly the ceremony is propitiatory, but from the information on totemism among these particular Mbuti it seems unlikely. It rather appears as a formal opposition between the human and the animal worlds.

Little can be said of inter-band relationships 628
as there are so few data. Neither type of band 476
has any need to cooperate with neighboring 224
bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occa- 184
sions when there is a particular profusion of
game. Among the archers joint hunting would
be necessary in order to make use of the *begbe*
beating technique. Among net hunters two or
more bands might combine either when the in-
dividual bands fall below economic level or
when a particular profusion of game requires
more nets than are possessed by the single band.
With the net hunters such association could be-
come permanent, whereas with the archers it
would never be necessary as the band is of such
small optimum size.

The difference between the archers and the 184
net hunters in their relationship with the vil- 182
lager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Put- 224
nam, is one of both degree and kind. We have 439
seen that with their less efficient hunting tech-
nique the archers must rely more on vegetable
products, and how, with the women's sphere
limited to gathering, the women have more time
and opportunity for gathering from the villager
plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy

[P 247-D]

[R 248-A]

184 nature of the hunt also makes possible a more
182 permanent settlement near the village. The
224 trade relationship among the archers, then, as-
439 sumes greater importance and is more formalized. Schebesta further understands it as being an inter-lineage relationship. Putnam, while acknowledging its importance also for the net hunters, says that it is interfamilial and can be broken by either side. The net-hunting technique makes more game available for trade, so there is less demand by villagers upon the net hunters than by the Lese of the archers. The necessity of a more strictly nomadic life also militates against permanent and continuous attachment between the net-hunting Mbuti and any one villager "master."

128 Of the legal system no more can be added to the section dealing with authority and leadership. There are simply not enough data even for comparison of the concepts of property and ownership between the two groups.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold [121] equally well among the archers. It is simply one of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light [595] of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [192] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *toré* society is an in- [776] tegral part of the religious system of the archers and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.
[P. 248-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 248-c]

and that Toré is applicable as a term for God. 000

As there is confusion, even among the Mbuti, 771
on questions of religious terminology we can do 121
little by pointing to this or that context. We 181
must go a great deal further and try to discover something of the underlying system of values. In the light of such an inquiry we shall be able to assess better the significance behind the outward differences between the two groups; for instance, differences over the performance of ritual, differences in magical practice, and others. Here we cannot be content with a comparison of outward behavior, for we are dealing with a world of symbolism, and in that symbolic world we can fruitfully compare only the values that underlie the symbols. To do so leads us into the very much wider field of study that is broached in the succeeding and final two sections (pp. 249–272). By attempting to understand something of the Mbuti system of values we may not only hope to understand the significant differences between one type of hunting band and another, but also we may hope to get some idea of the real relationship between both kinds of band and their villager neighbors.

Schebesta (1950, 13) insists that there is a 184
cultural unity among the Ituri Mbuti, which 114
he believes is clearly visible in their magico-religious system. He may well be right. Probably he is, but his method of comparing terminological usage among a number of different Mbuti bands as though he were dealing with self-evident facts, while relying frequently on casual information, does little to support his theories. When dealing with cult practices, he is more concerned with the origin of a particular practice than with its sociological significance. He accepts statements and even legends at their face value and builds his elaborate theories on this flimsy foundation.

In trying to draw any useful comparison be- 184
tween the material on the archers and that for 121
the net hunters, we are constantly confronted with the question of origin. Is this or that custom or ritual of villager origin? If so, how far [177]
has it been adapted and what significance has it? The latter question is more important for the social anthropologist than the former and is precisely the question we must ask. We are concerned not with the origin of any particular ritual but rather with its significance and its relationship to other practices in a system of related institutions. Thus when we deal with religious 000
[P. 248-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 177 Thus when we deal with religious (or any other) institution common to both villager and Pygmy, we necessarily deal with the relationship between these two people. Unless we understand this relationship we cannot possibly understand the institution. We can understand the relationship only by observing something more fundamental than the origin of a particular practice in a specific group, let alone the more obvious facts concerning the trade relationship. As indicated in the present survey, even the *nkumbi* initiation cannot be taken at its face value as far as the Mbuti are concerned.

No aspect of Mbuti life brings the people into more effective contact with their villager neighbors than the field of magic and religion. It seems that this is the field therefore in which we should attempt to understand the systems of values underlying the relationship between these two people.

[P 249-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE MBUTI-VILLAGER RELATIONSHIP

121 177 439 [128] In the preceding sections we dealt with the survey briefly, mainly in order to test the validity of our classification of the Mbuti into net hunters and archers. We deliberately avoided, as far as possible, reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship, although in the final section on religious life it became particularly obvious that this relationship could not be ignored. In Mbuti society a number of institutions in one way or another are associated with or appear to be identical with villager institutions, and we must understand this connection. The only alternative is to assume that the relationship between the two peoples is one of straightforward symbiosis based on an exchange of meat for plantation products and that, in the course of this symbiosis, certain customs have been adopted and are practiced either separately or jointly. This often-drawn picture represents only the outward appearance of the facts. When one tries to understand it as part of a coherent system, however, it can be done only by creating a hypothetical Mbuti social system that is in fact a hodgepodge culled from all over the Ituri area, from which any offending portions are plucked with the excuse that they are of villager origin.

121 177 We must determine, then, the underlying facts, as opposed to the mere outward appearance: the extent to which various institutions have been adopted by the Mbuti; how far their underlying values have also been adopted, or

[A249-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 249-C]

how far only the outward form of the custom has been taken over and the values rejected. The most we can do is to clear the ground for such a study. We do so with reference only to the Epulu net hunters (unless otherwise stated), as our information is fullest here. 121 177

In the first place, what are the major points of contact between these two people? They may be listed as follows:

Material culture
Trade
Magical practice
Dance and festivity
Intermarriage
Ceremonial attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death

Material Culture

The adoption by the Mbuti of various villager items of material culture or technological skill has only one significance for us, which is the extent to which it places the Mbuti in a dependent position. This is difficult to estimate. It is difficult to visualize the Mbuti without metal and hard, though quite possible, to visualize them without plantains. But, even among the net hunters, luxuries tend to become necessities, and we must admit of the trend, if not the accomplished fact, toward economic dependency on the villagers. 177 439 [178]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Trade

The bare facts only are known. The Mbuti supply the villagers with meat and with certain forest products, such as roofing leaves or lianas, in return for plantation products. The villager invariably tries to enforce some service as well, with varying degrees of success. Either extreme can be found: cases in which the relationship is formal and binding in fact as well as theory, and those in which the theory is held only by the villagers and does not correspond to the fact, i.e., the Pygmy maintains his side of the trade relationship only so long as it suits him. In my experience the latter is the situation far more often than otherwise.

Then again we must emphasize that trade is not necessary on either side. The villagers could perfectly well hunt if they had to, and the Pygmies could equally well gather all their vegetable needs from the forest. Further, contrary to Schebesta's (1952, 112) assertion, the Mbuti are perfectly capable of cultivating, given a

Z 439 433 177 P 439 433 177 P [241]
[P 249-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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clear space. Some of the net hunters in the Epulu area have tried, and with success, but quickly lose interest and revert to their old nomadic ways.

The fact that there is no attempt to equate the supply of meat and the supply of plantains is also significant. Either side gives what it feels like giving, except that the Mbuti believe themselves free to take what they want if it is not given. There is also the Bira custom mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) of giving the first fruits to the Pygmies. The Mbuti seem to have control of this situation. The villagers have no means of preventing the Mbuti from returning to the depths of the forest whenever they wish. When the Pygmy hunting camp is some distance from the village, the villagers may send in to ask for meat, or the chief may even come himself.

Sometimes the villagers try to gain control of the situation by supplying nets and claiming the appropriate share of a net owner. The Mbuti accept the nets, but see to it that only such game falls into them as they think fit. They eventually contest the ownership of the net, claiming to have added to it themselves and thrown away the damaged, village portion.

At most, it seems possible to regard the trade relationship only as one of mutual convenience. By itself, it is far too unformalized and unstable to provide the basis for the remarkably close relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Magical Practice

P 177 789 It might be observed that the Pygmies have adopted a number of villager magical practices; certainly some individuals give the appearance of having done so. But we cannot accept this as significant, nor can we relate these practices to other practices in Pygmy society until we understand, for instance, the significance of the old Pygmy who blew his magic whistle vigorously at the sky to prevent rain and who, when it poured, simply shrugged his shoulders and P [829] retreated to the shelter of his hut. This incident may seem trivial, but there are many such incidents that indicate a lack of faith in the efficacy of such magical practices as the Pygmies attempt.

P 224 177 789 Also to be considered, and more important because it brings villager and Pygmy together more directly, is the reported resort to villager witch doctors to improve the hunting. Sche- Z 789 177 563 [791] [P 250-B]

[P. 250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. There is no evidence of such a practice among the net hunters, but they may call in a villager for the purpose. But here we should consider Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying the villagers with meat for some time, yet has been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as his excuse the fact that the hunting has been poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as one can judge from casual conversation among themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti have little faith in it. Further, they have their own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song may or may not be accompanied by a dance re-enacting a successful hunt, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

P 224 177 789 Z 789 563 177 P [439] P 224 789 533

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

Dance and Festivity

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

[P. 250-D]

[P. 251-A]

ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held only during the *nkumbi*.

Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band is visiting a village, it may come down to the main meeting place in the evening and dance. The villagers expect it and regard it as one of their forms of entertainment, though they say they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

When the two groups meet on both festive and ordinary occasions they keep apart from each other. There is no leisure activity in which they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti camp beside the village, on the edge of the plantation where the forest begins. This physical disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Intermarriage

P 144 582 As pointed out above, this traffic is one-way. There are no records of Pygmy men taking villager wives, nor any acknowledged instances Z 144 583 582 of Pygmy men begetting children by villager mistresses. Blood counts (Schebesta, 1938, 111), however, reveal a small proportion of villager influence in hunting communities, which may or may not be accounted for by the return of the half-breed offspring from the village to the P Z [B51] forest. Normally the children of such unions are brought up as villagers. The father will, to the best of his ability, prevent children by his Pygmy wife from returning to the forest, and apparently the Pygmies themselves regard such children as villagers.

Z P 582 There are not enough data on individual intermarriage for us to determine how far this one-way tendency is a form of hypergamy. It may, in fact, simply be the result of the practical consideration that no villager woman could fulfill the requirements of a woman and wife in a Pygmy hunting camp. Even if the latter is the P 582 case, it does not answer the question as to why a Pygmy girl should marry a villager. Unfor- 186 tunately, there is no evidence that gives us even the hint of an answer. There is certainly no

[P 251-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

P 582 186

P [583] [439]

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

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These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

Z 563 796 P 177 796 P Z [844] [764] [765] P 583 585 177 Z 563 585

[P.251-D]

P [P.252-A]
583 local villager custom. The latter ceremony is
585 conducted entirely by the villagers and at their
179 expense. On these occasions the villager takes
Z the leading part and carries out his own ritual,
563 but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his
585 own indigenous way of recognizing the event.
The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy
adds to his own.

P With initiation the situation may seem to be
179 different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the
881 villager custom of initiation accompanied by
575 circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend
Z the same initiation schools which are always
563 run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation
881 is nothing if not entry into a very definite indig-
575 enous system of values, yet here we have the
Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordi-
nate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Sche-
besta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or
villager, into membership of the Lese *tori* asso-
ciation (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent,
the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

P 177 881 575 Z 563 881 575 of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [114] [608] Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association.

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the *nkumbi* or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the *nkumbi* to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

In the 1954 *nkumbi* there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the *nkumbi* should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *ganza* (members of the *nkumbi*) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P. 252-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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lagers when it suited them to do so. In the dispute over the visit of the *ganza* to the forest hunting camp, the villagers were quite unable to enforce their will or even to enforce the compromise they finally effected with the Mbuti. The villagers themselves made no major decisions concerning the arrangement or carrying out of the *nkumbi* without at least discussing the matter with the Pygmy fathers. No difference was observable in the preparations or the ceremony that could be attributed to the fact that Mbuti only were being initiated.

The account given shows not only the extent to which the villagers were unable to control the *ganza*, but also the thoroughness with which they attempted to dominate the initiation. Despite the fact that the *ganza* were entirely Pygmy, for the villagers the *nkumbi* was nonetheless sacred. They were interested in the *nkumbi* itself rather than in the individuals participating. Whether or not the villagers thought that by initiating the Mbuti they were subjecting them to tribal and supernatural authority is uncertain, though Schebesta (1952, 278; 1948, chap. 7) so suggests. The evidence considered here suggests that the villagers not only lacked control over the Pygmy *ganza*, but were not particularly rigorous in maintaining it, except in so far as any desecration of the initiation camp or the *nkumbi* itself was concerned. It seems that the villager was primarily interested in the *nkumbi* as a tribal festival; if any subordination of the Pygmies took place, it was incidental.

177 Similarly any subordination on the part of
186 the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant,
881 though they lost no opportunity for maintaining their individuality when their feelings clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the latter, they had no interest in the *nkumbi* as such. This lack of interest was manifest from the outset, when the village was in a state of festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony, and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack of interest was frequently manifest as total disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such touch and food taboos as were imposed by villager custom, and the general burlesquing among the *ganza* as described in the account, there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti band—notably the women and children. The
[857] young children in their forest camp found a new game to play. They were the *ganza*, imitating all
[P 253-B]

[P. 253-C]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, including some of the ordeals. They not only knew the initiation songs, but were taught them by their mothers, who even more than their uninitiated male children were supposed to be in complete ignorance of such matters. 177 186 881 [857]

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the instructors did not come with them, and the *ganza* had only occasional visits from one villager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting camp. There were no ordeals during this time, no singing except when visited by the solitary villager, and no other form of instruction by the Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to be, for both children and the adult members of the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors of the initiation school. 177 881 [527]

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, they could scarcely avoid respecting the physical discipline imposed by the various ordeals they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic 177 861 881

of conversation. Both by their conversation and their behavior they showed that they were well aware of the benefit of this training for the children. The older men talked of ordeals that their "fathers" had experienced (apparently without reference to any villager *nkumbi*) in order to make them into men and hunters (both terms were used). They were always critical of any sign of excessive harshness on the part of the villager instructors and protected their children from it. But, on the other hand, the fathers showed no sympathy for a boy who could not endure the normal rigors of camp life and accept the routine ordeals without complaint, and it will be remembered that the boy who became ill himself insisted on returning to his place among the other boys before he had completely recovered (Turnbull, 1957). [177] [86] [88]

It is, at the moment, an open question whether the Mbuti respect the physical discipline of the *nkumbi* because of its effect on the boys, or because of the status it gives their children in the eyes of the villagers, under normal circumstances equating the Mbuti (at least in terms of manliness) with their fellow villager initiates. The fact that no ordeals were practiced in the forest camp is perhaps an indication that the Mbuti do not lay very much stress on the physical and mental training aspect of the *nkumbi*. These are, in any case, benefits that [554]

[P. 253 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P [P.254-A]
177 they could quite well achieve in their own way.
881 Such practical benefits as there may be do not
861 demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate
Z in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the
[563] often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

P This hiatus becomes even more evident when
Z we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*,
181 as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus
182 not only between two ways of living but be-
881 tween two ways of thinking, and it shows that we are dealing with two totally different sets of values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To
Z the villager the masked dancers described in the
182 account of the 1954 *nkumbi* (Turnbull, 1957,
881 193) represent the *ngosa* bird, indicating the
776 presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the
778 bullroarer represents supernatural power. The
[825] various taboos applied to the *ganza* express
[532] village subordination to that power which is
[535] sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from
staying in the camp over night even though it
meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further
scope for getting out of control. The *nkumbi*
places the villager initiates in a definite rela-
Z tionship to the supernatural. It is closely con-
[769] nected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

P The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no an-
177 cestor cult. To them the masked dancers were
881 the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bull-
776 roarer was a piece of wood whirled around on
778 the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird"
829 and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti,
were neither "real" nor did they represent any
reality. They were empty and rather ineffective
theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by
conversation among the ganza at
night and in their constant
burlesque.
[P. 254-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 254-C]

conversation among the *ganza* at night and in their constant burlesque.

Schebesta (1948, 508–510) says that, for the archers, the *toré* association has both social and religious functions and that membership is common to both villagers and Pygmies through the *nkumbi* initiation. Among the net hunters the term *molimo* is used instead of the term *toré*, and among the Bira villagers the word has apparently similar usage. Thus the *molimo* horn is an instrument that is sacred to both villagers and Mbuti. The villager *molimo* normally makes itself heard during the *nkumbi*, when the young initiates are introduced to it for the first time. It made no appearance at all during the all-Pygmy 1954 *nkumbi*. Evidently it was unable to appear as there were no villager boys among the *ganza*, and the villager *molimo* has a distinct totemic aspect that excludes the Mbuti. Yet for the Mbuti, in particular, the instrument is associated with their most profound magico-religious concepts, and it is inconceivable that they should regard the *nkumbi* as initiation into their own religious society without the inclusion of their version of the *molimo* horn.

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1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it? P 881

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in P Z 177 181 P Z 17 439

[P. 254-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P Z 17 439

turn was free to return to his nomadic existence. We can suppose that the present relationship between the villagers and the Mbuti originated in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P 439 184

There is, among both the archer and the net-hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact between the two peoples complicates the issue further. Also, because of their nomadic existence and the loose structure of band composition, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

P Z 177 648 P B21]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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If we look at the situation in reverse, the fact that the Mbuti simultaneously participate in the *nkumbi* and reject its significance indicates the instability of their relationship with the villagers. The villagers would undoubtedly like to assert their superiority but are unable to maintain effective control over the nomadic Mbuti, either as individuals or in bands, during the *nkumbi* or at any other time. The *nkumbi*, however, does at least place the villagers in an overt position of dominance. On the other hand, the Mbuti would like to be completely free from subordination to the villagers, yet they find it as necessary to submit to initiation in villager society as the villagers find it necessary to accept them as candidates. The *nkumbi* undoubtedly gives the villagers an opportunity to drive the first blow in asserting their superiority over the Mbuti, but at the same time it gives the Pygmy status, as well as economic benefits, in any village throughout the region. It also strengthens his own identity as a Pygmy by enabling him to reject the villager system of values in mimetic burlesque. The 1954 *nkumbi* shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

[P 255-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 255-c]

shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling. 000

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well-knit bands, such as may be found among the archers described by Schebesta, may find it possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic relationship with the villagers, but not so an active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind of relationship must be established because of the inevitability of contact. As the smaller, more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies must make the move to fit into the larger, looser group. But there is no question of absorption; the smaller group preserves its identity. The *nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti with an opportunity both for establishing a place in villager society and for asserting their independent set of values by opposition. The antagonism that remains and is even heightened by this opposition is smoothed over to some extent by the secondary mechanism by which the two groups attempt to express their rela-

P 621 648 179 [184] Z [563]

P Z [439]

tionship-mutal trade

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

[P. 256-A]

177 as yet assumed village values in name only, and
18 only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

177 This interpretation of the function of the
18 *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an outward symbol of the association of two neigh-
12 boring peoples that, for one reason or another,
[881] come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

[71] In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

177 We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not
881 be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti
18 who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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177 *nkumbi* offers the Mbuti an opportunity for as-
881 serting their individuality at the same time
18 that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

575 In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also
575 true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at
881 all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

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[P. 256-C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and 575 even returned to the care and authority of their 881 mothers. None of these boys was allowed to 882 take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. 885 The reason—they were not "hunters," they had 224 not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large [575] enough to be worth distributing among the band, as opposed to the small animals caught by children and that are not worth dividing except within the family). To kill "real animals," usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to be allowed to wander away from his father during the hunt and to try his luck at either end of the semicircle of nets, where animals might escape and be shot with bow and arrow, speared, or caught with the hands.

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on 575 a combination of physical growth and prowess. 885 Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full member; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*; like the *elima* it is a religious association without priests. There is no ritual to be performed; all members play the same part in the meetings of the association with the exception of one who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The choice invariably falls on the best performer present, without regard for age or other qualifications.

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- 778
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children 562
are not excluded from the group, though, as is 858
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, 562
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- 858
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[p. 256-D]

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789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
(858) seem to be the non-participation of women and
children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
[885] bers of the band, the use of special songs and
(533) the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
777 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

[p. 257-c]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their 796
unity. Their means of communication are spe- 776
cial songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to 778
the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in 782
terms of explicit supplication. They merely call 575
on the God of the Forest by constant repetition 796
of his name (frequently changing from one 776
name to another, it seems for the sake of variety 778
and euphony), and an occasional recitation of 782
his qualities as the source of all good in the 533
Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the 575
molimo horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women are members, and participation is compulsory in one's own camp or when visiting another. Communication with the forest God is again established by means of songs, special and sacred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The exception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the initiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

575 796 [885] [533] [776] [778] [858] 881 885 224 575

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 258-A]

881 885 224 575

hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I have never witnessed nor been told of any formal rite introducing the new hunter to the association, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only

881 885 304 575

act that might be regarded as a formal token of initiation is the cutting of three sets of three vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 The contrast between the more formal *elima* initiation and this informal initiation into the *molimo* requires explanation, and more needs to be known about the function of these associations before any such explanation can be offered. It may be, in part, a consequence of the participation of Pygmy boys in the *nkumbi*; it may be that, as Schebesta (1957, 78) suggests, the *elima* (*elimo*) is of villager origin and has been adopted by the Pygmies. Or it may be that we have underestimated the part played by the young men in the *elima* festival described (p. 216). It is for both girls and boys, equally, a formal occasion recognizing their physical maturity and their prowess—the girls as proficient in womanly art and the boys as proficient in physical strength and endurance.

575 [881] Until further material is available it is impossible to elaborate on initiation among the Mbuti. It is sufficient to show that, among the net hunters at least, religious associations there exist for men and women, each with some form of initiation practiced without the aid or presence of villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. The function of these asso-

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The function of these associations[1] is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 796 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] [554] [171] [181]

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

Finally, it is worth taking very brief note of the function of music among the net-hunting Mbuti in so far as it throws light on their participation in the *nkumbi* and village society in general. 533 182

Music in the forest is almost entirely vocal. Drums may be used if within easy reach of the village, from which they are borrowed or stolen. [534] But drums are never used for formal meetings of the *molimo* and *elima*; rhythm is given out by wooden clappers. None of this song can be said to be secular, as it is all related to the forest. The extreme importance attached to song is most plainly seen in its usage for the *molimo* and *elima*. It is mentioned above in the survey how the Mbuti consecrate a marriage ceremony that is performed in the village according to villager custom, by singing the songs of the *elima*, welcoming the bride to the women's religious association in her new home. We also see how the *elima* songs mark the arrival of Mbuti girls at the age of puberty. *Molimo* songs mark

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533 any major crisis affecting the community as a
182 whole. But, as well as these religious activities, both major economic activities, hunting and gathering, are also consecrated by special types of song. It is inconceivable that the Mbuti, who accompany every important event in their lives with song, should not consecrate the initiation
533 of their boys in this same way. But for the
881 *nkumbi* they have no music at all. As we have said, in 1954 the *molimo* horn was not heard,
182 and no *molimo* songs were sung. I suggest that other initiations, in which the horn and songs are heard, are in connection with villager institutions to which the village boys are being initiated. The only conclusion we can draw is that for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is not sufficiently significant in their forest life to merit consecration by forest song.

533 This is closely paralleled by the absence of
182 forest music (songs of the *molimo* and *elima*, hunting-and-gathering songs) when the Mbuti
181 are camped on the edge of a village. When they do, the Mbuti themselves behave as different people. In the forest they feel and observe a
[178] certain restraint. Their songs are related to and emphasize their supreme value—the forest. Their daily activities are dominated by the forest and the hunt and the need for close cooperation.

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go.

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers.

In the final section we consider some legends 128
collected by Anne Putnam among these same 186
Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti 539
attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*.

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

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In order to understand the Pygmy values [181]
more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti [186]
rejection of villager values is effectively valid [177]
and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by 539
four of the more important hunters belonging 114
to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters

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1: Turnbull F-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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539 114 and by others. Although only a limited though representative selection of the legends is presented, a word should be said about the way the legends are told and the way these particular examples were collected and translated (Turnbull, 1959).

539 114 122 The original manuscripts were prepared under extremely difficult conditions by Mrs. Putnam while living in one of the Mbuti hunting camps. No typewriter was available. Apart from the physical difficulty of making a longhand rendition of the legends, as they were told, was the problem of translation. Mrs. Putnam did the only thing anyone except a proficient linguist could do, she translated the legend as it was told and wrote it down in English. This [91] procedure was further necessitated by the habit of these Mbuti, who speak three languages, of changing in the telling of a single legend from one to another as the mood seizes them.

539 114 Certainly, the ideal would have been to record the original texts, but these we do not have and could hardly expect to have under the circumstances. But we can be sure of the content and the general form of expression. I myself worked on the original manuscripts shortly af-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ter their completion and had the opportunity of hearing many of the tales retold, sometimes spontaneously but more often with a little prompting given with the aid of the manuscripts. The only legends that were retold in recognizable form were those concerning creation myth, origin, and tradition, and a few of the more popular ones concerning the *satani*, or forest spirits.

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In transcribing from the manuscripts I have not altered the content, but I have attempted to reproduce the legends in a way that will convey something of the manner in which they are told, and I have omitted the often endless repetition. For the present purpose I have divided the legends into three groups: (1) creation myths, legends of origin and tradition; (2) legends dealing with social relations; and (3) legends dealing with relationships to the supernatural.

The bulk of the collection is divided equally between the second and third categories. Only three of the total of 200 legends concern the creation of the world, the stars, and the sky. Fewer than a dozen may be said to deal with the origin and traditional history of the Mbuti. The creation legends are very curtailed versions

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of villager legends. The legends of tradition are 539
somewhat more original and are told in a 128
slightly less summary way but still without any great show of interest or enthusiasm.

Most of the tales concern the Mbuti and 539
their relationship with the three planes of exis- [82]
tence that they acknowledge: the human, ani- [772]
mal, and supernatural worlds. By various notable omissions and commissions they add to our understanding of their social and religious life. Whether the tales are villager in origin or not is for the present purpose not particularly significant. In practice they are never told the same way twice. They are often spontaneous creations arising from a certain set of circumstances, or they may be adaptations of dimly remembered tales, or of traditional villager tales, again made to fit certain sets of circumstances. One of the weaknesses of the present collection is the absence of such surrounding details.

A full analysis of legends and the circum- 539
stances under which they are told, together 121
with a similar analysis of other Mbuti arts, such as music and drama (all vitally important means of expression to the Pygmy), would give

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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us a body of facts on which we could draw in a study of the Mbuti system of values, joining such an analysis to a more formal anthropological study. It is not intended to attempt such an analysis here; there is insufficient detail and further field work is needed. However, a study of the legends we have at our disposal, if it cannot provide the detailed systematization we would like, does at least give us a clearer picture of Mbuti values than could be had by merely observing their behavior. 539 121

1. Creation Myths: Legends of Origin and Tradition 539

As mentioned, for the Pygmy these subjects seem barely worth mention in legend. I give all three legends that deal with creation and with the sun and moon. None concerned the stars.

The Water and the Earth

Many, many moons ago the Water was down below, and the Earth was way up in the sky. When it rained it rained dirt, and the dirt ruined all the water vegetables and spoiled all the water food, so that it had to be thrown away. The Water said to the Earth: "You are spoiling my water gardens by raining dirt. You come down here and I'll go up there." 539 821

The Earth agreed, and so the Water moved up and the Earth came down. When they had changed

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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places, the Water said: "Now I'm going to rain on *you*, but *I'm* going to rain water." And the Water rained on the Earth. The earth vegetables flourished and the earth gardens grew. The Water said: "See, when I rain I don't spoil your food like you spoiled mine. It is good like this."

And from then onward the Water stayed up in the sky and the Earth stayed down below.

Basi

The Sun and the Moon

The Sun and the Moon, who were close friends, had a big discussion. The Sun said to the Moon: "Come on up, high, high up; you and I will be higher than anything else—but now we should part. I will be high up over there in the east, and you will be high up over there in the west."

The Moon said: "Yes, I would like that, and it is good that we should stay apart because you are bright and shine like I do."

And so they divided the Heavens between them. When the Sun disappeared in the hours of the night, then the Moon passed by, all by itself. The Sun said: "This is very good. Your path is there, and mine is over here, but we must never cross at the same time; that would be very, very bad."

So they parted forever. That is why the Sun always shines in the daytime, and the Moon at night.

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The Pygmy and the Sun

There was a Pygmy who saw the sun in the middle of one afternoon. He thought it was a pigskin, so of course he tried to chase it and catch it. The Pygmy kept following, but the sun would not stay still. Still, the Pygmy followed until the sun disappeared from sight and night arrived. The Pygmy couldn't understand what had happened to the pigskin. He went to sleep.

When dawn came, the sun was way off in another direction. The Pygmy woke up and said to himself: "How did the pigskin get way over there?" He went toward the east and the sun kept coming toward him. They got nearer and nearer . . . then suddenly the sun passed the Pygmy. The Pygmy said: "Now, how did I pass the pigskin?" He turned and chased after the sun. He walked to the west. He walked and walked and walked, until the sun disappeared from sight and night arrived. The Pygmy couldn't understand what had happened to the pigskin. He went to sleep.

Basi

539 The first beginnings of the Pygmies receive scant attention. The single legend in the collection referring to them runs as follows:

Way, way back, when the Great Forest was young, there were two Pygmy men and one Pygmy woman.

[P. 261- B]

[P. 261-C]

They went off into the Forest together. The one man lived with his wife, but time went by and still they had no children. The other Pygmy saw this and decided that he would go to the main hunting camp. There he found another woman. He lived with her, and in due course a child was born. The Pygmy ran to his friend in the Forest in great joy, and told him the news. His friend immediately left the Forest and also lived with the woman in the hunting camp. They too had a child. And that is how Pygmies began, and how they became so plentiful. 539

Basi

Another legend tells how two brothers fought over an ax.

One was killed, so the other said to his nephews and nieces: "See, I have killed your father. From now on, your family and mine are enemies. We will live apart; you will live over there and I will live here." And they parted forever.

That, a social anthropologist might say, was the beginning of fission and fusion.

But apart from this, and one legend telling how a great dreamer dreamed and was told how the Pygmies should make nets out of *nkusa* vine and hunt with nets, the remainder of legends dealing with the traditional past refer to relationship with the villagers, a subject of much more interest to the Mbuti. 539 177 787

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Zaire FO1

There is a particularly nice contrast in the way the villagers tell how the relationship began and the way the Pygmies tell the same story. Here is the villager version:

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In the old days the Pygmies lived in holes in the trees, and nobody ever saw them. But one day a real man and his wife were walking through the forest and heard a strange sound. It was very loud and noisy. "What is this strange noise?" said the man to his wife, who replied, "I have no idea." "Well," said the man, "we will have to find that noise and see what it is. I'll go home and think what we should do." So he went home and thought, and he prepared a trap. He baited it with a banana, so that when the animal or whatever was making the noise grabbed the banana, an arrow would come down and pierce it.

The next morning the man and his wife set out with the trap and fixed it at the entrance to the hole in the tree from where the noise was coming. Then they went off a little way and waited to see what would happen. In a little while one of the Pygmies came to the mouth of the hole and saw the banana. He said to himself, "What is this?" Finally, his curiosity got the better of him and he made a grab for the banana. But as he touched it, the trap came down, and his hand was pierced by the arrow. He let

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Zaire FO1

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out an awful scream. The man and his wife came rushing to the trap and seized him. They released him. The wife said, "What is this?" They stared at him and examined him carefully, and the wife admired his barkcloth. They took him back to their home and gave him lots of good things to eat.

One day the Pygmy said, "I have many relations in that hole." So the man fixed his trap and went back to the hole and put down his trap with a banana as bait. In a little while a hand came out of the hole and reached for the banana. The trap fell and the arrow pierced the flesh and the Pygmy let out an awful scream. The man and his wife rushed to the trap and took the Pygmy home. The first Pygmy saw them coming and shouted for joy, because they had caught his wife.

The next day the man and his wife went back with the trap, but all the other Pygmies refused to be tempted out of their hole, so they waited and waited in vain. The Pygmies in the hole said: "See, the other two grabbed the banana and were taken away. They must have been eaten up."

In the meantime the two Pygmies who lived in the village were having a very good time, and the real people gave them lots and lots of food. In due course they had a child, and then another child. When those children grew up they had children, and their children had children, and that is why there are so many Pygmies in the forest today.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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The Mbuti, as might be imagined, tell it differently.

The Mbuti were out hunting termites because, as you know, termites are good to eat. They built their houses. When night arrived the wives cooked food for their husbands. Then they all went to sleep. But in the middle of the night they heard a cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" "What is that?" said one Pygmy. "It is coming from over there!" cried another, pointing into the Forest. "Yes, it is a great noise coming from the old *lihoyo* tree!" shouted a third. "We should go and see what it is!" They took their spears and crept up to the old *lihoyo* tree. There they found a large hole in the ground, and they thought they could see faces peering up at them. But it was very dark, and they were afraid to go too close, so they returned to their camp.

"Tomorrow we shall go and see what it is all about," they said. "We shall go and we shall smoke it out of the hole, whatever it is."

The next morning they went back to the *lihoyo* tree, carrying bundles of sticks and some fire wrapped up in *mongongo* leaves. They put the fire to the wood and started filling the hole with smoke. Then they heard voices calling out from the hole: "I'm dying, I'm dying! Oh, let me out, Brother, I'm dying!"

The Pygmies stopped the smoke and hurried to

[P. 262- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 262-c]

help whatever it was out of the hole, and out came people—Real People—much bigger than themselves, holding their heads and crying. They were villagers. "Where do you come from?" asked the Pygmies. "We don't know!" answered the Real People. "We fell into the hole by the old *likoyo* tree and then you started filling it with smoke. We should have died if you had not helped us out."

P 539 177 186 Z 539 177

The Pygmies took the Real People with them, back to their termite camp, saying: "Come back with us to our termite camp. Now we shall all live together; there will be no fighting between us. You will be the Real People, truly, truly; you will be the Real People, truly."

Bari

But the Mbuti have their own notions as to the origin of the "Real People." This legend characterizes their attitude to the villager—an attitude they never express in the presence of the villager, finding it more profitable to let the villagers continue to think that even the Mbuti themselves recognize the great superiority of the "Real People."

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1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

How the Real People Began[1]

539
186

In the old days there was a Savage. This Savage had a big house. She was a strange-looking woman. Not only was she tall and skinny and bony, but she had a mouth like a hippopotamus, and her stomach was enormous and her body covered with arrows. In the even older days she had had two husbands, but now both were dead. She said: "Now I'm all alone; everyone has left my village. But I'll get even. Anyone that comes by, I'll eat them."

And that is how the trouble started. She had a medicine that she put out to attract people, and when they came by she would say: "This is my house." If they became frightened and went away, her medicine brought them back. And always, she ate them. She ate them whole. She ate them one after another. Her stomach got larger and larger.

Then all the people she had eaten whole had babies and she soon had a flourishing village. She did not eat these people. They built lots of houses.

Basi

The remaining three legends in this section explain how the Pygmies got fire, how the "Real People" tricked them out of the plantains they discovered (which is why the Pygmies have none), and, finally, how war began between Pygmies and villagers. Again the villagers are at fault. A Pygmy is tapping away in a tree, chopping out some honey, and some villagers

[1] As told by a Pygmy.

[P 262-D]

[P.263-A]

539 passing by hear the noise and shoot at it with
186 an arrow. But even though wounded, the clever Pygmy remains very still, so the villagers think they must have been mistaken and go on. Then the Pygmy cuts them off and lies in wait and kills one of them as they come to him. And that began the war.

2. Legends Dealing with Social Relations

539 In this group we have a few legends telling
593 of the good mother (who protects her daughter
577 against nasty villagers) and the good father (who looks after his son when out hunting); the good sister (who protects her baby brother against a *satani*, a forest spirit); and the good brother (who does not quarrel with his brothers).

539 Social behavior is extolled in a similarly pos-
577 itive vein. Marriage and divorce, cooperative effort in the food quest, war and feud, hospitality to strangers—these are common topics, treated by telling how the reasonable Pygmy behaves in any of these situations. The remainder of the legends in this group deal with virtue and vice.

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Among the few legends commending the good
517 mother and father, the good brother and sister,
593 only one takes the opposite approach and tells
776 of the bad mother. I include it in this section because the emphasis seems to be on the thoughtlessness of the mother rather than the trickery of the *satani*.

A Pygmy, his wife, and his child, were all asleep. In the middle of the night the child woke up and began crying. He cried and he cried. He was crying from hunger, because his mother had not fed him. At last the mother got up and gave the child a plantain. Then she went back to lie down and they all fell asleep again. A little while later the child woke up again and started crying again because he was still hungry. He cried and he cried, but his father and his mother went on sleeping.

A *satani* arrived. "Why are you crying, my child?" he asked. "I am crying because I am hungry!" replied the child. "My mother hasn't given me enough to eat and she won't wake up."

So the *satani* fixed two pots of plantains, and lots of meat. He put them on the fire to cook. When it was all ready he put the food in front of the child and the child ate, and ate, and ate. "Oh! This is good!" said the child, and he ate still more. When he finished there was still a pot of plaintains and lots more meat, so the *satani* said, "Eat some more, my child, then

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[P 263-C]

you will not wake up hungry again." So the child ate some more. 539

At last the child had finished all but a few plantains and a little meat. "Oh! How full I am!" he said, holding his little stomach. "I have had enough, really." But the *satani* pointed to the plantains and the meat that still remained and said, "You must eat some more, or you will surely wake up hungry!" "But I have eaten all I can, really!" said the child. "Eat!" said the *satani*. 577 593 776

The child took a plantain and slowly began to eat it, then suddenly BAM! He burst. The *satani* vanished. The mother and father woke with a start and saw the dead body of their little child. "Oh, what can have happened?" cried the mother. And there was much grief.

But the father knew what had happened, the mother had let the child go to bed hungry. So the next night when they lay down to sleep, the father slept only with his eyes. In the middle of the night the *satani* arrived to see if there were any more children who had been allowed to go to bed hungry, so that he could feed them until they burst. The father leapt out of his bed and seized the *satani* and cried, "You devil! You killed our son because his mother allowed him to go to bed hungry!"

And the father killed the *satani* completely.

Bati

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Most of the legends extolling social behavior 539
are told in a matter-of-fact way and are not 231
infrequently related to incidents in the lives of 577
members of the community. Again, only one legend in the collection deals directly with anti-social behavior. It concerns a man who constantly maltreated his hunting dog. In net-hunting groups, such as the one in which these legends were collected, anything that concerns hunting concerns the entire society. This particular individual fed his dog only on the genitals of other animals. The dog saw that other dogs were being fed on more dainty morsels, such as liver; so one night when his master was sleeping he got his knife and killed the Pygmy. The Pygmy's wife woke up so the dog killed her also. The dog then disappeared.

Even a brief glance at the legends reveals 539
that the one quality to which these Mbuti 577
attach the greatest importance is cleverness, a term that in certain circumstances also means trickery. Conversely, while selfishness, greed, laziness, and gossiping women are mildly condemned in a number of legends, the sin of sins is stupidity. These two qualities are so overriding that cleverness can make crime pay, whereas stupidity can bring death and disaster to the

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 264-A]

539 best-intentioned of Pygmies. It is worth noting
577 here that we find an almost exact parallel in the
way these legends deal with the animal world,
539 in which cleverness is the supreme virtue. Leg-
577 ends extolling cleverness among Pygmies must
825 not, then, necessarily be taken as supplying a model for behavior in Pygmy society, but rather as showing how satisfactory relationships can best be established with the animal world. This has much wider implications, as we shall see below.

One of the tales of cleverness tells how a young Pygmy becomes a great hunter, not by killing game by himself, simply, but by killing it with trickery. In such legends the great ideal of the Mbuti seems to be to match the animal world in its own terms. But in other Mbuti legends they rely on aid from the animals to help them in their trickery.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Two men went to their camp. While they were
577 walking through the forest they came across a tree
825 called *pusia*, which bears delicious nuts. One of the men gathered nuts from this tree, but the second man gathered from another tree, bearing very bitter nuts. When they reached their camp they roasted their nuts over the fire. The man with the bitter nuts offered them to his friend, who tasted them and said, "Oh! These are terrible, I can't eat them." The two of them shared the sweet nuts.

Later on, the man with the bitter nuts went back to the tree and stole the rest of the sweet nuts and roasted them over the fire. When they were ready he offered them to his friend. His friend tasted them and said, "These are sweet; they must be my nuts. You have stolen my nuts." "I wouldn't steal your nuts!" "Well, tomorrow I'll go and see."

At first light, the man who had found the sweet nuts went to his tree and saw that all the nuts were gone. He returned to the camp and told his friend what he had found. "You see, you did steal all my nuts. You can stay here no longer."

So the man who stole the nuts left the camp and went through the forest until he came to a *konga* bird. When he saw the *konga* bird, he explained what had happened and said, "Please don't kill me." The *konga* bird said, "All right, you can stay here and look after us." In the meantime, the other Pygmy, his nuts all eaten, decided to follow his friend. When he finally arrived his friend said to the *konga* bird, "There is my brother whose sweet nuts I stole. You can kill him if you like." So together, they killed the Pygmy who had allowed himself to be tricked.

Basi

000 As might be expected, cleverness is frequently
[P 264-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P-264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539
associated with smallness. In several legends 828
the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825
respect) of small animals over large. It is not [186]
difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539
connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828
are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577
of this quality, which automatically associates 888
them more closely with the animal and spiritual

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

539 828 577 888

539 828 577 888 732

[776]

[682]

539 577 888 732

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(p. 265-A)

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about cripples that just happened to disappear or who suddenly just "died completely."

There was once a Pygmy named Butuwa. He was in the forest, and was sleeping with his wife, children, and old mother. His mother had no legs. In the middle of the night Butuwa said to his wife: "Mother is sleeping soundly; get the children together and let's go away." So they quietly picked up their belongings, and, together with their children, they crept away. They walked and walked and walked.

Early in the morning the old woman woke up. She said: "Where is everybody? Oh! They are a bad family, they have gone off and left their legless old mother to die. I will follow them." So saying, she stood on her head and walked and walked and walked until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She was very angry with them for having deserted her, and told them how bad they were to have left her alone in the forest. That night they all went to sleep together.

In the middle of the night the Pygmy said to his wife: "Now mother is really asleep; get the children together and let's go away." So they collected the children, picked up their belongings, and stole away. They walked and walked and walked.

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and
577 she was very, very angry to find that her family had
888 deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she
732 walked and walked and walked, until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She told her son how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son went off into the forest and gathered some honey. And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

Bari

539 825

3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

[P 265-8]

[P. 265-C]

seem to deal with relationships between animals 539
as animals. But, even with these, we can suspect 537
that there is some hidden meaning that is not 825
clear to us, until we know more about these Mbuti or, indeed, that may not even be clear to the Mbuti themselves. Here is such a tale:

There was once a chimpanzee and an elephant. The chimpanzee took bugs out of the elephant's hair. When he had finished he said to the elephant, "Now, you take the bugs out of my hair." So the elephant took out bug after bug after bug. He pulled harder and harder, and finally he pulled so hard that he pulled the chimpanzee's head right off. When the elephant saw what had happened he ran away. He went to his cousins in their hole. He said: "I have done something awful; I have killed a chimpanzee." His cousins said: "Really? Tomorrow we shall go and see."

The next morning they all left the hole. They saw the dead chimpanzee and said, "What shall we do with the body?" They decided the best thing was to let it rot there. So they let it rot, and they went back to their hole.

Bazi

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Most of the tales, however, deal with relationships between the animal and the human worlds. Some of these relate how Pygmies and animals become friends—almost. This corresponds to a mutual sympathy that the Pygmies seem to believe exists between them and the animals that share the forest with them, but, however much they may both try to meet, it can never quite be done. 539 825

An elephant and a Pygmy were friends. The Pygmy was called Mbali. He went to visit his friend, the elephant. When he arrived at the elephant's village, the elephant was delighted and said to his wife, "My friend, Mbali, has come; make us a nice dish of mashed plantains." So his wife pounded the plantains, added salt, and put the dish over the fire. When it was ready the elephant took some red-hot embers and held them to his feet, and the elephant fat ran into the food. When there was enough he turned to his friend, Mbali, and said, "Eat well." The two of them sat down and ate up all the food. The Pygmy said, "This is delicious." He went back to his camp.

The next day the elephant said to his wife, "Now I will go and visit my friend, Mbali." So he cleaned himself up and set off. When he arrived at Mbali's camp, Mbali saw him and called, "Welcome, friend! Come and sit down." He told his wife that his friend had come, and that she should prepare some mashed plantains for him. When it was cooked the Pygmy took some red-hot embers and started putting them

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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825

to his foot. The elephant said, "Don't do that, it will kill you. My feet are big and heavy, let me do it." "Don't be silly," replied the Pygmy, and put the embers to his feet. He screamed with pain and almost died. The elephant took hold of him and brought him back to life, then said, "See, I told you it would kill you." The elephant then took the hot embers and put them to his feet so that the oil ran out into the plantains, and they all sat down and ate.

When the meal was finished the elephant returned to his home. His wife greeted him and asked if he had had a good time. He said: "It was terrible. My friend, Mbali, took red-hot embers and put them to his feet and almost killed himself. I shall never go back there again, never."

Bazi

Relationships with chimpanzees are less happy. The Pygmy and the chimpanzee seem to be just about equally matched in cleverness, and they are continually killing each other. Typical is the tale of the Pygmy who sat down to watch a group of chimpanzees playing.

One of the chimpanzees noticed the Pygmy and came over to him. He said, "What are you doing here?" He called to his brother chimpanzees, "Come and see this Pygmy." They came over and said,

539 "We'll fight him." One of the chimpanzees grabbed
825 at the Pygmy, but meanwhile the Pygmy had taken up his spear. The Pygmy killed the chimpanzee. The others said, "What did the Pygmy kill our brother with?" And one answered, "It seemed to be with the root of a tree." So another of the chimpanzees gathered up the roots of the trees and threw them at the Pygmy. The Pygmy killed him with his spear. The remaining chimpanzees sat down and tried to puzzle this out. One of them searched all round and found the spear. He took it and killed the Pygmy. The chimpanzees then gathered some leaves and put them over the Pygmy. They all left.

The Pygmy's brother went to look for him. He found him dead, covered with leaves. He said, "What could have happened? Who killed my brother?"

Bari

539 Leopards and turtles are tricky animals that
825 teach the Pygmy much of his cleverness in leg-
828 end. They appear frequently, and it is always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed. But here we consider another aspect of these
539 animal tales. Not only is it always their clever-
825 ness and trickery that are stressed, thus auto-
828 matically associating them with the supernatu-
186 ral, if only indirectly, but they are often identified with villagers. In talking of villagers, in legend, more often than not the Pygmy gives them animal form. The villager is very defi-

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[p. 266-c]

nitely not included on the human side of the opposition between the animal and human worlds (the villager is often associated with an excess of cleverness). A frequently heard motif is for a Pygmy to wound an animal with a spear or an arrow. The animal escapes, carrying away the weapon. Later, the Pygmy discovers that weapon, covered with blood, hidden in the house of some Bira villager. The Pygmy then knows that he had, in fact, wounded a villager who had changed into an animal. 539 825 186 (828)

The collection includes one very similar legend in which exactly the same motif is used, accounting for enmity between two Pygmy hunting groups. A Pygmy wounds an elephant with a spear, and the elephant escapes, carrying away the spear. The Pygmy's father sends his son off to look for the lost spear. On his way through a village, he meets a Bira who says he has seen the spear in the hut of the Pygmy's best friend, another Pygmy. The Bira helps to conceal the unfortunate hunter in his friend's hut; at night, when his friend is sleeping, he

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

searches and finds his spear. But, as he is escaping, he is seen by other Pygmies who say, "Oh! So it was you who tried to kill our brother; we will kill you."

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In the ensuing fight the elephant hunter kills all the other Pygmies and returns to his father who is well satisfied.

The Bira villagers frequently turn into elephants and take advantage of their great size to make war on the Pygmies, destroying the forest as they do so. They are bad enough at the best of times, in Pygmy estimation, but apparently they become elephants when they are particularly bad.

A Bira and his wife had a terrible fight. The wife decided to leave and go to her mother's village, but her husband followed her. And as he followed, he turned into an elephant. He crashed through the forest and destroyed everything in sight. His wife heard the great noise and climbed a tree. The elephant tracked her down and started to knock the tree down. He charged at it and tore at it, but try as he might he could not pull it down. His wife held on tightly. Then she called to the Pygmies. The Pygmies heard her and came to her rescue. When she saw them she told them to kill the elephant. They attacked it with spears. They speared it again and again, but it would not die. It charged at the Pygmies and drove them back, right back to the Bira village. There the elephant spoke and said, "You have tried to kill me, your friend, a Bira." The Pygmies replied:

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[p.267-A]

539 825 186 "But you have turned into an elephant and tried to kill your wife. Because of that you must cross over to the other side of the river and die." The elephant said, "You want to kill me?" "Yes," said the Pygmies. "You have become a very bad elephant." So the elephant went across to the other side of the river. The Pygmies went back and took his wife to her mother.

Bari

539 825 We next examine some of the legends that very definitely attach supernatural attributes to certain animals and birds. There is a legend that warns against annoying porcupines. A Pygmy that tries to smoke some porcupines out of their hole is attacked, driven into another hole, and turned into an animal. Similarly a pangolin, if annoyed, has the power to drag its tormentor down into the world of the ancestors, through a great hole in the ground.

But some of the strangest tales concern birds. Above is an account of the *kongo* bird that helped the Pygmy who stole the sweet nuts to kill his brother. Another, unidentified bird is popular in legend—the Bird with the Beautiful Song. It sings the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest has ever heard.

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One day, a Pygmy child heard this Beautiful Song and searched for the Bird that could sing so wonderfully. He found it and praised its Song. The Bird flew down and perched on the boy's head, and the boy brought it back to the Pygmy camp. His father saw the Bird and praised it. When it sang he told the boy to give it some food. The Bird then flew off. The next day the boy heard the Song and searched until he found the Bird again. Once again he brought it back to the camp. This happens three times, and the last time the father takes the Bird from the boy and says, "Now you go off and leave me. Leave this camp and go away to another; go! go!" The young Pygmy left his father and went to another camp. When he was alone, the father took the Bird, the Bird that sang the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest had ever heard, and he killed the Bird. And he killed the Song.

And no sooner had he killed the Bird than he himself dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever.

Bari

Another curious bird is *fff*. Like the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, the legend

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1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 267-C]

of the *fifi* is told with great awe by the Mbuti; it is reproduced here in full. 539 825

There was once a poor Pygmy girl. She was crippled, and her skin was full of disease. She was only about eight years old. The Pygmies were breaking camp. Nobody was willing to carry the little cripple for fear of catching the disease. So when all the Pygmies had left the camp, the little girl was all alone, by herself. She cried and she cried and she cried. And when night fell she crawled into her empty hut and she cried herself to sleep.

At daybreak she heard a sound like: "Pip! Pip! Pip!" It was the bird called the *fifi* bird. It had fastened a long rattan vine between two trees, and it was sitting on the vine swinging back and forth, back and forth. The little girl went to look more closely, and the bird flew away.

In the distance there was a Bira villager with his hunting trap. Seeing the diseased cripple he came up and said: "My poor child, you have been left here all by yourself . . . I must kill you." And he took his knife and lifted it to kill the girl. But the knife caught his nose and cut it. It killed him and he fell down dead. The girl caught hold of the rattan vine, and she swung herself back and forth, back and forth. 539 825 186

As she was swinging on the vine, another Bira villager, seeing the movement, came slowly into the clearing. "What is this?" he said to himself. "Why, it is a crippled little Pygmy girl. Get off your vine swing, my child, and come over here to me." 539 825 186

The girl got down from her swing and made her way over to where the Bira was standing. Then she sat down on the ground and held her withered little legs. "Come nearer, my child," said the Bira, reaching forward. "No! No! I can't come any nearer," cried the girl. "My legs hurt so much, and I am all diseased." "Very well, I shall kill you," replied the Bira. "Oh, please don't do that, I'm only a poor deserted child." "But why did your father leave you all alone?" asked the Bira. "No, I must certainly kill you."

And he took a piece of wood and tried to strike the little crippled Pygmy girl. But the wood flew back in his face and hit him on the nose, and the blood streamed down. With the blood still streaming down he ran back to his village and told everyone: "There is a poor deserted Pygmy girl in the Pygmy camp. She is crippled and diseased, and she has the evil eye. She will surely kill us all." And with some friends and relations he hurried to the deserted camp.

There was the little girl, sitting on the swing, swinging herself back and forth, back and forth. The Bira called to her: "Come here, my poor child. You have killed one of our relatives, and you have wounded me. You are crippled and diseased, and you have been deserted. I am going to kill you."

The little girl got down from her swing and slowly

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539 825 186

came over to where the Bira was standing. "Come nearer, little one!" said the Bira. "Oh, please don't kill me," said the Pygmy girl, "I am only a deserted cripple, and I haven't run away." But she came closer still. The Bira raised his knife. "Now!" he said," "Now, I am going to kill you!" But the knife caught in his stomach, and he fell down, he fell down dead.

The girl went back to her swing, dragging her withered little legs along the ground. And she climbed on the swing and swung herself back and forth, back and forth. The remaining Bira all hurried back to their village.

"Come! Come! Come, all of you!" they cried. "There is a crippled little Pygmy girl in the deserted camp, and she will surely kill us all unless we kill her. Get your spears, and come!" And all the Bira villagers seized their spears and came running to the deserted camp. They all came to take their revenge and kill the deserted little Pygmy girl.

But the girl had gone.

The only sign of life was the *fifi* bird, and the *fifi* bird was sitting on the rattan vine, swinging itself back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Basi

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Mbuti

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There is another link between the animal and the supernatural worlds in the alleged existence of "water animals." These water animals are not particularly dangerous spirits; they appear rather as vehicles to transport the Pygmy from the natural world to the supernatural. There is a legend told by the Epulu Pygmies of a man who was known, they say, to their fathers.

There was once a man called Ngoyi. He was tired of all his relatives and said: "I can't live with you any longer. I'm going to live on my own." And off he went to the river named Tato, where he disappeared into the water. He called out, "I'm going to stay here in the water, and you won't be able to see me any more."

His family had all followed him to the river and asked: "Are you really going to stay there in the water?" He replied, "Yes." He called his children and took them into the water with him. They all disappeared.

Now Ngoyi was a clever worker of wood, and, if you go to the river today and throw in a piece of wood, he will make it into whatever you want. His children are there also, and during the day time they come out to play. And even though they disappear when you come near, you can always hear them talking.

Bari

Another legend tells how two brothers were crossing a stream, and one fell in. The other

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 268-C]

thought his brother had been drowned, and returned to camp with the news, but actually he had become a water animal. Some weeks later the land brother saw his water brother and tried to tempt him home, so glad was he to see him still alive. But the water brother caught hold of him and pulled him into the water, so the land brother also became a water animal. 539 776

And the two Water Brothers stayed in the stream; they stayed in the stream and never came out again.

A third legend connects the rainbow with these water animals.

Some girls were off cutting wood. They crossed a stream by a fallen tree. But really the tree was the "bad water animal, called *Ndima*, the Rainbow." When returning they all crossed, except the slowest of the girls, and a man who waited for her. As these two were halfway across, the dead tree, which was really the rainbow which was really a water animal, suddenly dived down into the water, carrying them with it. Later on, the couple was seen sitting on a rock in the middle of the stream, but never again after that.

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Quite distinct from the water animals are the forest spirits which these Pygmies call *satani*. They are, unlike the water animals, capable of being dealt with. Their outstanding characteristic is an excess of cleverness amounting to the grossest trickery. They molest the Pygmies on every possible occasion, stealing their food, devouring them in anthropophagous orgies. The Pygmies resort to cleverness of the same order. It is perfectly possible, though difficult, for a Pygmy to outwit a *satani*, even to kill one. But one of the legends warns against imitating a *satani*'s ways too closely.

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One day a Pygmy and his child went for a walk. They collected some *eseli* nuts. On the way they met a *satani*. The *satani* put a nut on the child's head and split the nut with a machete. "Oh!" said the Pygmy, "that's like the *ndumbi* circumcision school. Tomorrow, I'll collect some more nuts and try that."

The next day he went with his child to the same place and collected some more *eseli* nuts. He put one of the nuts on his child's head and hit it with his machete. He killed his child dead. The *satani*, who had been watching, said, "See! You have killed your child."

The Pygmy left his child's body there and went down to the river. The *satani* went with him. The *satani* threw his spear into the water. The Pygmy said, "I'd like to do that!" But, when he tried, the

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I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1953) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.269-A]
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M6

spear went all over the place, everywhere except into the water. He said: "When you do it, *satawi*, it goes straight, yet when I do it it goes all over the place." They left each other.

Bazi

Pygmies become *satawi* far less frequently than they become water animals, but it can happen. The woman who gossiped became a *satawi*. The following tale tells how a certain Pygmy was driven to the same fate by his relatives.

There was once a young Pygmy whose name was Mambalia. His relations kept whipping and whipping him until at last he could bear it no more and ran away into the forest. His family followed him, but he built a huge fire and said: "I am not going back—never!" And he ran even farther away. His relations returned to their camp.

After that, whenever Mambalia heard voices he ran farther away still, until finally, he said: "Now this is my part of the forest, and nobody must come here. I'm going to stay here all by myself."

He lived in a hole in a tree where no one could find him. He became very, very powerful. He became a *satawi*. And now he is an old, old man.

Bazi

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 Mb *Satani* are very popular with the Mbuti as subject matter for their legends, and they let their imaginations run riot. A *satani* can do almost anything except kill a really clever Pygmy. They are used frequently as excuses for failure in the hunt or in honey gathering. When a Pygmy has found a good honey tree and has managed to consume most of the honey himself, his excuse to the camp for not bringing back more will be that he was waylaid by a *satani* who was so tricky that he turned into the Pygmy's grandmother, so he had to hand over all his honey, or something to that effect. (This excuse I heard myself.) Rather than examine more *satani* legends, we now briefly review the collection as here presented and draw such conclusions as we can.

538 128 Any conclusions are necessarily general and tentative and are of course based not only on a knowledge of the entire collection of legends, only a bare tenth of which is reproduced here, but of the Mbuti themselves. Also it must be emphasized that we are dealing with only one particular band of Pygmies, a net-hunting group in the Epulu District of the Ituri Forest.

My classification of the legends into three groups, which is quite arbitrary and satisfactory

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[P. 269-C]

only for certain purposes, reveals at once a lack 538
of interest in the past which is in accord with 128
the apparent shortness of memory among these Pygmies, particularly noticeable when an investigator tries to construct some sort of genealogy. For me it heightens my suspicion of such genealogies given by a people who at times are only too willing to please by inventing totally fictitious names. The legends prove singularly unrewarding to anyone seeking some evidence of a [181]
lineage system. If they represent anything, they represent a people who are wholly absorbed in the present. If we accept this evidence, we can look for its consequences in the magico-religious life of the Mbuti as well as in other spheres.

Also with reference to the Mbuti magico-religious system, there is possibly some significance in the tendency to emphasize the natural 538
order of events in the legends relating to social 183
life. The ideal represented in the legend is the normal; consequently, these particular legends seem singularly unimaginative. They read like reports of actual occurrences. A certain amount of cleverness is normal, but an excess of it (when the term becomes best translated as "trickery") is abnormal and leads us, as we have seen, into

the world of the supernatural. The Pygmy is 538
anxious to preserve the normal, the *status quo*. 183
Although one could hardly determine this with any certainty from the legends alone, they certainly confirm the notion, which is of particular significanec with reference to Mbuti religious thought. We return briefly to this point below.

The second section dealing with social rela- 538
tions also reveals a center of interest on food, 181
the importance of the food quest being implied repeatedly. Also emphasized is the importance [476]
of cooperation, not only between members of the same family, but between all members of the hunting band. These legends tell us that [577]
vice and virtue are scarcely understood as such, that the dominating quality is cleverness, with its converse, stupidity. But, as pointed out, this is a borderline world. Whereas cleverness may 538
be of use to a Pygmy in his normal everyday 181
life, it is really a quality associated with his 183
dealings with the animal and supernatural worlds. In fact, one legend, not mentioned, quite distinctly tells us that in everyday life it is not good to be too clever, but better to be normal. An elephant hunter who loses his normality (by failing to accept food offered to him, and failing to join in the conversation) is

[P 269-D]

[P.270-A]

538 promptly deserted as being unsafe company. So
181 we might gather that in daily life normality is
183 the ideal, and, when the supernatural (including animals, regarded as possessed of supernatural powers), is dealt with, cleverness is dominant.

538 From the second section of legends we can
888 finally glean some information from the treatment of old age. Two things emerge: first, old age is associated with extra cleverness, approaching trickery; second, we find Pygmy realism emerging again when old age is accompanied by disability. Either way, old age is a dangerous condition. In this particular band it is perhaps significant that the leaders of the group are not old, but are the active—the "great hunters."

538 Animals, like food, enter into the majority of
825 legends, and in some cases they seem to be regarded merely as animals. But more often the trickery of the animal is emphasized and, consequently, its association with the supernatural. In the third kind of legends, those dealing with the supernatural, we find animals in almost every one.

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the
772 normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.270-C]

malevolence) in the forest world of the Pygmy. 538
In his daily life the Pygmy regards the forest as 181
a kind, good, protective home. At the risk of 771
being accused of begging the question, I would 772
like to say that other evidence (song, dance, and the practices of the Mbuti religious associations) also suggests that the Pygmy opposes these two worlds as we would oppose the sacred to the profane. Our understanding of his relationship with the villager tribes that surround him is, I think, considerably increased if we bear this fact in mind and realize its full implications.

I deliberately use the term "supernatural" 538
loosely in order to allow the fact to appear that 771
very few of these legends deal with the supernatural as we generally understand the term. Situations that would, to us, be supernatural—such as villagers turning into elephants or even *satani* changing form at will and luring innocent Pygmies to their doom—to the Pygmy are, in a sense, natural. Like the difference between the sphere of magic and that of religion, and in a way corresponding to them, the dividing line is

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers. 538 771 [828]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There 538 789 182 [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

[P270-D]

[P.291-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
789 adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case. There is no common explanation of death or illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The nearest approach to standard mythological rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

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538 776 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves in-
[789] dicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice.

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 771 772 I mention one further factor, which in a way may be said to be magical, and that is the power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and

[P. 271-B]

[p. 271-C]

rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. [p. 5] 533 538 789

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex-

1: Turnbull F-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

plained. But there is a feeling, and I cannot say 533
that it is more than that, that song has power. 538
The song may have no words; it may be a mix- 789
ture of meaningless sounds; but plainly it is
esthetically satisfying to the Mbuti. These
wordless songs are among the most powerful.
When the father killed the bird, he killed the
song, and he dropped down dead, completely
dead, dead forever. In real life, also, song is
powerful. Membership in the religious associa-
tions of the women and the men gives the
Pygmy the right to take part in the singing of
songs peculiar to those associations. In fact, it
imposes a duty to do so. The songs are distin-
guished not by their content but by their
musical style and the technique of performance.
It is the *sound*, rather than the word content,
that matters. These songs are sung, in their
most powerful form, only on occasions of the
greatest distress, such as sickness or death of
one of the great hunters, or failure in the chase.
These are departures from normality. It has
been my contention from an analysis of the
function of music among the Mbuti that song is
believed to restore that normality.

As well as several more obvious differences 538
from villager values, such as emphasis by the 171
[P 271-D] 181

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 272-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 272-87]

cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

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The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

CONCLUSIONS

[P. 273-A]

121 WE SET OUT TO MAKE an ethnographic survey
128 of material on the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, to evaluate that material, and to see what problems it raised and which direction further field work should take. Rather than attempt to record the material from all sources, we used only the material that added to our knowledge of two specific groups of Mbuti—the archers of the southeastern Ituri Forest and the net hunters of the Epulu District. The rest of the material consists largely of isolated descriptive remarks which cannot always be accurately associated with any one particular region, let alone any particular group or band of hunters. Its inclusion would have added nothing to the sociological value of this work.

114 The material on the two groups to which we limited ourselves is by no means adequate either. Schebesta's information for the archers is to be regarded with caution because of his admittedly preconceived notions and his faulty methodology and field-work technique. The

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 Putnam material is drawn not from a single coherent account, but from a number of isolated manuscript notes and from the written observations of Anne Putnam, put together by myself in the light of my own partial knowledge at the time of writing, of the particular Pygmies of whom the Putnams write.

128 The survey must be taken as a survey of source material and not as an ethnographic description of two types of Mbuti society. Though I have tried to draw from the material as much description as possible, obvious gaps are revealed, particularly in our knowledge of the social structure of the Mbuti. We have virtually no information, for instance, on the kinship, legal, or political systems of either group. Undoubtedly, the social structure is simple, but it is all the more regrettable that we do not have any detailed description of it. Our ethnographic description, in so far as it is such, gives an account of various institutions but with no hint as to their interrelationship. The account itself is never sufficiently detailed to permit speculation with any accuracy. In one sense it is virgin ground for the field worker, but not completely so. The survey reveals that
128 the Mbuti should be studied with regard to
101 their economic classification as archers and net

[P.273-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.273-C]

hunters rather than as Efe, Aka, or Sua—the linguistic division made by Schebesta which does not correspond to any sociological division. It may well emerge that there is a better classification, according to structural principles rather than purely economic differences, but at the moment this cannot be seen.

The survey also reveals a strange contrast between an apparently simple social structure and primitive material culture and a highly developed artistic sense. It seems worth while for the future field worker to pay particular attention to myth and mime, noting all the surrounding circumstances and not only the subject of representation. Similarly music is of obvious social importance and should be fully treated, with special attention to the social context. We might in this way gain some insight into the Mbuti system of values, which not only would be of significance itself but would immeasurably help our understanding of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

. 1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must 182
determine both their function and their mean- 53
ing, to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers.

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably 177
the major problem that arises from the survey. 439
We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical 177
grounds for the difference between the relation- 439
ship of the archers to their villager neighbors 184
and that of the more nomadic net hunters to

[P. 273- D]

[P.274-A]

177 theirs. There is also evidence, but in regrettably
439 little detail, that certain hunting bands main-
184 tain a client-patron relationship by specializing in elephant hunting, bringing the tusks to the villagers, on whom they rely for all vegetable products and on the edge of whose villages they live in permanent camps.

177 However, no matter how great or little the degree of dependence on the villagers, the Mbuti for whom we have any information all seem to maintain a distinct individuality in opposition to the villagers, despite their apparent adoption of villager institutions and even of [881] villager language. With regard to the adoption of villager customs, the 1954 *nkumbi* shows the degree to which this adoption may be a mere superficial conformity and may indeed conceal a formal rejection of villager values. A very careful study should be made of all such institutions held in common, if not practiced jointly.

177 It is indeed at this level that we seem to find
184 some excuse for referring to the Ituri Mbuti as a single people rather than as consisting of a number of widely scattered, semi-independent

P 177 184 hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the P [575] [114] difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *toré* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P 829 648 186 Z 563 The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net [P. 274-8]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 274-C]

hunters). Even in situations that do not directly associate the two groups, the Mbuti thinks in terms of his ethnic status. Thus, when the villagers were taxed by the administration and exemption was granted to all Mbuti, the point at issue among the Pygmy hunters when they discussed the matter was whether or not such exemption was a slight on the Mbuti, placing them somehow on a lower level than the tax-paying villagers. At least one Mbuti felt so strongly that he secured the necessary money and insisted on paying. The majority, however, compromised by saying that they were different people, so why should the same law be expected to apply to all?

The villager himself opposes the two worlds just as does the Pygmy. While he always tries to include the Pygmy in social, economic, and political fields, there is a rejection at the magico-religious level. In the *nkumbi*, the villagers seemed to be both aware of and unconcerned with the formal rejection by the Mbuti of villager values associated with initiation; the villagers failed to introduce their *molimo* into the ceremony, presumably because there were no villager boys present.

no villager boys present. But even more obvious, and ever manifesting itself, is the difference between the two people in their attitude to the forest. In the legends as told by the Mbuti we see something of the Mbuti attitude to the forest as the provider of all that is good and bad, as the source of the essentially good life of the Mbuti people. The forest is a place to be trusted (witness the *molimo* invocation to the God of the Forest) and loved. The villagers, on the other hand, fear the forest and people it with malevolent spirits. In their fear of the forest, there is necessarily an element of fear of the Mbuti, whom they recognize as its original inhabitants, as forest people. It is perhaps worth mentioning that Possoz (1954, 257) claims that the term "*Batwa*," derived from "*Batoa*," was originally applied by the Bantu-speaking tribes to the Pygmies, denoting that the latter were of older stock, closer to the ancestors and so worthy of veneration. The more recent term "*Batswa*," however, means "those in the course of disappearing." It would be difficult to prove or disprove such etymological deductions, but there is other evidence that the villager inhabitants of the Ituri Forest do not entirely lack respect for the Mbuti. There

P 178 181 Z 176 186 P Z [101] Z [829] Z 186 829

[p. 274-D]

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Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.275-A]

Z 186 829 is even the formalized manifestation of this respect mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) when the Bira villagers offer first fruits to the Mbuti.

P 186 181 Z 181 The Mbuti, on the other hand, when they are in the presence of the villagers, do not openly assert their own attitudes and values but, rather, reinforce those of the villagers, telling stories of the terrible things that can happen in the forest and of the difficult and dangerous life there. The Mbuti regard the villagers as uninitiated foreigners, alien if not actually hostile, to their own forest world. They therefore tolerate, it would appear, the fanciful beliefs of these outsiders, effectively preventing the villagers from entering the forest, either physically or spiritually. The villager is afraid to enter the forest, and his belief in the evil nature of the forest erects an effective spiritual barrier between himself and the Mbuti. The taboos and magical practices that he observes are in accord with his religious beliefs and his system of

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 186 181 Z 181 values. To the Pygmy, however, these same practices are meaningless, as they do not conform with his own notions of the forest world. There is, consequently, a hiatus in the relationship between the two people or rather a hiatus between their relative systems of values and their structural relationship. For a proper understanding of the situation we need a great deal more data, the gathering of which should be one of the foremost tasks of any field-work project.

P 121 With reference to such a project, there appear to be two main needs. First, there is a need for detailed studies of representative hunting bands, both archer and net hunter, and of their relationships with their villager neighbors. Second, we need as large a number of such studies as possible for purposes of comparison, not only according to economic technique, but according to other possible systems of classification by structural principles or by degrees of affiliation to different villager tribes. The second need will be fulfilled simply by an extension of the first project. This initial project must necessarily cover not only a single band but other hunting bands with which it is associated through bonds of marriage or for any other reason that may become apparent. At the moment, the single hunting band appears to be the major effective political unit. Such single hunting bands are loosely associated only through

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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marriage or very rarely through cooperation in the hunt, this latter sometimes accompanying a process of fission or fusion. In the course of such a study it should appear how far all these bands unite in terms of values in opposition to the villagers. This question will be further extended when we come to study another such loose association of hunting bands, that which utilizes one or other of the alternative hunting techniques. 121

Thus we shall be studying the social structure of individual hunting bands and the structural relationship between different bands (presumably but not necessarily utilizing the same hunting technique). The structural differences and relationships between one type of hunting band and another should then appear and the identity or difference in their systems of values. In the course of the study we shall probably accumulate material for a comparison of the relationships of these different groups to their villager neighbors and will learn what generalizations, if any, can be made about this relationship.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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It would seem advisable to begin by working 121
in the communities already covered in the survey, checking and verifying the known information and filling in the numerous gaps. It should be possible by an eastward extension of the study of the Epulu net hunters to reach the point where they come in contact with a westward extension of the archers in the southeast of the area. The Pygmies ("Aka") in the north, [101]
of whom little is known at present, should certainly be included in the study, in so far as they can be fruitfully compared with the net hunters and archers. We should then at least know whether or not we are justified in using the term "Mbuti" to include all the Ituri Pygmies as a single cultural entity. It may prove that we are no more justified in studying them together on account of their outward physical similarity than we would be in regarding the Dinka and the Nuer as a single people simply because they both have long legs.

It seems unnecessary even to consider the question of origin or of "purity." We are interested in the situation as it is. We can consider the past only in so far as we know it with certainty (which is not very far), or in so far as it plays a part in the beliefs, attitudes, or values of the people we are studying, in which case it is

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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121 part of the present situation. Nor need we be concerned whether any one group is more "acculturated" than another. In any case, the adoption, or otherwise, of villager institutions or language seems to be a poor index to the degree of assimilation involved. Nor can we assume that the simpler society is necessarily the purer, as parasitic organisms are usually simpler in structure than their hosts, who take over the function of certain parts of the parasite. The parasite community, while maintaining an outward separateness from the host, loses much of its own vitality and originality. On the other hand, the community that is taken over

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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quickly and fully integrated, say, on a definite basis of division of labor, may well retain much of its original structure because it is still a fully live organism living a complementary rather than a dependent, or even partial, existence. 121

Eventually, then, the study should include such well-integrated groups of Pygmies, or Pygmoids, as the Kango, on the western edge of the Ituri; the Twa and the Tswa; and other Pygmy groups toward the west coast. We should then have some opportunity for seeing how far the term "Pygmy" has any anthropological meaning, but first we have to discover the same truth about the Ituri Mbuti.

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TEXT FIGURES

0004. Household utensils carved from wood, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
a. Stool (90.2-2862)
b. Mortar (90.2-2861a)
c. Pestle (90.2-2861b)
d. Stirrer (90.2-2903)

5. Household utensils made from clay, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
a. Pipestem and clay bowl (90.2-2921)
b. Cooking vessel (90.2-4962)

6. Hunting equipment, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri
a. Bow (90.2-2851)
b–h. Arrows (90.2-2852d, a, c, b, f, e, g)

7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Nduye District, Central Ituri
a. Bow (90.2-2848)
b–h. Arrows (90.2-2849a–g)
i. Dog bell (90.2-2899)

8. Hunting equipment, archers, Oysha District, Central Ituri
a. Bow (90.2-2847)
b–c. Arrows (90.2-2850c, f)
d. Wrist protector (90.2-2856)

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0009. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri
a. Skin quiver (90.1-8913a)
b–i. Arrows (90.1–8913c–d; 90.2–2368a, g)
10. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri
a–b. Spear, Bira (90.2-2837)
c. Spear, Bira, hafted by MButi (90.2–2936)
11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri (90.2-3691)
13. Adze, Bira villages, rehafted by Mbuti archers, Central Ituri (90.2–2933)
14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
a. Axblade (90.2-2916)
b. Ax (90.2-2928)
15. Miscellaneous items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
a. Comb (90.2-2907)
b. Flute, notched (90.2–2876)
c. Flute, notched (90.2-2877)
18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2943)
19. Chair, *ngbanga*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2949)
20. Household furniture, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
a. Bench, *mbakati* (90.2-2951)
b. Bench, *mbakati* (90.2-2950)
21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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a. Machete (90.2-2929)
b. Vessel, cooking (90.2-2866)
c. Comb (90.2-2906)
d. Vessel, cooking (90.2-2867)
e. Knife (90.2-2935)
f. Knife (90.2-2926)

22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2343)

24. Block and scraper of wood, *nkula* (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2942a–b)

25. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. *epo'u* vine (90.2-2814)
    b. *esele* vine (90.2-3692)

26. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. *akoko* vine (90.2-2815)
    b. *esele* vine (90.2-2920)

27. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. *le'engbe* vine (90.2-2818)
    b. *akbanda* vine (90.2-2816)

28. Belts, *mokaba*, for barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. (90.2-2810)
    b. (90.2-2372)
    c. (90.2-2812)

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2808) 000
30. Personal adornment
    a. Seed, gardenia, *kangay*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2900)
    b. Hair decoration, *mongele* antelope hair, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2901)
    c. Bracelet, Bira, Central Ituri (90.2-2904)
    d. Bracelet, Bira, Central Ituri (90.2-2902)
    e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2911)
    f. Comb, *kisanoa*, Bira, Central Ituri (90.2-2909)
    g. Comb, *kisanoa*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, (90.2-2939)
    b. Bark pipe, *mbende* (90.2-2919)
33. Prepared antelope hide, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2859)
34. Hunting net, *kuya*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2802)
35. Magic whistle, *mamambamamba*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2895)

[P 281-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.282-A]

000 37. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
a. Skin quiver, *baba* (90.2-2858)
b. Bow, *mangé* (90.2-2366)
c. Arrow, *api* (90.2-2367i)
d. Arrow, *api* (90.2-2846c)
e. Arrow, *api* (90.2-2846a)
f. Wrist protector, *asuba* (90.2-2857)

38. Hunting equipment, net hunters
a. Bow, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2842)
b. Quiver, Central Ituri (90.1-7968b)
c–e. Arrows, Central Ituri (90.1-7958o, e, i)

39. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
a. Bow (90.2-2361)
b–k. Arrows (90.2-2367d, a, e, m, k, j, f, c, l, b)

40. Spear, *ekonga*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2376)

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 41. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
a. Basket, *so* (90.2-2804)

42. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
a. Basket, *so* (90.2-2803)
b. Basket, *so* (90.2-2805)

43. Gathering equipment, net hunters
a. Honey container, *ebimba*, bark, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2944)
b. Honey container, *apayabisi*, vine and leaf, West Nduye District, Central Ituri (90.2-2945)
c–d. Clappers, *ngbengbe*, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2873a–b)

44. Baby-carrying sling, *koko*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-2822)

45. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
a. Spear, *ekonga* (90.2-2840)
b. Fire spear, *iswakamaboki* (90.2-2839)
c. Castanets, *kolokbenje* (90.2-2869)
d. Top, *tokiya* (90.2-2887)

[P. 282 - B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 282-C]

e. Baby sling, *koko* (90.2-4964)
f. Bark beater, *kolea* (90.2-2937)
g. Seed whistle, *pho'u* (90.2-2882)
h. Seed whistle, *pho'u* (90.2-2883)
i. Wrist protector, *asuba* (90.2-2855)
j. Basket, *so* (90.2-2806)
k. Bow, *mangé* (90.2-2354), and arrow, *api* (90.2-2844e)

46. Initiation whip, *mbaka*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri (90.2-2833)
47. Initiation items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
    a. Armbands, raffia (90.2-2355, 90.2-2356, 90.2-2357)
    b. Skirt, grass (90.1-226)
48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
    a. Mask, bark (90.2-2356)
    b. Mouth mask, leaf (90.2-2830)
49. Wood carvings, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. Male, standing (90.2-4686)
    b. Tree (90.2-4687)

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

50. Headdresses, ***salakuku***, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri 000
    a. (90.2-2827)
    b. (90.2-2828)
51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri
    a. Pipe, ***akbelea***, attached to fur headband (90.2-2890)
    b. Whistle, ***angbelu***, wood (90.2-2896)
    c. Antelope horn, ***anjo*** (90.2-2893b)
    d. Honey whistle, ***madé*** (90.2-2889)
    e. Honey whistle, ***madé*** (90.2-2888)
    f. Hunting whistle, ***manyongé*** (90.2-2892)
52. Split clappers, ***banja***, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri (90.2-3693a–b)
53. Fetish sticks, ***amati a oni ganza***, Bira villagers, Central Ituri
    a. (90.2-2952)
    b. (90.2-2953)

[P 282-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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PLATES 26–38

[P. 283]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 26 1/A

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 [292] a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [604] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

1/A, /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[P 284]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888
142
292
302

/Plate 26-A/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P. 285-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

885
142
201
302

/Plate 26-B/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P 285-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 27 Σ/A

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

888 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and
30 affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift
197 from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.

854 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding, fondling, and even nursing the child.

1/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P. 286]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
301
888
177
516
302

/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/
[P. 287-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

854
142
302

/Plate 27-B/

/Caption appears on p. 286/

[P/287-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 28 1/

855 Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

851 a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

882 b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities
885 of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married.
202 Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

1/ /Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
855
851

/Plate 28-A/

/Caption appears on p. 288/

[P.289-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
882
885
202

/Plate 28-B/

/Caption appears on p.288/

[P.289-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 29[1]

A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

361 184 571 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 602 887 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

1, /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
342
137

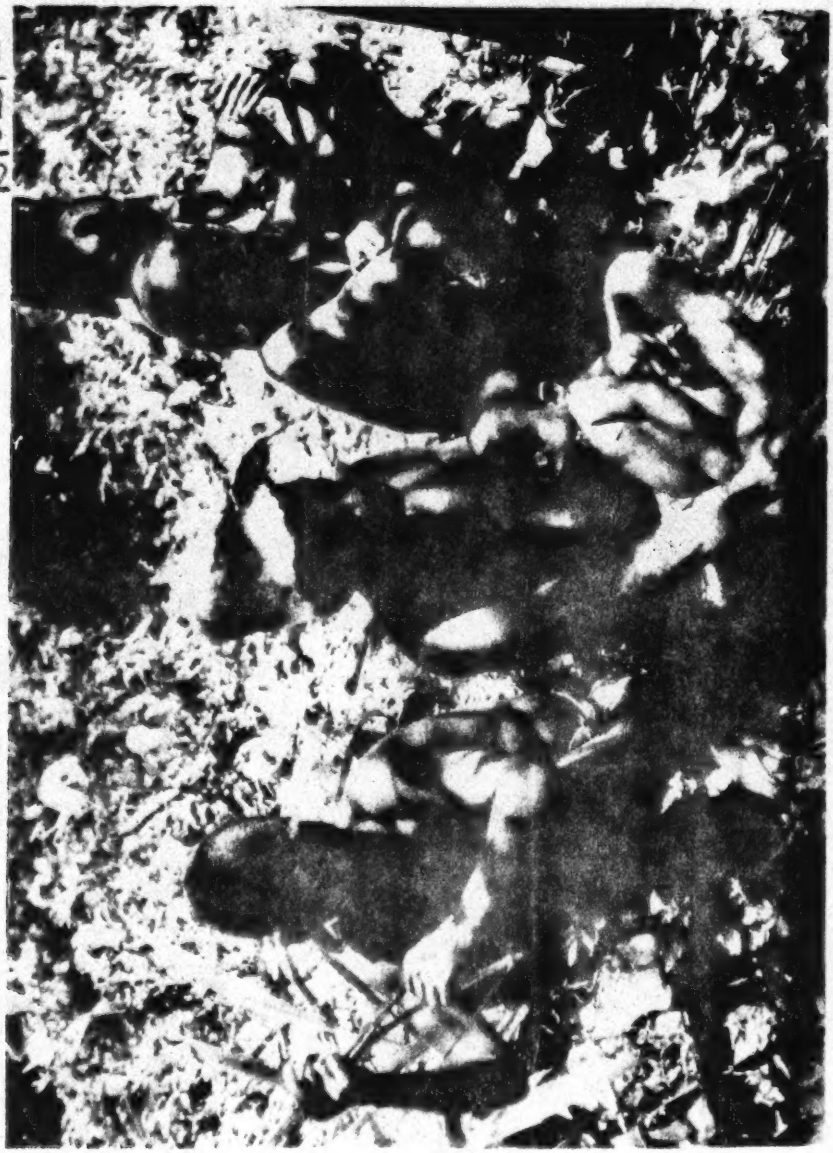
/Plate 29-A/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P. 291-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621
602
887
142
302



/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P. 291-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 30

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.
824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women,
but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
591
352 1,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
516
462
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824

/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P.293-A]

I: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

342
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824
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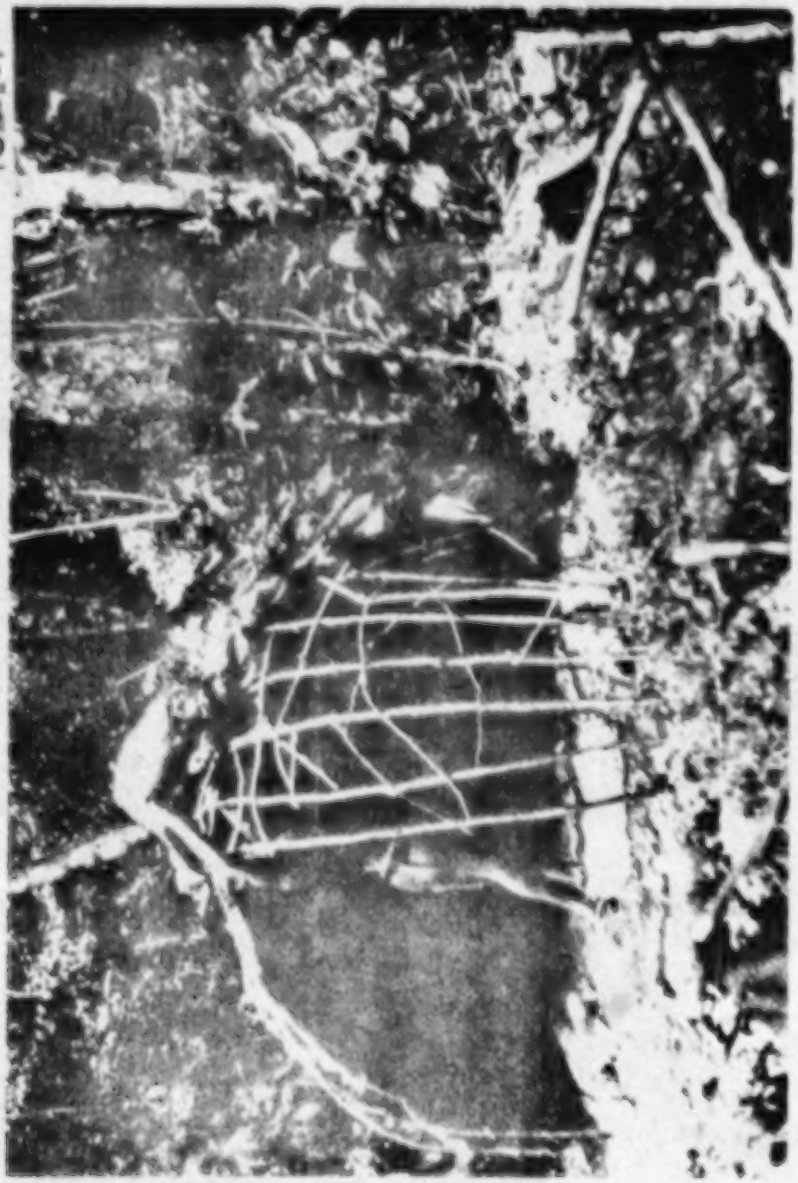

/Plate 30-B/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P 293-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 31 1/4

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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287
412
883
177

Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1/ /Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
287
412
883
516
177

/Plate 31/

[p.295] /Caption appears on p. 294/

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
171 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

531
386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
287
412
227
177

/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P.297-A]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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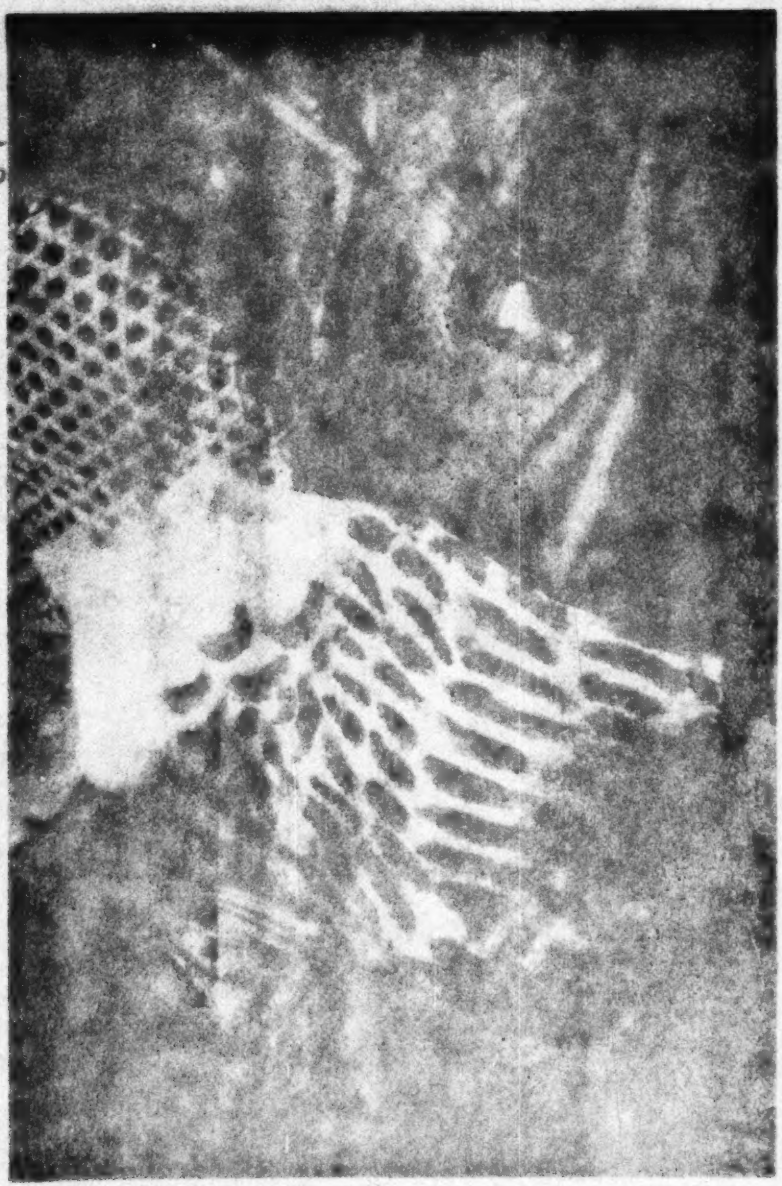
386



/Plate 32-B/

/Caption appears on p. 296/

[P.297-B]

PLATE 33 1

AN MBUTI GATHERER WITH HER TYPICAL BASKET AND TUMP LINE,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

462 Women and girls do nearly all the gathering, though a man may pick any mushrooms or
482 fruits he happens across on the trail. Women are also responsible for the maintenance of
222 fire. Not knowing how to make fire, women always carry a smoldering ember, as does this
372 woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves.

1, /Plate 33 appears on page 299--Analyst/

[P. 298]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
462
482
415
392
291
301

[P 299]

/Plate 33/
/Caption appears on p. 298/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 34 1

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

224
484

a. Net hunters on the trail. The Mbuti are naturally well camouflaged and can conceal themselves with ease against the foliage. Although net hunting demands cooperation between men, women, and children, the men and youths generally set off by themselves. Spears are carried for protection and for killing large game that might fall into the nets.

b. Net hunters setting up the net. Youths help their older brothers, or sons their fathers, as the net is stretched through the undergrowth for up to 300 feet, joined end to end with the nets of other hunters to form a vast semicircle into which the women and children drive the game.

1, /Plate 34 appears on page 301--Analyst/

[P. 300]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224
484
137

/Plate 34-A/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

[P 301-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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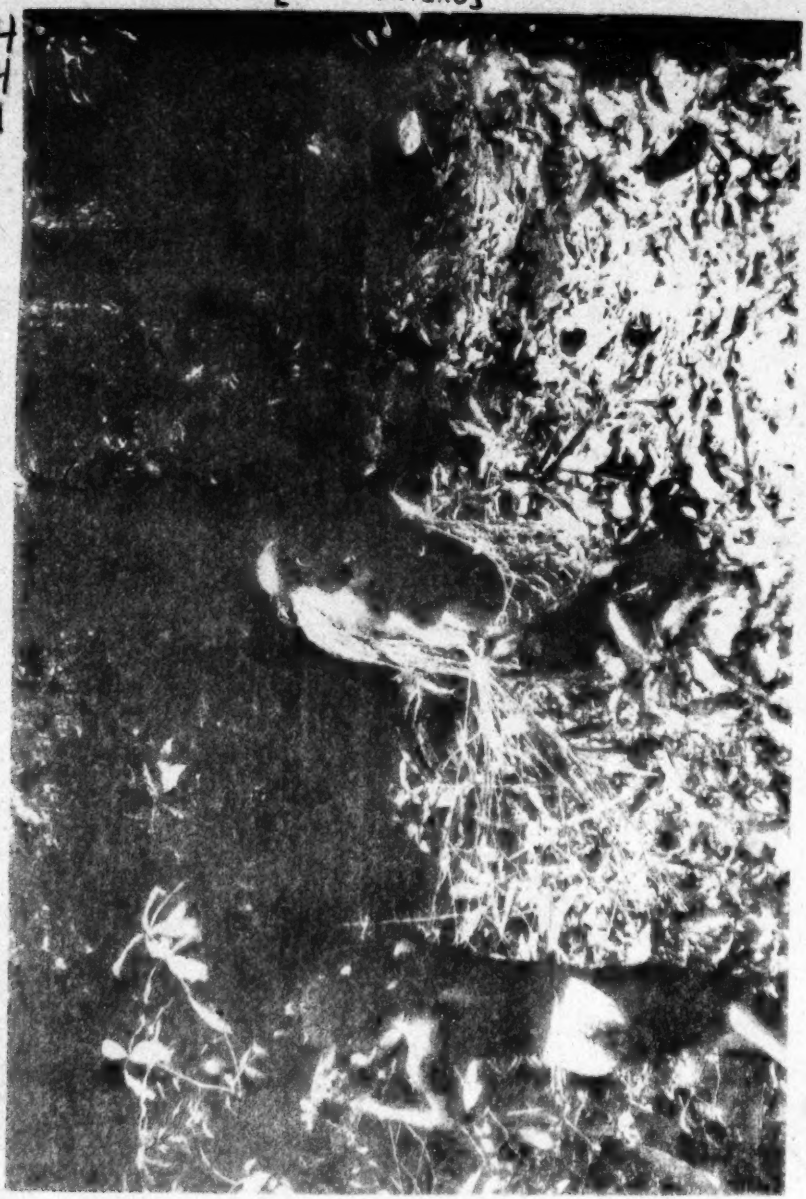
484
291



/Plate 34-B/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

[B 304-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 35 1/A

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

224 a. The kill. When an animal falls into the nets, nearby men and youths run to catch it before it tears itself loose or damages the net. As the men disentangle the trapped animal, a youth stands by with a spear ready to make the kill. Even the smallest antelope, when trapped, can be dangerous. Although the hunt is vital to the food economy of the Mbuti, they take no pleasure in the kill. It is considered a crime to hunt or kill more game than is essential for sustenance.

411 b. The main weapon of the archers, the bow and arrow, is for the net hunters only an incidental means of obtaining food. The net hunters prefer their own poisoned arrows with [177] a fire-hardened tip (as used here) rather than the unpoisoned metal tips supplied and used by the villagers.

1/A, /Plate 35 appears on page 303--Analyst/

[P. 302]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224
291

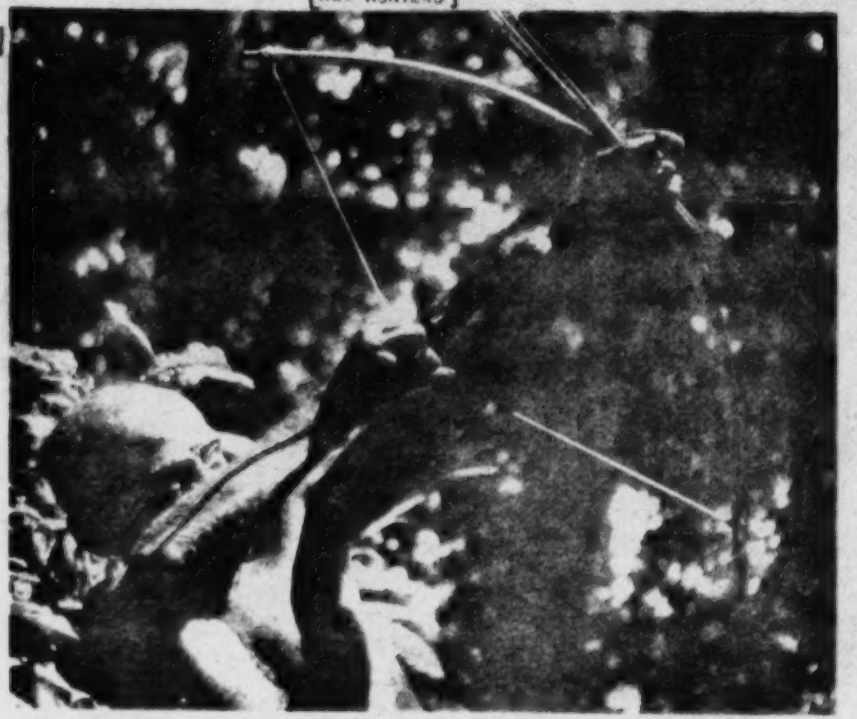
/Plate 35-A/
/Caption appears on p. 302/

[P. 303-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

411

[NET HUNTERS]



/Plate 35-B/

/Caption appears on p.302/

[P. 303-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
291
222
412

/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P. 305-A]

PLATE 36 1

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

222 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
[251] drunk.

1, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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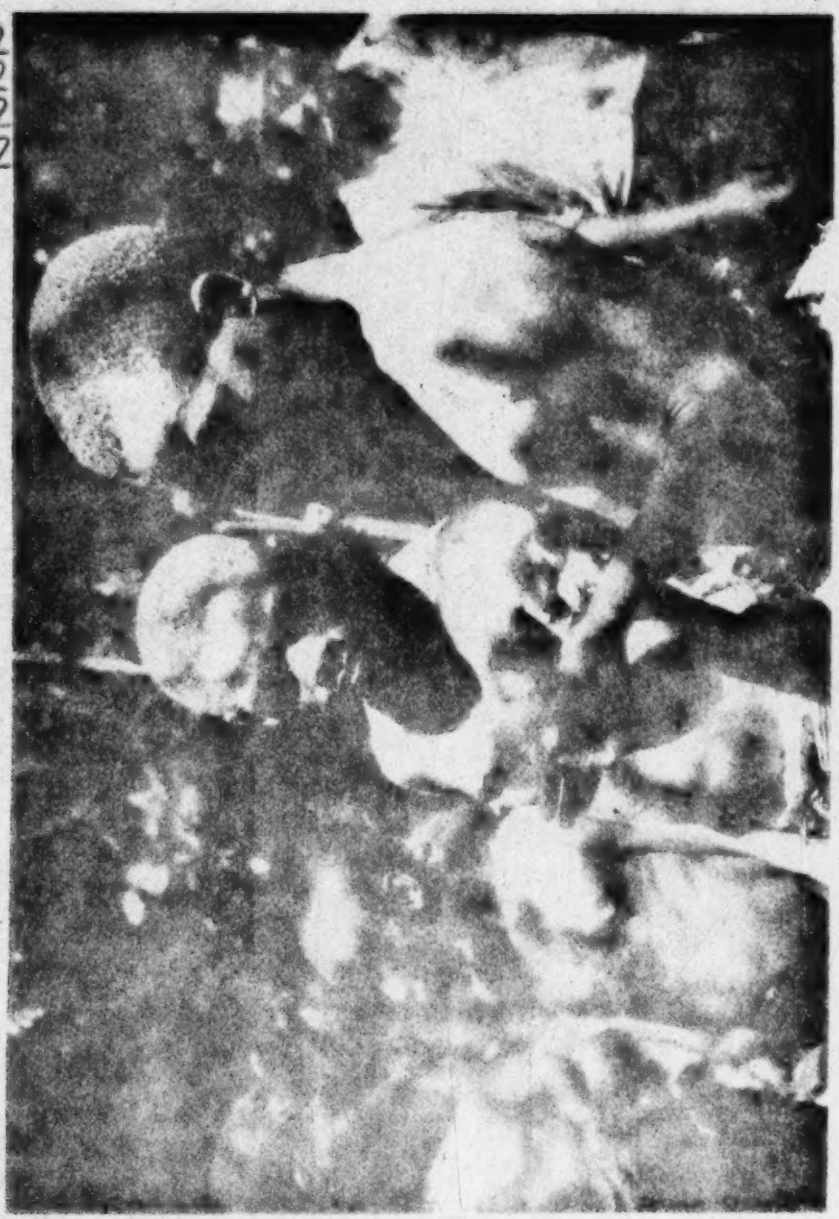
222



/Plate 36-B/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P.305-B]

PLATE 37 [1]

MUSICAL BOW, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

[534] [533] [535] [536] Mbuti music is almost entirely vocal, the voice being accompanied by wooden clappers. The musical bow is used sometimes to accompany the telling of legends or simply for personal amusement. As here, it is most often simply the hunting bow, tapped with an arrow, the mouth acting as a resonator.

1, /Plate 37 appears on page 307--Analyst/

[P 306]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
534
411
516
302

/Plate 37/

[P307] /Caption appears on p. 306/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

535
533
796
881
517

PLATE 38 7

GIRLS' HOOP DANCE, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
291
535
796
881
533
517

[P309] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

177
648
439
571

[For additional information on the relationship of the net-hunting bands of Mbuti Pygmies of Zaire and the Bira villagers, see information coded for the FO1 Zaire file in the FO4 Pygmies file in category 116, sources 1-3: Turnbull under the appropriate OWC subhead.]

794
881
765

Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[For information on the Molimo and Elima religious associations, see category 575.]

177
648
439
571

[For additional information on the relationship of the archer bands of Mbuti Pygmies of Zaire and the Lese villagers, see information coded for the FO1 Zaire file in the FO4 Pygmies file in category 116, sources 1-3: Turnbull under the appropriate OWC subhead.]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. i]

Wayward Servants

ooo

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.ii]

133
137

[Frontispiece]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. iii]

Wayward Servants ooo

The Two Worlds of the African Pygmies

Colin M. Turnbull

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[Title Page]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p.iv]

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[126] [128] The photographs for this book were taken by the author; the line illustrations were prepared by Nicholas Amarosi of The American Museum of Natural History.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.V]

TO MY PARENTS,
WITH GRATITUDE AND LOVE ooo

[P.Vi is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. vii]

Acknowledgments

The present study is based on field work conducted during the years 1957 and 1958, under the support of a grant from the Emslie Horniman Anthropological Trust. To the trustees I owe thanks not only for their financial aid, but also for their personal interest and encouragement. 114 122

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perience have been invaluable, but shortcomings still persist and are in no way his fault.

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However incomplete this work may be, it would have been far more incomplete without such help. It is hoped that at least it is another step forward, and a sound one, offering a springboard for the further research that is so urgently needed.

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PART ONE

INTRODUCTION

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CHAPTER 1

Objectives

The general purpose here is to add as much as possible to our knowl- |2|
edge of the Mbuti pygmies and of their much misunderstood relationship with the neighboring tribes of forest cultivators. The account is drawn from first-hand field experience, and is primarily intended to be of use to anthropologists.

In the belief, however, that anthropologists are human beings, and that other human beings might equally well find much of interest in works of this kind, the currently fashionable academic jargon has been discarded. Such jargon in most cases only obscures what are often essentially simple basic truths, and so another objective is to present an academic study in plain language. I cannot claim to have been thoroughly consistent, for to have striven too hard would have led only to an equally artificial form.

Even so there may be those who will object, for the mystery, formerly obscured by an abuse of the English language, in this way becomes unveiled and accessible to all. I hope that what I say is plain, so that others may more easily and more usefully take issue with it. Before embarking on the account itself, however, a certain amount of ground-clearing for purely academic purposes is necessary.

ground-clearing for purely academic purposes is necessary.

LIMITATIONS

It is important at the outset to define very clearly the objectives of the present study, so that its limitations may be plainly understood. Both the objectives and the limitations were a carefully preconsidered part of the field project, and form an integral part of the subsequent analysis. The reasons for accepting such limitations were, I believe, insuperable in the given circumstances.

The title perhaps indicates a wider scope than is covered by the work, but it is believed that there are good grounds for using this

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12 [10] study as a comparative base from which the study of the Mbuti as a whole may be more speedily and accurately advanced. It is also believed that although the bulk of the study involves a single hunting band, much of the basic structure uncovered applies to other Mbuti bands. The major limitation, however, is that we are here concerned primarily with one band rather than with the Mbuti as a whole, yet this was an inevitable necessity.

Other limitations arise from the lack of monographs on comparable groups of forest nomads, from my consequent reluctance to generalize too far from so narrow a base, and from the difficulty of presenting the principles of organization of a society that does not possess the formal institutions found in larger and more sedentary societies. Nonetheless, such principles plainly must exist, and while our general objective is to outline the form and structure of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers of the Ituri Forest in the northeast Congo (Leopoldville), we also have the more particular objective of searching for the elusive principles that integrate each apparently autonomous Mbuti band, giving it an identity of its own by which it recognizes itself and its integral but diffuse relationship with other bands. For it is in light of these principles that we must try to understand the effective but problematical relationship that pertains between any Mbuti band and the village cultivators who are its neighbors.

12 [11] Another limitation derives from the lack of reference material on the Mbuti, which necessitated the gathering of ethnographic minutiae in the field and their presentation here, adding considerably to the bulk despite vigorous sifting. However, without a firm ethnographic base no analysis would be possible, so the provision of such a base is considered a prime prerequisite.

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular

analysis, though this is not to deny their possible value in other fields. My own subsequent account of the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1961) was in no way intended as an academic study, nor is it suited for use as such, though it served a useful purpose in helping the field worker detach himself from the subject of his study, enabling him to examine it more critically.

[99] In my examination of other sources (1956) it was suggested that subsequent field work might discover a more meaningful division of the Ituri Mbuti than the linguistic division made by Schebesta, as

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the languages referred to, although spoken by the Mbuti, were evidently of non-Mbuti origin. Consequently another objective of the present study, based on further field work, is to begin to look for valid structural differences that do exist, following up the contention (*ibid.*) that one would expect to find such differences between the Mbuti who hunt by net and those who hunt with bow and arrow. The boundaries of the net-hunters and archers incidentally correspond, very roughly, to the linguistic boundaries drawn by Schebesta between the Sua- and Efe-speaking Mbuti: the Aka, to the north, although somewhat divided amongst themselves, offer a third category, some of them using the spear as their prime weapon.

To all these ends it was decided to make a further field trip in which one hunting band would be studied intensively throughout a calendar year, and in which as much comparative material as time and field conditions permitted would be gathered from other hunting bands. It was decided in advance, in the light of previous personal experience, that the sacrifice of a whole year to the study of one small band was essential, even though it would mean that any final conclusions about the general nature of Mbuti society would have to be delayed until a number of other such studies had been made. A band of either archers or net-hunters is a highly mobile, volatile entity, demanding of the field worker the utmost persistence in both physical and intellectual pursuit. It was quite obvious, also from previous experience, that the band not only constantly changes location, but it also constantly changes in composition. The significance of these fluctuations would only be discovered, it was felt, by following them right through their course in one given hunting territory before attempting any comparative studies among other bands. Above all it was essential in one band to find out what the significant social groupings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How

ings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How
was the band divided, along exactly what lines did the characteristic splits occur, what forces operated to hold the band together and to divide it? The scope of the one-band study was aimed at answering such questions and others that concern band relationships with local villages of cultivators. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding of the true nature of the over-all Mbuti/Villager relationship in this area, following up on the suggestion made earlier (Turnbull, 1956, 363–64) that this relationship was not one of master/servant, still less of slavery, and probably not even of symbiosis.

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121 In paying special attention to this relationship it was felt that the otherwise intangible value-system of the Mbuti would be more clearly revealed, leading to an understanding of the ritual relationship that appeared to exist between the Mbuti and the forest, as implied in the accounts of other observers and in my own prior experience, but nowhere made explicit.

EXECUTION

114 101 131 Field work was undertaken between the summer of 1957 and the late winter of 1958, entering the then Belgian Congo by driving through from the West Coast, collecting as many local accounts of pygmy or pygmoid hunters and gatherers along the way as possible, for future reference. Such accounts were gathered in Dahomey, Nigeria (particularly towards the east), the Cameroons, Gabon and throughout the Congo, but few hunting bands were encountered until well towards the Ubangi River (see Map 1). It was decided not to spend time trying to make contact, except on the far side of the Ubangi, where contact was relatively easy, and where there were also some Binga pygmies from the west bank of the river.

114 131 [144] From the Ubangi over to the Ituri it was quite obvious that, as elsewhere, true hunting bands only existed where there was substantial primary forest, and that elsewhere not only was the hunting and gathering economy defunct, but there had been so much intermarriage that one could not truly speak of a pygmy physical type any more than one could speak of a pygmy culture.

Leaving aside the forested area south of the Congo River, which I did not cover but for which pygmoid groups are reported, I found relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) as well as in the forested regions [101] around the Ubangi River. But by far the heaviest concentration is in the Ituri Forest, where all the pygmies recognize their unity in the name Mbuti, and where both the physical and the cultural integrity of the hunters and gatherers seems to have been best preserved.

121 There was no question that this was the right area for the major bulk of the field work, but there was some question as to which band to select for the intensive study. I eventually decided on the Epulu

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net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one. 121

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism: 121 123

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps. [609]

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized. 114 121

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations. 101 114 131

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans. 114 131 122

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

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114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time [164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of [165] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; 648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- *179 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

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Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the 123
year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning fes- 114
tivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when 764
in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much 765
respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made
the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three
months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti
magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even [184]
among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it
possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study,
in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migra- 114
tions, living in every camp it established during the course of some 166
fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely
in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it;
on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was di-
vided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute
my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was
able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained
three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts 114
of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material
among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had
been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion [126]
was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of con-
secutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly
showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months
in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and
even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and
to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not
immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others 123
to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important
that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I
employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that
any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

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123 sults I wanted I had no alternative. Other methods would have produced different, though not necessarily contrary, results.

However, there were inherent limitations in the technique followed, which involved close identification and integration between myself and the Epulu net-hunters. For one, by identifying myself
123 with the Mbuti, my relationships with the villagers were automati-
648 cally worsened; the mere fact that I preferred to study the Mbuti rather than the villagers was ground enough for hostility. But being accepted by the Mbuti in their forest hunting camps was a privilege
[122] denied to most villagers (though few would have wanted it), and learning to speak the village language with a strong Mbuti accent that made it almost unintelligible except to other Mbuti added further fuel to the fire. This all made it extremely difficult for me to see the Mbuti/Villager relationship from any but the Mbuti point of view, though I tried, at the end of 1958, to establish a better rapport with villages both in and beyond the Epulu area.

However, it was impossible for me not to take sides. Had I wished to work as an outside observer I am not even sure that it could have been done, as I do not think such an observer would have been tolerated for long in the forest camps. And as an outsider I would certainly have been denied familiarity with many aspects of Mbuti life, particularly the all-important *molimo* festival. In fact, as an "insider" I was able to observe the process of exclusion of the few outsiders temporarily admitted to a forest camp. But in any case I was quickly forced by purely practical considerations to take sides.

123 During the burial proceedings in the village, for instance, in the
648 first month of my stay, I was invited by both Mbuti and villagers to
764 take part. But whereas the villagers wanted me to stand by and watch the digging of the grave under villager supervision, the Mbuti wanted me to help out with the digging. By acceding to the latter wish I automatically lost my status among the supervisors, and in fact became unclean and had to ritually wash myself with the other gravediggers. And during the post-burial meeting of the men, when the villagers all argued among themselves as to which Mbuti witch had caused the death, I had the choice of listening on one side of the grave with the villagers or of standing on the other side with the Mbuti and being associated in this way with their mirth and their ridicule of what was, to them, an utterly nonsensical procedure. And when on one occasion a burial took place on the morning of the day that a wedding was to be held in a neighboring village, I had the

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choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing.

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint.

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family.

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Being a bachelor made my integration into family life somewhat easier than it might have been otherwise, and my reciprocal duties were not heavy, mainly involving my working with other bachelors in collecting the saplings and leaves used for making the huts. But being unable to make any great contribution to the food economy, although I participated in the hunt, I found myself pushed into another category that I subsequently discovered to be a perfectly traditional one for incompetent hunters and some others—that of buffoon. This was very convenient, as it meant that I was the recipient of threats, ridicule, jokes and gossip, all of significance, and being made a general scapegoat I was also the center of a number of disputes. I have observed similar buffoons in almost every other hunting band, fulfilling the same function, harmlessly dispelling the many little jealousies and hostilities that arise in everyday camp life.

Later on I acquired a hunting net of my own, by virtue of my proven adult status, and was so able to contribute to the food economy. At this time I was able to watch another bachelor take my place as buffoon.

123

The advantages of this kind of participation are obvious enough, and particularly desirable when a six-foot field worker is living among four-foot pygmies is the way it helps him blend into the social landscape, at least. Among the Mbuti, however, there was an additional advantage. The amount of information I could get from them, even the extent to which I would be allowed to participate, depended upon my attitude to the forest. Fortunately this was something of which I was well aware. But the fact that I was prepared to eat the same food, and that often entirely excluded village plantation foods, and the fact that I was prepared to carry my few belongings myself, to sleep on leaves or branches, and take part in the forest songs that were sung almost nightly around a central fire, conveyed enough of my respect for the forest for the Mbuti to admit me still further.

The process was an interesting one, because it again demonstrated the close relationship between the Mbuti and the forest world around them. But it was also an exhausting and arduous one, and because of the very nature of forest life it was impossible for me to observe all that went on. As will be seen, in the normal course of events a number of different things are going on in different places at different times, and even in the course of the year I cannot be sure that I saw everything of significance. During the *molimo*, for instance, men were expected to stay awake and sing throughout the night until about an

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hour before dawn, then be up at dawn in preparation for the hunt. 123
This much I could manage, but whereas during the day individual men could stretch out and snatch an hour or two of sleep whenever they felt like it, I never had the chance to feel the same freedom. Acts associated with the *molimo*, such as the ritual gathering of food from every hut, continued throughout the day and I did not wish to miss anything new that might happen.

However, with all its drawbacks (and perhaps the physical and mental strain are not the least) the technique seems in this instance to have been justified by the results.

RESULTS

Both the general and the particular objectives were answered to 121
some extent during the course of the field work. The general form and structure of the Mbuti hunting band became evident, as did certain differentiations between the structure of the archers and that of the net-hunters. Further, certain principles were found that accounted for the cohesion of the band within itself, while at the same time enabling the band to present to the villagers a structure so fluid that any formal relationship of the kind envisaged by the villagers was impossible. Perhaps it is as well to point out here that the kinship system (or lack of it) that characterizes the Mbuti band today is not necessarily representative of what it was yesterday; indeed it may well be that the current ambivalence is in itself a response to the attempts of the patrilineal village society to enforce control through the myth of hereditary unilineal relationships. The origin does not concern us here, only the system as it exists in the present context.

The structural differences between archers and net-hunters are not 121
perhaps as wide as might have been supposed, but before any final 124
conclusions can be drawn there is great need for a detailed study to be made among the archers. Certain differences in behavior are shown, however, to achieve the same structural ends—for instance the process of fission and fusion, where the net-hunters and the archers behave in diametrically opposed cyclic patterns but to the same structural end.

The detailed study of the Epulu net-hunters was backed by suf- 121
ficient field work among other net-hunting bands to enable us to gen- 128
eralize with reasonable safety. Where generalization is not possible,
a I cite the specific, and where it is possible but not with absolute cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[128] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[184] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
105 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is
[181] one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
177 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems. 121 177 18

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination. 121 177 *

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightforward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed. 128

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 16]

CHAPTER 2

Orientation

THE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

101 144 The Mbuti pygmies form the largest single group of pygmy hunters and gatherers in Africa, and are probably also the purest in both the biological and cultural senses. Throughout the equatorial rain forest other similar groups exist, but while some of them (notably in the Gabon and in the Ubangi area) appear to be comparable with the Mbuti, the majority, like the Twa and the Tswa of the Kivu and central Congo districts (see Map 3) have at one time or another intermarried with Negro tribes of cultivators, losing many of the true pygmy physical characteristics and at the same time losing a great deal of their original hunting and gathering culture.

181 Far more important, from the structural point of view, is the altered relationship between all these pygmoids and the world they live in, for as we shall see, the structure of Mbuti society pivots around a powerful forest-oriented system of values. This value system to a large extent overrides economic considerations in determining the relationship between the Mbuti and their village neighbors, whereas among the pygmoids the economic factor appears to be dominant, and the consequent dependency of the pygmoids upon the villagers in other respects is also greater.

177 178 This is in no way to say that the structure to be found among the Mbuti is representative of an original pygmy hunting and gathering structure; in fact probably far from it, for the repercussions of the invasion of the forest by the village cultivators have been enormous. But the response of the Mbuti, for whatever reason, has been different from that of the Twa and the Tswa and it is of much greater structural interest and significance, incidentally throwing light on the whole process of acculturation. At the same time, however, the peculiar structural development of the Mbuti does enable us to observe a

[see page 318 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Sahara desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 90,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analysis]

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itabe*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2:Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not surprising, then, that the Mbuti recognize their dependence upon the forest and refer to it as "Father" or "Mother" (I have heard both used, it seems without discrimination) because, as they say, it gives them food, warmth, shelter and clothing, just like their parents. What is, perhaps, surprising is that the Mbuti add that the forest also, like their parents, gives them affection. 778

If it has been thought that this stress on the environmental factor is overweighted, the last observation should make it clear why. The forest is more than mere environment to the Mbuti. It is a living, conscious thing, both natural and supernatural, something that has to be depended upon, respected, trusted, obeyed and loved. The love demanded of the Mbuti is no romanticism, and perhaps it might be better included under "respect," but I make the distinction here because the Mbuti make the distinction, and because it is all part of the structural relationship of opposition between the Mbuti and the villagers. 778 182

More of the intimacy of the relationship between the Mbuti and the forest will emerge as we proceed; indeed there is not a single aspect of their lives where it is not evident. Here let us take a quick look at the relationship of the neighboring villagers to the same forest.

In the Ituri the tribal composition is thoroughly confused, a succession of invasions from different directions having taken place over the past four hundred years. From the north came the Mangbetu, pursued later and driven westward by the Zande. At the present day these two large tribes stretch right across the northern edges of the forest, a large proportion of each remaining in relatively open savannah. Also in the north and in the east are the populous Budo and the Mamvu-Lesé. From the southeast came the Bira, a Bantu-speaking plains people who split on reaching the forest, some pressing up by Lake Albert and retaining something of their cattle culture[1], the others turning westward through the middle of the forest, segmenting into a number of isolated villages loosely held together by the principle of patrilineal descent and recognition of a common ancestor manifest in the chiefs and sub-chiefs. In recent years, apparently since the imposition of Belgian authority, the Forest Bira (the Plains Bira do not concern us here, directly) divided into two main chieftainships, with territorial headquarters at Koki and Bahaha. (Map 5 illustrates c 101

[1] There is some uncertainty as to whether the Bira were originally cultivators or pastoralists. Among the present Plains Bira, however, cattle plays an important role and the people themselves claim to have always had cattle. They now practice a mixed economy.

2:Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

101 the territorial division of the Bira, with the location of chiefs and sub-chiefs, and also of the Lesé.[1] The Bira stretch as far as the junction of the Nduye and Epulu rivers, west of which are the Ndaka and the related Mbo, also Bantu speakers. Further to the west are the Bali, who are at the westward extremity of Mbuti territory.

241 All these tribes, whose total forest population numbers some forty thousand, have taken to a specialized form of forest cultivation, growing both plantains and manioc as staples, some dry rice, beans and groundnuts. Palm-oil trees are more common in the north and west of the forest, but palm oil is used and traded throughout. Elsewhere, 252 however, groundnut oil is widely used. The leaf of the manioc plant is 273 cooked with the oil, and sometimes with groundnuts, to make a sauce, and other leaves are also sometimes used this way. Various wines are extracted or made from the palm trees and their fruits, and liquor is commonly distilled from both manioc and plantains. Hemp is grown in illicit plantations.

226 There is a fair amount of fishing practiced throughout the area, but fish is never more than a supplementary food. Pits and spear-falls are 224 placed around plantations, partly to protect the plantations and partly in the hope of acquiring meat, but their yield is negligible. For reasons that will emerge, the villagers dislike going far into the forest, away from their plantations, and do little hunting. For their meat they are dependent either upon trade supplies, available only very recently (and even then only to the few who can afford them), or upon the Mbuti.

311 The major difficulty in the life of the villager is the forest itself. 361 Owing to the size of its enormous trees (many 12 feet in diameter [137] and 150 in height) and the speed with which secondary vegetation grows up once the trees are cut down, the work of cutting a new plantation for a village may take months to finish; and once cleared, the ground has to be constantly worked on to prevent it from being overgrown. When the cutting and burning are completed there is little danger of the newly planted crop not coming up, but in each succeeding season the yield becomes less, and after three years may cease altogether. Thus whole villages and plantations have to move every few years. Yet once a site is abandoned the apparently barren land suddenly bursts forth with a luxuriant forest vegetation that soon destroys the buildings and makes access to the old plantation all but impossible.

The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal re-

[1] [see page 320 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal relationship with the forest, but a very different one. The forest surrounds them on all sides, but they do not live in it or by it, only despite it. Their initial act is one of destruction, the cutting down of the forest to make way for village and plantation which in turn are destroyed in the final act. The hostility is mutual, as the villagers see it. They have to fight not only the forest itself, but also the creatures that live in it. Elephants, leopards, baboons and Mbuti, all are a menace to life and livelihood. A whole plantation can be destroyed in a few hours by even a modest sprinkling of elephants. The excessive and sometimes erratic rainfall can cause hunger for a whole season. Baboons and Mbuti come in the night and steal the ripening fruit. Leopards prey on the few scrawny goats and chickens the villagers manage to raise.

As for the Mbuti, so for the villagers is the forest an entity to be reckoned with, upon which life and death depend; it is also an entity that is natural and supernatural. But instead of acceding to the natural, the villagers with their superior technology combat it; and instead of respecting the supernatural in the sense that the Mbuti respect it, the villagers oppose it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate. They people the forest with evil spirits, and they fill their lives with magic, witchcraft and a belief in sorcery.

The forest achieves the establishment of two virtually irreconcilable systems of values. It further determines, for both Mbuti and villagers, a certain degree of nomadism, and it tends to fragment large populations into small, relatively isolated bands or villages. For the Mbuti the forest merely indicates natural boundaries, such as valleys, ridges, rivers, caves and so forth, within which a band can conveniently roam at will throughout the years, economically self-sufficient. Within that nomadic framework there is an enormous sense of permanence and of territory. But for the villagers the forest announces, at the end of every three years or so, that the village must pack up and move, it does not much matter where. The move will inevitably bring the village into renewed conflict with the forest, and may well bring it into conflict with a neighboring village which has also been forced to move. In spite of the vast size of the forest and its small population, the villagers are unwilling to go off entirely on their own. At the present time they move up and down the long road that connects Stanleyville with Irumu, or Wamba with Nia-Nia and Mambasa. Formerly it seems that villages were similarly stretched out along recognized trails, and seldom moved away from them. On any given trail, or road, the number of suitable sites for a semi-permanent village is limited, but fric-

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tion between villages is due only in part to rivalry for territory. It is also due to suspicion of witchcraft and sorcery, a suspicion that seems to increase as the distance of separation decreases. This, of course, can also be interpreted as an expression of territorial friction, but it is conceived in personal rather than territorial terms, and is accompanied by a general dislike and mistrust of strangers.

Nor must we lose sight of the fact that whereas the Mbuti, even with their nomadism, in which hunting camps are shifted every month, have a strong sense of basic territorial permanence, the villagers have none, and this gives rise to further instability. To mention only one example, it is believed among the Bira that the dead should be buried according to a prescribed ritual, and that the grave should be cared for in a prescribed manner. The burial is always carried out but it is a constant source of conflict having to care for a grave that may be some miles away. Every time a village moves the villagers have to face the fact that they are abandoning their dead, to some extent, and they are unpleasantly reminded of the uncertainty of their own future. We do not know what the original burial practice was before the Bira moved into the forest; undoubtedly changes have been made, but they have not adequately met the new situation.

It is only in light of the relationship between each of these peoples and the environment in which they live that we can understand the relationship between the people themselves. It is in part ignorance of this factor that has led to the gross misunderstanding of Mbuti/Villager relationship, and indeed of Mbuti society itself. Before considering either the Mbuti or their relationship with the villagers, however, a certain amount of further ground-clearing is necessary.

MBUTI, BaMBUTI, BAMBUTI

A certain amount of confusion concerning the Mbuti arises out of conflicting terminology, some of it totally inapplicable or lacking in significance. First we have to be clear why we group together, under any one name, all the pygmy hunters of the Ituri Forest, even though they speak different languages and use different hunting techniques.

Racially, they are clearly one people, quite distinct from any of the surrounding Negro tribes. They form a strongly, visibly distinct unit. Culturally, they are equally distinguished from their neighbors as a unit, being hunters and gatherers, and not cultivators, with a consequently totally distinct social structure. Differences in hunting techniques do not affect the basic structural unity.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

niques do not affect the basic structural unity. The fact that the 101
Mbuti fall into different linguistic groups is no more than accidental, 197
and is of recent historic origin. The linguistic division is that propounded by Schebesta (1938, pp. 24–26). In effect he uses the terms Aka, Efe and Sua to refer to those pygmies who were in territories invaded and settled by the Ngbetu/Zande, the Lesé, and the Forest Bira respectively; these pygmies apparently adopted the languages of the newcomers to their respective areas and they have maintained some kind of relationship with their Negro neighbors ever since.

The question of language is by no means settled yet, and it may be 197
that either KiLesé or KiBira may in fact prove to be a language of 174
pygmy origin adopted by the Negro invaders. At the moment there is no significant evidence available to this effect, and given a situation where small isolated hunting bands (of an absolute maximum of thirty nuclear families and a possible minimum of three) are brought sharply into contact with larger, more permanent, technologically more advanced peoples with a tribal system, we can only assume the likelihood that the pygmies adopted the languages of the newcomers, losing most of their own.

In this case the linguistic division suggested by Schebesta most 197
certainly only refers to a post-contact situation and does not neces- 114
sarily point to any indigenous difference between these three groups of Ituri hunters and gatherers. The fact that, very approximately, the linguistic boundaries also correspond to the boundaries between pygmy hunters who emphasize the spear, the bow and arrow, and the net may be no more than a mark of acculturation with the three distinct Negro groups; on the other hand it may point to some earlier distinction, but in any case is of much more significance in any contemporary study of social structure.

In dismissing the linguistic differences as any indication of internal 197
differentiation it is worth pointing out that any pygmy from any area 101
in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken. This is one small pointer toward an earlier linguistic unity among all Ituri pygmies, as is the fact that they all seem to recognize themselves by the term Mbuti. One hears this term far more frequently than any other when pygmies are distinguishing themselves from villagers, in all parts of the forest. Even in distinguishing them-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

197 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be
101 used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Ne-
144 gro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, neces-
128 sary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

to rule if the ceremony is to be effective, whatever its purpose. By "festival" I mean something rather different. It in no way necessarily implies an annual or regularly recurrent event; its objectives may be precisely the same as those of a ceremony, but the means employed are different. There is no precisely regulated pattern of behavior. On the contrary, there is an important element of spontaneity that gives the occasion a vital immediacy, keeping it in the current context rather than connecting it with the past. I confess that the term "festival" has, for me, other less easily definable connotations that make it more suitable for use in the Mbuti situation, the most important of these being that it implies wider, freer participation, less pomposity and more enjoyment, an abandonment that is almost subversive with respect to the commonly accepted norms of behavior.

Most important, I have to revoke my earlier usage of the term "Esumba" or "Lusumba" (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1], 1957[2]). The context in earlier writing, I hope, makes it plain when I am referring to a magico-religious festival of the Mbuti as distinct from a ceremony practiced under the same name by the villagers. The misleading terminology employed before my last field trip was due in part to the difficulties of the linguistic situation and the fact that I was then using the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as my major means of communication. The importance and significance of the confusion will appear later in the text, but as I now wish to use a terminology that will clarify the situation as much as the actual linguistic confusion permits, I have to state that wherever in the past I have referred to the magico-religious festival of the net-hunting Mbuti, in which the men play a predominant part, and where I have used either "Esumba" or "Lusumba," it would have been more correct to have used the term *molimo*. Even this term, however, has its counterpart in the Bira *molimo* ceremony, but at least we can now distinguish more easily between both of these and the other local ceremonies known variously as *esumba*, *lusumba* and *ishumba*, which ceremonies are connected primarily with the Ngwana villagers and their earlier slave-trading and ivory-collecting practices.

One last small correction of past usage; whereas before I once or twice (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) used the spelling *Alima* for the festival associated with the puberty of Mbuti girls, I now use the form and spelling *elima*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship
114 between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty
121 elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups
220 that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

621 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[9] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. [621]

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, [621] 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[9] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*177 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

[221] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
*[177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
[622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621
the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771
pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 296
evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try 651
to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the 965
picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar [177]*
names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121
a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177*
the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621
any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti, and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently lawless, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.31]

PART TWO

THE VILLAGE WORLD

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

[P 53]

CHAPTER 3

The Mbuti/Villager Relationship

THE QUESTION OF DEPENDENCE

Although we are primarily concerned with the structure of Mbuti society, there are a number of valid reasons why we should first concern ourselves with the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. 121 648

For one, this has been the area of greatest misunderstanding and this misunderstanding has consequently affected attitudes toward an understanding of the forest hunting and gathering life of the Mbuti even when apart from the villagers. It is widely believed that the Mbuti are subject to village authority, that they are a subordinate people. This belief rests on the assumption that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, and the theory of dependence has been extended to political and ritual fields as well as economic. The exact degree of dependence is something that we have to examine carefully throughout our study, though we can only take it up specifically after we have considered the Mbuti in both the village and the forest worlds.

The notion of dependence has led to the theory that Mbuti culture, such as it is, is in itself derived from the superordinate village culture, and we shall see that this is far from the truth. Even when we look at the Mbuti in the village world it is not hard to see the superficiality of his alleged acculturation, for the very willingness with which he adopts village institutions and falls in with village ways leads him inevitably into one contradiction after another, which contradictions are possible only because the institutions do not have the same structural significance for the Mbuti as for the villager. 121 179

The cause of the misunderstanding is largely that previous accounts and investigations have been derived from experience of the Mbuti in the village context, in almost complete ignorance of even 121 14

12 the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute igno-
[114] rance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious
[178] institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

439 Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence
282 of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itabe* root
[222] has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day
[482] one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to
[462] capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

439 When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

[325] Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how
[248] to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their de-
[197] pendence upon the villagers.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the *molimo*, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
+177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
+177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
+177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322 vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
324] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the huts and the shafts for spears; the ax is used for enlarging the 412
holes in which bees make their hives, so that the honey can be extracted more easily. Younger Mbuti do not know what they would do without the machete for cutting saplings. Both they and the older men realize that the ax is not absolutely essential, and I have seen ax-shaped clubs used for breaking away the wood from around a hive, where the wood is rotten, as it frequently is. The older men say that [324]
if they did not have machetes for cutting saplings they would use stone tools, but they have no knowledge at all of how to make such tools, and are probably prompted to make this remark by the presence in the forest of early stone axheads.

Accepting, for the moment, that the Mbuti in their forest world are 121
not in any position of necessary dependence upon the villagers for food 177*
or material, or technological skill, and admitting that in the village context they are dependent, the question arises as to why they choose to place themselves in that position of dependence. It is certainly not out of economic necessity. The truth of the matter is simply that the village offers, for a brief while, an agreeable change of pace, an opportunity for a relaxation that is not always possible in the forest, and, one might say, better hunting, on occasion. An Mbuti band or an Mbuti family or an Mbuti individual may descend upon a village either because of sheer whim, or because of laziness if the forest hunting gets too strenuous, or because of dissension, or indeed for almost any reason except necessity. Whatever the reason, and most commonly it at least involves an expressed desire for relaxation and freedom from care, the reason is on the side of the Mbuti, the choice is theirs, and the dependence that follows is as voluntary as it is temporary.

ECONOMIC RECIPROCITY

We then have to ask what the Mbuti offer in return for the food and metal products that they receive, and to determine at least the economic structure of the relationship. In so doing we are inevitably led to consider the domestic, political and religious aspects and their interrelationship with the economic system, and it is in these interrelationships that inconsistency and conflict emerge.

Even in terms of sheer economic reciprocity the relationship is in- 121
herently unstable. Continuing to grant, for the moment, the fact that 177*
no economic necessity is involved on the part of the Mbuti, and that 439
their dependence is voluntary and temporary, the forest world remain-

2: Turnbull E-S (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

In Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

2: Turnbull B-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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tree and the Mbuti alleges that the villager stole the stem by trickery, leaving him only the leaves, so that the villager was able to replant the trees and grow more, but when the Mbuti planted the leaves they just withered and died.[9] It is seldom that the Mbuti deny possession of the stolen goods; what they deny is the act of stealing. But whatever the fact, and however judgment is given, the essential point is that there is no mechanism for enforcing that judgment. Judgment being given by a villager is in my experience without exception against the Mbuti, and orders restitution of the property, or service in lieu. If the Mbuti complies, however, it is merely because in his own estimation it is expedient to do so. If he feels that he has exhausted the goodwill of the injured villager he will simply leave, and thenceforth deal with another villager. If any attempt is made to inflict physical punishment on an Mbuti, or to imprison him, then the whole band will initiate reprisal raids on the plantations of the individual who brought the complaint. This seldom happens, because villagers seek other means for achieving some measure of control over the Mbuti, and it is with those that we shall now concern ourselves.

[9] See Appendix I: "The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 P04 Pygmies P04
Mbuti
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[p.44]

CHAPTER 4

The Notion of Hereditary Ownership

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A superficial glimpse of the Mbuti/Villager relationship in any village might well tend to confirm the belief that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for the very principles of their social organization. This is the claim of the villagers, the more sophisticated of which use a popular description of the Mbuti as "*les gens sans culture*." The Mbuti themselves will readily admit it, and investigation will, up to a point, confirm it. But we have already witnessed one contradiction; namely, that if the situation is one of superordination, and one of total cultural dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, then the villagers would have and be able to exercise some form of political control, and they do not. Indeed there are only the most tenuous political mechanisms for relating the two groups, such as the supposition that each hunting band has a headman or chief (entitled *capita* or *sultani*) who is answerable to the village headman. The villagers accord the Mbuti headman due respect, not far different from the respect they would accord a junior headman of another village, and hold him responsible for the behavior of his band. But even supposing that the Mbuti headman had any actual authority over his band, we have seen that the villagers are incapable of enforcing their will by taking either retributive or restitutive action against the band or the *capita* for fear of reprisal, and because of their very real need for the continued, if minimal, service of the Mbuti and their fear of losing even that.

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The Mbuti *capita*, in any case, is merely a village creation and carries no authority whatsoever and little influence among members of the hunting band. The other Mbuti accord him his title when in the village, or even when in the forest, if discussing a village problem. They use him as a convenient link who can also serve as a scapegoat. Through their "chief" the other Mbuti are freed of many of the cares and considerations involved in their relationship with the village, but

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2: Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1954) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, and the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, who are bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

2: Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1956) 1963 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]

Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends. They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans. It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups. In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
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tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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still Ngoma's Mbuti. Ngoma himself said he had no objections to the Puemi, or any other of his Mbuti, hunting for other villagers while he was away, so long as they still acknowledged him as their *kpara*, or owner. He was wealthy enough to have no economic need of the Mbuti, but he was greatly concerned with his status, which was, he said, determined largely by the number of Mbuti who called him *kpara*. Certainly status was an important consideration for the villagers, and ownership, effective or otherwise, of a large number of Mbuti would add to it, but there were few who could afford to ignore the economic aspect of the relationship as could Ngoma.

The situation then becomes seriously complicated for the field worker who is trying to disentangle the system of ownership. Any villager will claim hereditary rights over even the most recent newcomer. But he will also claim rights over the Mbuti who have left him, and in some instances over those that he would have inherited from his father had they not left his father. As hereditary ownership can be transferred by adoption with compensation (a sum in cash or goats, and a promise of a share of any meat that falls into the net of the Mbuti transferred, or of that of his senior male descendants) and as the "clan" names also sometimes become adopted in this way, any attempt to discover a system of hereditary ownership becomes doubly hazardous, if indeed such a system exists except in theory.

The Epulu situation is perhaps more complicated than others because most of the Mbuti in that band are claimed by Bira villagers, whereas the band itself is in Ndaka territory and has formed effective links with both Ndaka and Bira villagers, offering forest foodstuffs to the local villagers, who are mostly Ndaka, and performing some service for their more remote Bira owners. In this way, of course, they maintain two sources of supply of village goods. But the actual distribution of the clans that contributed to the composition of the Epulu band, as shown in Table 2,[1] indicates how ineffective the principle of hereditary ownership is, in fact. The same kind of picture can be drawn for most net-hunting bands, and when we come to consider the forest world, among both net-hunters and archers we shall find a situation that militates against any effective stable and durable exchange relationships between Mbuti and villagers, particularly if based on the principle of unilineal descent.

The myth of hereditary ownership, then, does not seem to provide a much more effective means of control for the villagers than does the creation of mythical but comparable political systems. But it is not totally ineffective.

[1] [see page 323 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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use the appropriate kinship terminology and follow the appropriate behavior patterns. It is difficult to see what attracts the Mbuti girl to such a union except the politically advantageous position in which it places her. Unfortunately, little is known of the extent to which she stays in the village, or to which she takes advantage of her ability to slip into the forest unpursued and rejoin her band from time to time.

However, this is considered a selfish and antisocial way of attracting Mbuti adherents, and it is only countenanced by other villagers if it is done because the villager concerned is unable, for one reason or another, to acquire a villager wife. More generally the villagers try to introduce the Mbuti into their own kinship framework by insisting not only on the myth of hereditary ownership, but by positing a parallel relationship, a *kpara* referring to his Mbuti as his "children," but not allowing them sibling status with his real children.

As their "father" he then claims the right to concern himself with all their domestic problems, and most particularly with marriage. For an Mbuti boy to marry an utterly unrelated Mbuti girl owned by his *kpara's* brother, for instance, would be considered by the villagers as incestuous, and prohibited. It could only take place if either the boy or girl changed allegiance. Marriage between the Mbuti, then, becomes a matter of major concern to the villagers, who will not only provide all the necessary ritual for the Mbuti but who will also have to negotiate between themselves, just as if it were a village marriage, the *kpara* of the groom paying appropriate wealth to the *kpara* of the bride. In every respect the *kpara* act as parents, except that it is as if they were considering a less important line of children by some very inferior wife. In 1957–58 the wealth paid by one villager to another for an Mbuti wife for his own Mbuti "child" was about a tenth of what he would have to pay for a villager wife for his real child.

The matter is one of some concern, because a wealthy villager might "own" or claim to own a hundred or more Mbuti, and his only assurance against bankruptcy is an insistence upon his hereditary rights over the offspring of his male Mbuti, and his right to demand wealth from other villagers whose Mbuti married his own Mbuti girls. Considerable conflict arose between villagers as a result, because while the Mbuti accepted the feasting and their share of the wealth, they did not accept any of the obligations, and according to their own custom of betrothal and marriage they did not consider the marriage final until a child had been born. At any time before then, without asking leave of anyone, Mbuti or villager, they were free to sepa-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective *kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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control of the specifically village supernatural. Indeed the villagers are obliged to do this, in consonance with the rest of their system, for to admit someone to the kinship system without admitting them to the ancestral cult would be a contradiction in terms. But not so for the Mbuti. The most sacred of the village institutions is completely divorced, in the Mbuti system, from any other adopted village institution. It is, like the other institutions, adopted for what it offers in itself, and if it is related to anything, it is related only to the economic aspect of the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 5

The Notion of Supernatural Control

THE VILLAGE SUPERNATURAL

We have already seen something of villager participation in Mbuti marriage arrangements, but only from the aspect of kinship. From this point of view the villagers hope to be able to control, to some extent, the movement and residence patterns of the Mbuti, and to support the myth of hereditary ownership. From another point of view, however, villager participation in the marriage of their Mbuti necessarily introduces the Mbuti to the village magico-religious system, through the ritual that consecrates the marriage as well as through the absorption of the Mbuti, in this way, into the village kinship structure. It might also be pointed out in passing that as far as the villagers are concerned, marriages between their Mbuti are of as much political importance as their own marriages, in regulating relationships between one village and another, one segment of the tribe and another. Insofar as our primary concern is with the Mbuti, however, this political aspect does not directly concern us here.

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Marriage is only one village ritual adopted by the Mbuti, and in considering any such adoption we have to keep in mind the structural aspects of ritual in the village social system and, in particular, the relationship between ritual and kinship. It is in light of structure that the villager side of the Mbuti/Villager relationship is comprehensible, the attempt to include the Mbuti within the village framework being an attempt to secure some measure of control over them. That is not to say that the motive of control is necessarily responsible for the inclusion, but it is certainly openly acknowledged by villagers and has some bearing on their attitudes.

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At the same time we must be aware that on the Mbuti side there is the knowledge that the villagers are seeking to gain control. There is a considered element of risk involved in accepting certain institu-

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tions, even in the strictest village context, but it is outweighed by what at first seems little more than a lively desire to have all the advantages of village life with none of the disadvantages. Again, it is only through an examination of the interrelationship of the institutions adopted by the Mbuti, and their relationship with the indigenous Mbuti social system, that we can arrive at any true understanding of the apparent process of acculturation.

The attempt by the villagers to assert supernatural control is structurally the most significant, for it involves elements with which the Mbuti have no institutionalized means of dealing. Political pressure the Mbuti can counter by changing allegiance; economic pressure can also be countered, by reverting to the always available pure hunting and gathering economy; as we shall see in the next section, pressure through absorption into the village kinship system is repelled quite simply by the maintenance of an opposed kinship system. However, the Mbuti have no magic with which to counter magic, no witchcraft or sorcery with which to counter witchcraft and sorcery. They do have belief with which to counter belief, but it is part of the belief of both Mbuti and villagers that in a war between the gods, no man can safely predict the outcome. It is in this situation that the villagers do manage to effect some extent of control, but it is also in this context that they come up against the ultimate bedrock of opposition.

Let us look at the various ways in which the magico-religious life of the villagers impinges upon that of the Mbuti, and the extent to which it exerts some measure of control over the hunters and gatherers. Fully recognizing that a clear division of the subject matter is difficult, if not impossible, to make, we nonetheless have to attempt such a division for the purposes of discussion. There is a great deal of overlapping, but nonetheless at the extremes, in this case, the division used here between magic and religion is legitimate.

By *magic* I refer to activities involving, on the part of the African, villager or Mbuti, a conviction in the pragmatic relationship between a cause and an effect which, in terms of Western science, is not demonstrable. The term in its usual sense has meaning only as far as we are concerned, for as far as the Africans here are concerned, magical activities are as scientifically valid as any other. They may not always be able to explain the exact way in which the effect is related to the cause, any more than everyone who drives a motorcar can explain the mechanism. Indeed, the corresponding term "medicine"

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative*, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ence and natural life. There is no practical cause—the cause itself is supernatural. I include various *rites de passage* under religion because such rites involve a thoroughgoing belief in the supernatural. The nature of the supernatural, however, varies greatly as seen by Mbuti and as seen by villagers. Both peoples, however, do have a belief in the supernatural; that is, scientifically nonexplicable powers that are invested in another class of beings, without form or substance, which we call *spiritual*. It is belief in these spiritual beings that is the essence of what we here call religion.

CURATIVE MAGIC

As indicated above, we are not here in the least concerned with acts, of either the Mbuti or the villagers, simply because they involve an assumed but scientifically false connection between cause and effect. We use the term "magic" as a translation of the native term, which groups together divers curative activities in the belief that all are equally scientific. Thus the penicillin that cures a sore is magic just as much as the antelope horn that cures a spell of bad hunting.

In trying to assess how far the village world impinges on the forest world in this respect, then, we have to see what situations there are for which the Mbuti have no cure and which they wish to cure, and for which the villagers do have a cure. Or, indeed, we must look to see if the reverse situation exists.

When I say there is little magic in the forest world of the Mbuti, I mean that there are few curative activities, and for the very simple reason that there are relatively few situations that require curing. For most Mbuti who have reached adolescence the life expectancy is good, as is the expectancy of good health. For most minor physiological disorders the Mbuti seem to have effective remedies, some of which are cited in Appendix II together with details of the botanical identification of the plants, wherever I was able to be sure, or reasonably sure, that these were the only plants used. Such remedies cover not only the mild fevers, aches and pains, and sicknesses that may come the way of the Mbuti, but they also cover accidental injury such as may be incurred by falling on a spear, by being attacked by a wild animal, bitten by a snake, stung by bees, or by falling from a tree, breaking or twisting an arm or leg. Such injuries, however, occur remarkably seldom.

For these particular curative activities the Mbuti are acknowledged

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

But here we may note a significant difference in attitude to magic, or curative activity. Childbirth is a time which is thought of by both Mbuti and villagers as being attended by the possibility of danger, at least. The Mbuti think in terms of physical danger, and they have precautions that they take in the diet and behavior of the expectant mother before birth, and apparently effective knowledge of midwifery, including recognized ways of dealing with difficult births. After birth there are known cures for any weakness the infant or mother might show. What is lacking, among the Mbuti, is precisely what is dominant among the villagers: a felt need for protection against the supernatural.

A village mother and child will both have, according to how wealthy the family is, a number of potions to drink (which may or may not have medical significance, but are thought of as being protective) and divers charms to wear. The protection is thought to be necessary against *unknown* dangers. The difference between the two peoples is in the extent of this unknown. An Mbuti infant will have a vine bracelet or belt tied to it almost immediately after birth, and a small piece of wood or two will be fixed to the vine. It is stated that the vine and the wood convey to the child the health and strength of the forest. There is no apparent concern for any supernatural dangers, and no precautionary steps taken.

From the village point of view the lack of such measures involves the child and possibly the mother in great danger, and out of self-concern as much as out of concern for the Mbuti, the villagers proffer charms in abundance to expectant mothers and newborn children. However, the need is only felt by the villagers, not by the Mbuti.

This is precisely the difference we find when we seek other situations for which only the villagers have a cure—they are situations in

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

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much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

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the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind; so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

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that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti considers the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, and he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government *station de chasse*.

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C 754 439 P 439 *tion de chasse*. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

P 754 *177 There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk P [5'21] of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own P [18'] [19'] concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbafu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

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CHAPTER 6

Village Religion

NKUMBI

Both villagers and Mbuti have notions concerning spirits and spiritual intervention, and associated religious systems. Once again, however, even where the facts coincide, the systems do not. One of the major differences is the lack of ritual ceremony among the Mbuti and the importance of it among the villagers. Thus, though manhood is every bit as important to the Mbuti as to the villagers, there is no formal Mbuti initiation ritual. And although marriage is considered just as sacred, and is recognized by the Mbuti as having profound social implications, it takes place in the forest in an apparently utterly casual manner without any ceremony or ritual joining of the boy and girl or of their families. The ritual attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward death again is totally different. P C 771 796

But in the lack of ceremony the villagers once again see a chance for acting as intermediaries, as though this made them indispensable. The Mbuti are continually being subjected to one or another ritual ceremony at the hands of the villagers, even when the affair is entirely domestic and apparently does not in any way directly concern the villagers. C 563 796 P 796 177*

According to the notion of hereditary ownership, of course, the villagers also have a responsibility, and by virtually assimilating or, better, adopting the Mbuti into the villager tribe they are obliged to adopt them also into the religious system. The parallel kinship system, while never opening the way to complete integration, nonetheless demands an extension of the parallelism in all directions. The villagers have no qualms about this, and it is certainly no indication of friendly intimacy, for in this way they hope to secure the inferior status of the Mbuti not only in the present but also in the afterlife. At the same time the villagers believe they have found another source of control over their wayward servants. C 608 563 P 608 C [626]

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Of all the various *rites de passage* practiced by the villagers, and to which they are forced to introduce the Mbuti, none probably is so important as the *nkumbi* initiation of the boys into manhood. Among the Bantu tribes this is practiced with circumcision, among the Sudanic it is without circumcision, though there is a tendency among some Sudanic tribes situated close to the Bantu, such as the Lesé bordering on the Bira, to adopt the custom, one village at a time.

The major purpose of the *nkumbi*, as stated by the tribes that practice it (I refer mainly to the Forest Bira here), is to fit the youths as men, to make them men in the eyes of the ancestors. A boy who does not undergo the *nkumbi* is denied access to the ancestors after death, and during his life has the status of a child. Boys between the ages of eight and twelve, generally between nine and eleven, are eligible for the ceremony, which now takes place once every three years and lasts for two or more months. The traditional time element has been completely upset by the administration, which, together with the missionaries, has tried to discourage the whole institution. But the *nkumbi* initiation has remained as the only way to achieve adult status within the tribe. I have seen an entire *nkumbi* ceremony, including circumcision, held for a boy who died just prior to being initiated.

Effectively the *nkumbi* also unites a few neighboring villages as a single political unit, and affords an opportunity though the system of *karé* blood brotherhood, of cementing specific political bonds. It also effectively unites those tribes who practice circumcision in opposition to those who do not practice it, and it determines certain lines of marriage prohibition.

One such line, of course, divides the circumcised from the uncircumcised, and theoretically marriage between a Bira and a Lesé would be unthinkable. The only cases known to me allegedly happened during war, captive women being taken as wives. But equally theoretically these prohibitions should apply to the Mbuti who, according to the practice of their *kpara*, not having any of their own, either do or do not suffer circumcision at village hands. As we shall see, however, forest territorial organization is no respecter of village tribalism, and band composition is fluid, to say the least. Consequently, in any one band one can by no means be sure that all the men are circumcised, and the question is never raised. Further than that, there is no objection to marriage, among the Mbuti, between a family whose *kpara* circumcises and one whose *kpara* does not. Such marriages would cer-

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tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

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to village boys. In some cases the Mbuti's *kpara* may choose him as *karé* to his own son, and in other cases he may see some advantage in having his Mbuti form a *karé* pact with another villager, as this forms an economic and political link, then, between the two villagers. It seems that, generally, *karé* brotherhood is formed between Mbuti and their *kpara's* patrikin, however. It is believed that this places the two in an indissoluble politico-economic relationship for the rest of their lives, a relationship of subordination as far as the Mbuti is concerned, and one that will persist into the afterlife of the same individuals.

The villager concepts of afterlife are not clearly defined, but it is accepted without question that individuals continue to exist after death and may, if qualified by initiation and by adherence throughout life to the tribal code of behavior, join the ancestors, who live together much as they did in the present world, and continue to concern themselves with the present world. It is also accepted without question that there must be Mbuti in the afterworld, just as there are in the present. If one asks why must there be Mbuti, the invariable answer is in terms of the economic dependence of the villagers upon the Mbuti in the present world, the assumption being that the same needs will exist in the afterworld. But the economic relationship is the most easily expressed and recognized, however mistakenly, and is not necessarily therefore the most important. The political relationship is also recognized, though not quite so easily expressed because of the greater incompatibility of the systems of the two peoples. But there is also a ritual relationship which is certainly as powerful as the others, if not more so, and it is just as much a part of the *karé* pact as are the economic and political aspects.

Karé partners are expected to trade with each other, though not necessarily exclusively. This allows for the formation of *karé* brotherhood between individuals who are not in a *kpara*/Mbuti relationship, and is an attempt on the part of the villager to regularize the situation should his Mbuti join a band trading with a neighboring village. To have a *kpara* in one village and a *karé* in another, strategically chosen, is considered equally advantageous by Mbuti and villager. As far as the Mbuti is concerned it provides him with two groups of people who feel under some kind of an obligation toward him, and who need him. As far as the *kpara* is concerned it gives him someone he can effectively claim against should his Mbuti decide to trade in that direction. As far as the villager *karé* is concerned it is another Mbuti

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to his credit, increasing his prestige and also somewhat increasing his trading opportunities. The trade is mainly thought of in terms of meat and labor on the side of the Mbuti, village foods, clothes and tobacco on the side of the villager. A fairly friendly relationship does sometimes develop between two *karé*, who, regardless of the status differentiation, undergo the whole *nkumbi* together, suffering the same ordeals side by side, and are perhaps more united by age than they are separated by the status differentiation.

The political aspects of *karé* brotherhood reinforce the economics, not only serving as a basis for compensation against a migrant Mbuti, but also for extending the *karé* relationship to link the Mbuti's *kpara* with the village boy's father. The relationship is primarily between individuals, but it nonetheless creates felt obligations between the families involved, and one family of villagers may invoke the help of another family in a dispute, through an Mbuti *karé* link. The kinship ramifications of *karé* brotherhood are still far from clear from the village point of view, and it seems that the introduction of the Mbuti to the system may have somewhat disorganized the traditional system. For the Mbuti there is no connection between *karé* and kinship, and effectively there can be none among the villagers. If there were, then the formation of a *karé* tie between *kpara* and their own Mbuti would be incestuous, and the formation of such ties with unrelated families, conceived of as a sibling relationship, would effectively prohibit marriage in that direction and create an impossibly confused dual kinship system. Yet *karé* do refer to each other sometimes as "brother," and take advantage of their thus extended kinship relations.

The religious aspects of *karé* brotherhood are far less easy to define, and far less easy for the investigator to determine because they are seldom, if ever, discussed. I have never heard such a discussion, unless I instigated it, except on the occasion of the death of a villager. On the death of an Mbuti it is generally only the other aspects of the *karé* relationship that are discussed, involving liability for funerary expenses, compensation for outstanding obligations, divination of the cause of death. But when a villager dies the Mbuti *karé* is introduced into the heart of the funerary ritual, having to perform divers functions such as beating the villager's wives, leading an attack upon all close kin of the deceased, conveniently clustered together for the purpose, "to drive away evil," as the villagers explained it among themselves and to me. The Mbuti *karé* is also made responsible for providing certain foods for the deceased and, I believe, certain herbs

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with which the body of the villager is treated before burial. Owing to my somewhat peripheral relationship with the villagers I was not allowed to witness the more intimate rituals when the *karé* Mbuti was closeted with the deceased on one occasion for about three hours, on another occasion for one hour. Nor was I able to elicit much from the Mbuti, who said that they knew nothing about it, and only did what they were told to do by the villagers. When asked what that was, they repeated the above information, which was as much as I had gathered from the villagers, and no more except a few colorful and imaginative details about the appearance and odor of the corpse. This being clearly something better investigated from the villager side, I did not press the matter. It seems sufficiently well established, however, that the ritual connection between *karé* is considerable as seen by the villagers, and this was borne out on one occasion when an important Bira noble died and the entire funeral ceremony, including the burial, was held up for a day and a half because of the non-appearance of the dead man's Mbuti *karé*. On this occasion the Mbuti eventually arrived on the run carrying a spear, loudly shouting his complaints at being brought from the forest for such stupidity (again the term *mbafu*). There were several hundred villagers assembled, and the Mbuti ran through them to the compound of the deceased. He evidently knew in advance what was expected, and broke his way in to the closed hut where the widows were wailing. There was great concern among the villagers because he took his spear with him, and they said he might kill the women, but they did nothing to prevent him. Happily there was a full complement of widows at the subsequent burial.

The villagers recognize that they cannot force the Mbuti *karé* to fulfill their obligations by political or economic pressure, but they now have another weapon. By the act of ritual circumcision, according to tribal lore, the Mbuti are placed in a direct relationship with the tribal village ancestors, and by the *karé* bond each Mbuti is placed in a direct relationship with the protective spirits that look after the welfare of their respective individual villager partners. Every step of the *nkumbi* reinforces the authority of the tribal ancestors, through the supernatural powers at their disposal, over the Mbuti as well as over the villager initiates. Failure to fulfill "kinship" or *karé* obligations on the part of the Mbuti cannot be dealt with by the legal mechanisms available to the villagers, but it can now be countered by supernatural sanctions. Villager lore defines the Mbuti responsibili-

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ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

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ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

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the first appearance in a girl of menstrual blood. But there the similarity ends.

Be that as it may, the villagers do not take nearly as much interest in the puberty of the Mbuti girls as they do in the puberty of the boys. The Mbuti generally seem to hold part of their *elima* festivals in the forest, and the closing part in the village. In this way they are able to pursue their own way through the festival without interference, claiming a feast at village expense only when the forest festival is virtually ended. Village interest in the *elima* while it is in the forest is not manifest in any practical way, although a particularly fond *kpara's* wife might send out an occasional gift of plantains or manioc. But when the *elima* moves to the village there is invariably some conflict, because the closing phase of the Mbuti *elima* is particularly untraditional in the eyes of the villagers (as well it might be, for in fact it is probably a totally different tradition) and offensive to their tribal lore. In particular in recent years, there has been a tendency for Mbuti girls to imitate the boy's *nkumbi*, of which they are supposed to know almost nothing. They display an intimate knowledge of the most jealously guarded secrets, and there have been, throughout the Ndaka and Bira tribal areas, instances of *elima* girls adopting both the costumes of the boy initiates and some of their behavior.

In 1958 the Epulu band went so far that both the Bira and the Ndaka chiefs and ritual specialists joined in complaint, and threatened the *elima* girls (the two candidates and their companions, known jointly as the *bamelima*) with a death curse if they did not desist. The girls were upset because they claimed that they had merely adopted the boys' costume because it was so much prettier than the traditional costume approved by villagers for village *elima* girls. And was not the whole idea to look pretty? Of course from the village point of view the whole idea was to behave as one defiled, and this is one of several indications of the total difference between the two attitudes to the event of puberty.

We shall see that the Mbuti attitude is that a girl's first menstrual period is an indication of her readiness for motherhood, and is therefore a time for great and public rejoicing (see Turnbull, 1960[1]). It is also a time when boys and girls should get together and think about settling down in marriage, so it is a time for experimentation. The girls are expected, during the last stages of the festival, to look their best at all times, and they paint and decorate and dress themselves to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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excellent effect. They flaunt themselves in public, to the increased dismay of the villagers.

The villagers regard the appearance of menstrual blood as a disaster, and as the inauguration of a time of great danger for the girl, her family and, by extension, the whole tribe. She is considered as unclean, and is rigorously secluded and abased. Her family has to undertake a series of purification rituals ending in a feast (the part of the ceremony for which the Mbuti solicit "help"). They also have to discover the cause of the blood, which is believed by the Plains Bira and still by a number of the Forest Bira to be due to intercourse. The girl is questioned as to who caused the blood, and she names the youth on whom she has set her heart. He may acknowledge the blame, whether or not he ever had intercourse with her, and can then resolve the unclean situation by marrying her. If his wishes are otherwise he can deny her accusation and she will have to try elsewhere. The girl's parents will guide her accusations as they think necessary, but the actual extent to which the village *elima* leads thus directly into marriage seems to vary. Sometimes it is sufficient to secure admission of guilt and payment in lieu of marriage. But the villagers seldom try to follow an Mbuti *elima* through its full course; their major concern is that the impurity of the *elima* girls should not touch them. The provision of the final feast gives them an opportunity, which they do not always take, for supervising the ritual purification of the girls by bathing, the cleansing of the *elima* house, and the ritual disposal of all clothing and bedding and utensils used by the *bamelima*. The latter they do generally supervise, as the Mbuti are notoriously loath to part with perfectly good clothing or bedding for such *bulé* reasons, and will try to avoid having them destroyed.

If anything, the *elima* sets the villagers and the Mbuti apart, rather than offering any means for drawing them closer together. This is perhaps because while the *nkumbi* involves the village ancestors and is in honor of them, and secures their blessing, the village *elima* involves malevolent spirits more than it involves the ancestors. And as far as the villagers are concerned, evil spirits emanate from the forest. The *elima* offers no opportunity to the villagers for placing Mbuti girls under the control of the ancestral spirits; at the most, it offers them a responsibility for freeing them from contamination by the evil spirits. They sometimes voice the opinion that the Mbuti are in league with those spirits emanating from the forest, and rigorously avoid any contact with an Mbuti *elima*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatural sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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C 581 789 P 581 *177 [789] craft or to a breach of marital taboos, as indeed are any disasters, natural or unnatural, that befall the couple. The Mbuti, not having any traditional means of divination, are considered by the villagers to be dependent on them for help, though a few Mbuti have learned the art and become quite highly respected by the villagers. Sometimes if villagers come to hear of a marital dispute within a band, they will try to settle it by reference to divination, and if so the Mbuti appear to accept the settlement without question, in the village, but in no way allow it to impinge upon the reality of the situation in the forest. So once again the only dependency that exists is in the minds of the villagers.

DEATH

C 761 784 754 P 761 *177 [608] Even when it comes to the greatest crisis of all, death, the Mbuti seem to accept all the externals of village ritual but none of the implications. The invariable accusation of witchcraft and the equally invariable mention of supernatural sanctions as an alternative cause of death are made to remind the Mbuti not to falter in fulfilling their obligations to their *kpara*. Village insistence upon the unnatural causes of death serves to sow enough seeds of doubt in the mind of the Mbuti to cause at least momentary fear.

C 764 761 [608] P 764 761 *177 The actual ritual of burial is conducted under strict village supervision, the necessary payments being made by the *kpara*. The *kpara* and his family, as well as many other villagers, attend personally in the procession to the grave, and the *kpara* is almost certain to take a prominent part in the subsequent discussion as to the cause of the death and be present at the divination, if one is held. But whereas the Mbuti generally subject themselves to village ritual with the best of grace, they become quickly impatient following the burial of the dead and sometimes simply walk out of the *baraza* where the cause of death is being determined, leaving it entirely to the villagers to decide whatever pleases them. The village preoccupation with death and its unnatural causes disquiets the Mbuti, and when an Mbuti dies in a village there is frequently voiced suspicion that somehow the village is responsible; maybe one of the old curses is at work, perhaps a neglected *kpara* is employing a sorcerer to seek revenge, or, more likely, it is impersonally simply the village itself that caused the death.

P 761 764 Among themselves the Mbuti do not bother to settle the question, if they ask it, but if they feel that the village is to blame in some un-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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oughly as possible, it seems that among both Bira and Ndaka, and I believe also among the Lesé, death is believed to put fellow clansmen of the deceased in great danger from the *keti*, or evil spirits. The object of the *molimo* is twofold, then; it must help the deceased on his way, giving him what protection it can, and it must protect the living, who will be in a state of ritual danger throughout the period of mourning.

During that period the *molimo* meets regularly, at nighttime, in the house of the senior surviving member of the clan, in whose possession the *tete* is held. Only adult male clansmen are admitted, and the sound of the *tete* is the audible evidence of the invisible presence of their totemic guardian spirit. Specially prepared food is offered to the spirit, and the rest is eaten by the men. No women are allowed to participate in any way, even by cooking the food, according to all informants. However, I had been told the same thing about the Mbuti and found it to be different, and do not accept this information without some reservation. It would seem, though, that women generally are excluded from the *molimo* of the villagers, and indeed it really is no concern of theirs.

During the proceedings, which may last an hour or so, the men wail and call out the name and/or the kinship term of address of the deceased; his praises are recited and he is commended to the ancestral spirits. At the same time, the praises of the surviving clan members are similarly recited, and mention is made of the way in which they have upheld tribal lore and observed all the rules of clan exogamy, and have increased the number of attendant Mbuti. Continued protection for the living is requested, particularly for the period of mourning. Apparently no Mbuti take part in this part of the ceremony, though there seemed to be some disagreement over this and my impression was that the associated Mbuti are not prohibited from attending, but effectively seldom, if ever, do.

Upon the death of an Mbuti the *kpara* will not only oversee the burial and funerary ceremonies and divination, he will also want to hear announced the calling together of the men of the *molimo*. Sometimes he will leave it at that, but if the Mbuti continue to stay in the village and hold any *molimo* meetings in their village camp, the *kpara* may attend one or two meetings. It is very noticeable that when he does, the meeting runs a completely different course, centering around some erotic dancing by the younger men and a small amount of singing. The *molimo* trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *tete*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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ble situation, retaining at all times the village position of superiority over the Mbuti. But it is a myth which at the same time satisfies the needs of the Mbuti, affording them precisely the freedom of which the villagers seek to deprive them, enabling them to rationalize the situation in their own favor and to their own advantage. We shall shortly see how this takes place.

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CHAPTER 7

Flux and Instability

Not yet having examined the forest context, we cannot completely dispose of the question of economic dependence or interdependence. At the moment, it appears that the Mbuti do not need the villagers except for luxuries which may in time become necessities, and it equally seems that the villagers do not need the Mbuti except as laborers on the plantations, in particular with the cotton harvest, and this is a very recent need introduced by Belgian administration. The most that one can say about the economic aspect of the relationship is that it appears to be one of mutual convenience. The villagers *could* hunt (and in areas where there are few or no Mbuti, they do) but they prefer not to go into the forest if it can be avoided. The Mbuti *could* live successfully off the forest at their indigenous level of technology, but trade with the villagers makes life that much easier.

If we look carefully at daily life in any village, the economic aspect of the relationship fades even further into the background. Mbuti can occasionally be seen bringing in from the forest meat or other forest products needed by the villagers, such as the *fito* saplings and phrynium leaves for their houses. More often they will be seen helping with odd domestic chores, such as fetching water or firewood, house-building, or guarding plantations. Mbuti women help the village women pound manioc and to thresh and winnow the locally grown dry rice. They also help the village women carry loads of plantains to and from the market.

But mostly, if any Mbuti are to be seen at all, they will be seen lazing on the *baraza* of their *kpara*, being fed and offered ends of cigarettes, or bribed with liquor to put on a dance that all the villagers will come to watch. Such dances are wild and erotic, accompanied by anything from one to three or four drums, never by song.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

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P 685 648 571 121 C 648 571 P [361] [621] other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

P 829 648 571 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and P [224] fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the P [825] villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

C 439 648 121 Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

P C 121 648 There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist between two peoples in a context such as this. Apart from one of symbiosis, implying interdependence, there could be political subjugation, such as existed, say, between the Tussi and the Hutu. But that is plainly not the case here. The villagers themselves admit their inability to exert physical force to bend the Mbuti to their will, for the Mbuti always have the ultimate escape of flight to the sanctuary of the forest. The villagers are completely unequipped to pursue the Mbuti into the forest, and never attempt it. They are incapable of even finding the Mbuti if the hunters wish not to be found. And, as we have seen, there is no effective political mechanism for maintaining any kind of political relationship, let alone one of superordination/subordination.

C 563 121 P *177 121 Another possible relationship would be one of assimilation, such as occurred among the Ganda of East Africa, where two different peoples merged, as did their two different economies. At the present there is no question of actual assimilation, but the existence of linguistic and institutional similarities certainly indicates an interchange of ideas, at least. But it is, at the moment, an interchange of outward forms only, and not of the accompanying systems and structure. And while a great deal of intimacy is expressed, in action as in word, between the two groups, there is also a great deal of expressed opposition, and sometimes hostility.

C 563 121 P *177 582 121 The intermarriage between Mbuti girls and village men and the attempted absorption of the Mbuti into the village kinship system may be considered as steps toward assimilation, but if so they are very tentative and preliminary steps, and as such need not concern us here. Indeed we shall find that there are other indications of the reverse process, of separation. There is no question of physical separation in the sense of the expulsion of one group by the other, but a perfectly valid alternative relationship left to us for consideration is one of ideological separation accompanied by a mutually accepted territorial separation—a form of indigenous apartheid.

P 166 *177 182 This in fact seems to be the case, for in common conversation, as in action, both groups distinguish the village and the village people from the forest and the forest people. The Mbuti effectively are the only group to cross the territorial boundaries, and the ideological boundaries remain inviolate on both sides. When the Mbuti cross into the village world they leave the forest behind them, and with it they leave their forest social system. Forest values cannot be so easily left

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 648 121 177 mand that they come to some kind of terms and establish some kind of mechanism for dealing with the threat that each feels.

P 648 121 *177 We have seen how the villagers attempt to deal with the situation by asserting control over the Mbuti through the adoption of the Mbuti into the village social system, thus placing them under the supernatural sanctions of village society. We have also seen that the Mbuti evade such control, though we have not exactly seen how, for at the moment the success of their evasion seems to lie in the rejection of system, in a flux and instability that alone would lead to chaos. In examining the forest society of the Mbuti now, however, we shall see how this flux and apparent instability is in fact a structural factor, and that while the villagers are constantly attempting to absorb the Mbuti into their village social system, the Mbuti have evolved a social system of their own which, while still permitting their traditional hunting and gathering existence, takes this new village factor into consideration and, so to speak, by opposing, ends it. For the Mbuti forest system seems almost expressly designed to run counter to the village system, and, by opposing it at every point of possible structural contact, it makes any structural relationship except one of opposition quite impossible.

P 648 621 121 178 Thus in examining the forest system of the Mbuti we have to remember that the same institution may well have a double function; the one of maintaining cohesion with the forest world, the other of maintaining opposition with the world outside. And insofar as the invasion of the village tribes is relatively recent, this is a system that is still evolving. All the more so because the successive waves of the invasion, followed by the advent of the Arab slave traders and finally by the arrival of the Belgians, have all wrought sudden and drastic changes in the nature of village life and on the village settlement pattern. There may indeed be some institutions that are newly evolved and the purpose of which is directed primarily at maintaining the relationship of opposition between forest and village. Others are in the process of adaptation, notably the Mbuti *molimo*, where the forest system of values has its deepest roots and where, consequently, their opposition to village values must be most forcefully expressed. And some institutions appear to be in a state of atrophy.

P 178 121 We are, then, very clearly going to be studying a society in the process of change. The structure that will emerge, involving a disconcerting lack of emphasis on kinship, is not necessarily or even probably characteristic of hunting and gathering societies, and should cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

tainly not be taken as such. It should only be considered as a system 178
that maintains, in its basic respects, a hunting and gathering tradi- 121
tion, while also maintaining, as completely as possible, a physiological
and ideological separation from a hostile village system.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.91]

PART THREE

THE FOREST WORLD

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
62 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

[A] [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
628 site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
621 shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred 166
territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry 574
far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assump- 131
tion that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus 628
territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to ex- 166
press and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also 574
used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it 131
is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights 582
as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity 621
in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even 614
when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over 613
the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[3]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[3] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net. [592]

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		Male Members		Female Members	
Camp 3a – in 26 huts, there were		13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
3b –	22	10	5	10	6
3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

		Male Members		Female Members	
Camp 3d – in 9 huts, there were		5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
3e –	9	5	3	6	3
3f –	6	4	4	4	3
3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

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The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)[A] indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m).

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I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe- [614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

[A] [see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	Members Male	Members Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] [361] [84]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analyst]

621 this in mind we shall go on to discover the nature and extent of lin-
613 eage participation in band activity, but the nonlineal nature of the corporate unit—i.e., the band or sub-band—has first to be examined in another context.

FRAGMENTATION, FISSION AND FUSION

We have already mentioned that the band may be large or small, that it may be established in a single large camp or in a number of smaller camps. In examining the process of fission and fusion, it is plain that lineage considerations are by no means paramount, but that, if anything, there is some effort to maintain nonlineal composition even in the smaller camps. That is to say, there is at least a consciousness of lineage and an apparently felt need to maintain some kind of balance between lineages. Whereas the process of fission and
621 fusion—the division of the band into small segments, each with its
361 own hunting camp within the hunting territory, and the eventual realignment of the band as a single unit—is systematic, it is not without an element of the less systematic process of fragmentation that takes place within any single camp, large or small, and which starts the day the camp is first established.

The whole shifting complex is best understood by looking at the camp plans at the end of the book. As each hut represents a married
[613] couple with or without unmarried children, Plans 5 and 6,[1] respectively, show the lineage groupings according to male and female membership for the camp named *apa* Lelo. *Apa* Lelo was one of the larger camps and is as typical as any. Plan 7[2] shows the significant changes made in the direction in which the huts faced as the camp took shape, day by day.

On looking at Plans 5 and 6 it is evident that not only does the shape of the natural clearing lend itself to the division of the camp into sections, but that these sections show as much consideration for affinal as for consanguineal ties. Plan 7 shows how the natural divisions offered by the clearing were made plainer by the addition of screens to hut entrances, or by rebuilding huts so as to face them in different directions. The fallen tree trunk and a clump of undergrowth are also utilized, and in other camps such undergrowth was eventually cleared if the reason for making use of it disappeared.

[613] When we examine the camp, section by section, it will be seen again that lineage is only one of many factors in determining the social groupings within the camp.

1, 2 [see pages 355-357 respectively -- Analyst]

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[572 low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
614 of the huts themselves.
613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 578

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any other factor.

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary importance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of fragmentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always pat-
[611] rilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band com-
613 position be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is com-
184 parable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
[224] groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
621 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
613 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
174 attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
621 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE VILLAGE WORLD

[P.108-A]

PC
361
342
137

1. The village of Epulu, shady but constantly threatened by the encroachments of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R 108-B]

E
602
344
352
291
516

2. The village headman's *baraza*, used for receiving visitors and holding public discussions.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 108-C]

P
C
342
137

3. An abandoned village, overgrown in a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

PC
139
252
291
511
412
142
415

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 108-E]

142
516
342
302
291
854

5. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring roofing leaves into village for village houses.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

[P.108-F]

P
C
342
464
291
571
142

6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their *kpara*, are fed as part of their "payment."

P
C
571
465
464
291
142

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

342
361
137

[P.108-G]

8. This village camp of the Mbuti at Epulu was built in imitation of the main village. It soon became fouled and was abandoned, succeeding village camps being built in the forest at the edge of the plantations.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

361
344
352
142
291
516

9. The Mbuti village baraza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

142
516
412
415
853
482

10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-I]

P
352
147
516
533
C
534
352

11. An Mbuti hunter amuses himself in the village by playing a village-made zither.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-J]

P
535
142
291

*P
[177]

12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

P
[302]
[386]

C
585
563

13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Makubasi. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her *kpara*'s sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

P
142
291
585
*177

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 108-K]
C
881
563
292
P
881
292
* 177

14. The *nkumbi* initiation is another means by which villagers attempt to control the Mbuti. The initial dance here, with the sacred *makata* sticks, is led by the traditional doctor, Sebani, at the village of Eboyo. Mbuti and villagers take part jointly in the festivities, but the Mbuti are excluded from all ritual roles.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R 108-L]

C
881
842
342

15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching *nkumbi* during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

P
516
LUT
881
304
152
C
[152]

16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult, but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

181 the economic and political life, and even in the religious life of the
611 Mbuti, who are supremely concerned with the present.

P 601 The effective kinship terminology at once reflects the situation, which only becomes confused when any attempt is made to relate the terms to their usage in village society. It distinguishes generations rather than kin, and cuts indiscriminately across actual kinship boundaries. Through its effective organization of the band into age groups, it emphasizes the economic basis of band unity rather than any kinship bonds. The only terms in general usage in the Epulu region, and among the Mbuti bands to the east-west extremes of the Bira-speaking net-hunting territory, are as follows:

P [561]

Grandparent:	*tata*	for address and reference
Father:	*epa*	for address and reference
Mother:	*ema*	for address and reference
Sibling:	*apua'i* or *moko*	for address and reference

(*apua'i* is used rather than *moko*, though its connotation is one of close friendship)

Child:	*miki*	for address or reference

Except at the parental level, there is generally no sex differentiation. At times it seems that *taté* is used for grandmother, *tata* for grandfather. Similarly, *amua'i* is a possible variant to denote a female sibling. But as frequently, if not more so, and more consistently, I found *tata* and *apua'i* used for either sex. Differentiation is also made, if necessary, by adding the terms used for boy or girl—*moko* or *kali*, respectively. Thus *miki a moko* is a boy child; *miki a kali* is a girl child. There is also a way of distinguishing the younger from the older: *vomia* is older, *motoa* is younger, but the Mbuti generally only couple these designations to kinship terms in direct imitation of the village usage and only in village contexts.

C 601 Bira terminology, with minor dialectal variations, is similar to the above, but with the addition of terms such as *noko* for mother's brother; *kola* for father's sister; *om-epa* and *mot-epa* for the older and younger brother of the father; and *om-ema* and *mot-ema* for the older and younger sister of the mother. The Bira call an older brother *homioné*, an older sister *alwané*, and a younger brother or sister simply *moto*. The Mbuti normally refer to their father's sister simply P 601 as *ema* ("mother"), but if trying to refer to her for the benefit of

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance. P 601

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment. P 768 602 [768] [602] P [597] [567] P [591]

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only P 582 835 61 [60] [55]

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
61 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
[578] them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[1755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

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bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

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594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[765] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [888]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

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621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
561 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[128] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

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same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost ex- [829]
clusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

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[P118]

CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

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The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which activities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal institution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream should wash himself, or at least a part of himself, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

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are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 224 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

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her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

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512 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one
264 person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to
[576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even
[868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth 857
or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pre- 224
tending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, 868
and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the ensnarement of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the vil- [231]
lagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry.

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a 857
baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a 868
real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision.

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different 857
families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far 571
more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a 561
brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop 857
quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear 868
practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out t

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders. 88 561

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men. 88 561 627 554 [562]

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the 888 [157] 888 627 578 [885]

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888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
93 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 [821] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [654]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
751 of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
856 of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, 851
including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social [171]
position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, [597]
regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among 856 854
the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar [751]
as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of [778]
forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of 844
supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication [782]
that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness de- [778]
rives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although [594]
birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the [621]
band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

PUBERTY: THE *ELIMA*

At the next crisis in the life cycle, however, it is the band rather than the nuclear family that takes charge. By early childhood the child has already grown away from its family to some extent, and become more a member of an age group cutting across kinship lines. At puberty the boy or girl may not even be living with kin any more, let alone in the nuclear family. But even if they are, the band takes control of the situation. It is an occasion that concerns the band as such, for adolescence leads into marriage, and marriage will inevitably bring about a significant change in the economic structure of the band. A member of the band may leave it, or a new member may join it, or, if the marriage is within the band, then at least there will still be an additional net, and a change in the hunting and gathering pattern and perhaps in interfamily alliances. The process of fission and fusion might also be affected by the political implications of the marriage. The *elima* is best regarded as a premarital festival. It does not necessarily lead directly into a marriage that is marriage in the sense of a final, childbearing union. It is rather a preparation for marriage, an opportunity for the youngsters to find suitable partners. It does not even have to end in betrothal, so there cannot be said to be a functional connection between *elima* and marriage.

The arrival at puberty among boys being somewhat less easy to determine, the signal for an *elima* is the first appearance of menstrual blood in a young girl. This is something that fills the local villagers with horror, and with fear of evil influences against which they take elaborate ritual precautions to protect themselves. These precautions are costly and inconvenient, and the girl who has brought both shame and annoyance to her family is hidden and treated harshly. There are elaborate cleansing ceremonies for the girl and her family. Among the Mbuti, however, the appearance of menstrual blood is a sign that the girl is now a potential mother, and it is consequently a signal for rejoicing and for preparation for motherhood. Thus an integral part of the festival is the selection of suitable potential husbands. Such selection demands that the boys prove their manhood, since it cannot be proven as simply as is the womanhood of the girl. In this sense, then, the *elima* is a joint initiation of boys and girls into adulthood. Having dealt with it in descriptive form elsewhere (Turn-

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bull, 1960[1]), I shall keep the description here to those essentials 881
concerned with the structural implications of the *elima*.

The fact that it is not an individual family affair, to be concealed with shame as best possible, is doubly emphasized when two girls in a band, of quite different lineages, "see the blood" within a few days of each other. There will then be a joint *elima*. And there is also the selection by the girl or girls of the *bamelima*, the friends she likes and wants to accompany her for the duration of the festival, living with her in the *elima* hut. They will be drawn from her female age mates, [561]
and may or may not already have had their own *elima*. If they have not yet seen the blood, participation in their friend's *elima* will excuse them from having one of their own when the time comes. If a girl sees the blood, and a close friend thinks she is about to see it as well, the *elima* will be delayed, perhaps for several weeks.

As with birth, this life-cycle crisis does not evoke any sense of need 881
for urgent ritual action, protective or otherwise. Its significance is of 182
a different order. It is regarded as essentially natural and therefore good. Also as with birth, the personal importance of the occasion [778]
leads to an establishment of personal contact with the forest, a reification of the direct bond between the individual and the forest world; but the social importance of puberty for the band is recognized, so the band as such takes certain measures, both social and ritual, to mark the occasion.

The girl or girls with blood are expected to keep to their homes and 881
an extension may be built onto one of their huts, or onto that of any friend or relative who is willing to house the *bamelima*. Every *elima* girl with blood has to choose a personal assistant, and the choice is left entirely to her, and again may fall on a relative, though more often it is a very close friend, of the same age group. They then invite other friends to join them in the *elima* hut, when it is ready. The assistants share such restrictions as are placed upon the *elima* girls, except that they are more free to leave the hut unaccompanied. There are few restrictions anyway, it seems, and they are mainly concerned with maintaining adherence to the schedule of instruction and activities. There are some minor food prohibitions, based on the 881
personal taboos of the *elima* girls and their assistants, which in turn 262
are based on their individual reactions to these foods as young children. If a certain food makes a child sick it may be forbidden to him until puberty, when he may try it again and abandon the taboo if it no longer affects him adversely. Sometimes, but not always, there is 881

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 an injunction against eating meat, and this seems to be when the *elima* activities are affecting the hunt and the supply of game.

The rest of the *bamelima* are merely expected to be in attendance, and come and go as they please.

In the very lack of restrictions we can see that the Mbuti do not regard the *bamelima* to be in any ritual condition of danger or impurity. At such times as they are free to be among other band members in the camp they behave perfectly normally, playing with young children, fondling babies, sitting by family hearths, and so forth. But they eat separately and wash separately, so we might say that at least they are in a condition of ritual respect.

881 To begin with, the *bamelima* spend most of their time either inside
864 the hut or else off with an instructress, in the forest. Inside the hut
867 they are taught the songs of the *elima* by any older women who care to take part in the instruction. In the forest, I was told by a number of women, young and old, the girls are instructed in the arts of motherhood. This presumably includes such aspects of sexual life as are still unknown to them, which are probably few, but also use of the various herbs and treatments that a woman must know to insure fertility, an abundance of milk, easy childbirth, and abortion if necessary.

881 Girls say that certain of the *elima* songs are taught them in the
533 forest rather than in the hut, and as the festival progresses less and less time is spent in the hut, and more in the forest. For the festival is said "to rejoice the forest," to make it happy and glad. If the girls are not singing well they are told the forest will be displeased. If they are dejected they are asked if they want the forest to be sad. Everyone is expected to be happy, and as the *bamelima* go through the forest they sing to it. As with so many of the other songs of the Mbuti, the *elima* songs are either wordless, being just plays on vowel sounds, or else the words are slight and without any evident significance, such as "Ibu is a dog," "Let's get leaves," and "Oh, the mud!" Other songs sung by the *bamelima* toward the end of the festival, when they sing in public in the camp, are rather different, making rather more sense and being distinctly spicy in nature.

But the songs that are considered as true *elima* songs and which conform to a musical style of their own, are evidently sacred. When they are sung in the forest, they are sung *to* the forest. A phrase is cast at the forest and an echo is awaited before the girls continue. Even an individual girl, usually the one with blood, will sing in this

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way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

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quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers. 881 86 561

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings. 881 864 867 [836]

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them. 881 836 [574] [835]

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

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881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[574] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[2]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [2] The drama not only appears like a reenactment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

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have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable opportunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 591 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered preferable, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable 58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status [851] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 621 583 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut, a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

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MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is re- 621
quired. In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
591
621

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the
761 whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so
761 with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
763 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
152 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[887] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

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to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763
children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152
sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764
the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768
a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152]
there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]*
the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764
the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152
same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764
and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177*
not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152
by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception [887]
to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766
small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768
be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

766 two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be oc-
[768] cupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt
765 with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it
621 should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes
[778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature
621 of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest con-
594 text, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one
765

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death. 761 765 [182] [621]

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp. 764 768 184

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment. 764 [184] [766] *

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide. 765 302

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst. 765 [761]

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765 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they
152 should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death
765 at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not
[783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an-
[594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby
462 female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their
[171] women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

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765 462 152 [171]

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

765 462 171

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

765 764 621 594 [561]

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

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[P. 148]

CHAPTER 10

The Economy

THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 613 602 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 439 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 *seq.*), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 439 431 261 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri, except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

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Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *kare* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a molimo death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 439 C 439 608 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *haré* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P 439 *179 This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *haré* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

P 439 621 591 C [439] Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[8]

P 439 423 184 224 In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

C [648] [8] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti, the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

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Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a *capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting 732 and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

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Mbuti

become spirits, but there is no evidence of the old or crippled actually being treated with anything but a care and respect that, judging from appearances, derives more from affection and a sense of responsibility (not unmixed with a certain amount of rare forethought) rather than from fear. 732 734

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The iron tools available to the Mbuti since the inception of their relationship with the village tribes have not, apparently, tempted them to develop their hunting technology. They do not dig pits or make traps, nor do they erect spear-falls, techniques employed by the villagers. To make their traditional technology more efficient, however, the Mbuti do use iron blades for their spears, axes, knives and arrow blades. The spear blade makes the hunting of elephants much easier, though old Mbuti assert that they used to kill elephants with fire-hardened wooden spears. The knives and machetes undoubtedly make the cutting of leaves, saplings and vines much quicker and easier, and the honey ax affords simple access to beehives deep within hollow branches or tree trunks. The arrow tip is used more by the archers than by the net-hunters, it seems, but both groups rely primarily on poisoned arrows. The bows of neither group are large or efficient, accuracy is made doubly difficult by the limited vision of the forest environment, and hunters often aim at a sound or a movement of leaves rather than by sight of the actual quarry. With the poisoned arrow even a light graze will bring down the quarry, whereas with the metal-tipped arrow direct impact on a vital spot is essential. Even so, so chancy is Mbuti archery that throughout the forest the practice is to hold a handful of arrows in the hand that holds the bow; this enables them to be drawn and fired with remarkable rapidity. Naturally many are lost, but the loss of a poisoned arrow is of far less economic significance than the loss of a metal tip. 224 411

Traditional hunting techniques include archery, net-hunting and spear hunting, and occasional snaring (usually by youths, sometimes by old men). Nets vary in length from one to three hundred feet, and are about four feet in height. Seven small nets, together with beaters, might form a circle of over one hundred yards in diameter. Any area smaller than this would be impractical, as the game would be scared away before the nets could be set up and the beaters get in place. Even seven nets of average length would only form a circle barely two hun- 224

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [554] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

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though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [578]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 224 372 789 rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

P 224 372 789 * 177 There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider *anjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

P 224 * 177 834 One clear example of village influence is that in any village context the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt. These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating P [841] woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

P 778 * 177 However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of actual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the C 778 belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-A]
THE FOREST WORLD

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17. A forest camp (a corner of apa Lelo) is far removed from the dust and dirt and heat of the village. When the Mbuti tire of the village, they can escape to the forest and build a camp such as this in a matter of a few hours.

[166]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.156-B]

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[595]

18. Apa Kadikatu, showing Ekiongo's village-style hut, where he lived with his controversial youngest wife.[1]

[1][see pages 102-103 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-C]

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[164]

19. In one of Cephro's camps, Aberi talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P.156-D]

20. Cephu the troublemaker,[5] but also Cephu the great storyteller.

[5] [see pages 101-109; 194-198 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[9]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[9] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

224 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the
482 camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or
578 acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt
152 returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be al-
626 most deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the
[476] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

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Mbuti

Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epulu	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Biasiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

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ARCHERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

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Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

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It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

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The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

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The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

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it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [861]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

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224 magic seems to be somewhat more prevalent. Further, although
621 archery does not demand a relatively large co-operative band as does
[221] net-hunting, and although for most of the year the archers seem to be split into small bands of maybe only three or so nuclear families, the band is actually comparable in size and composition, and manifests its unity once a year for the annual *begbe* beat-hunt.

The *begbe* is remarkably like the net-hunt in technique and in social function. The major difference is the absence of nets, which makes for a much smaller circle for the same number of participants. Seven nuclear families could successfully hunt with nets; they could never form a *begbe* hunt. By the same token, more than thirty families could easily participate in *begbe* without inconvenience or danger, and if we define the archer band by stated territorial boundaries, and consider its composition as consisting of those who hunt within those boundaries during the year and form the communal *begbe* hunt once a year, then the average size of the archer band is probably larger than that of the net-hunting band.

The *begbe* demands large numbers; the men form a tight semicircle, each man well within sight of the next, the women and children forming a similarly tight semicircle opposite. The men are armed with bows and arrows, and with spears; the women make petards, which when beaten on the ground make a sharp, explosive sound. When the circle is complete, the women beat toward the men, who try to kill the animals before they break through their ranks, a procedure that is considerably more hazardous than the net-hunt, where the hunters can afford to wait until the game is at least temporarily held up by the net.

224 Among the archers the *begbe* is referred to as the beginning of the
221 new year, and the hunt coincides, it seems, with the honey season,
621 which for the net-hunters is similarly the beginning, or the end, of the year. During this season, then, the archer band is consolidated and co-operative, though it seldom builds a single camp. Rather, there may be from three to five large camps, but built close to each other (within earshot) and connected by trails. This, however, is the one time of year when the band does meet and hunt as such, though even at this time there is no central authority.

621 For the rest of the year the band is broken up into smaller units,
221 each one economically and politically independent of the other. These sections may vary in size from two or three nuclear families to as many as ten, or temporarily even a few more. Generally an archer camp contains from three to six families.

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contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

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Mbuti
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P 224 628 825 [554] sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

P [221] P [621]

P 224 613 614 Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

C [613] [614] [439]

P 224 613 614 262 825 Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

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spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[214] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[124] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time throughout the year; the sweet *itabu* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are frequently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the *elima* songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity.

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and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to secure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game. When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally. We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

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It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the ground, and any who are timid or slow get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 222 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 555 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomea*." No satisfactory translation

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
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of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1961 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madi** (*efe*: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

* The *madi* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *okusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the
621 economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is
628 determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to
224 move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it
166 temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself
131 is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence
131 the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING
224 BANDS
131

It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of 628
game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey 222
season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a 131
neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As [621]
often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the en- [602]
croaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the en- 621
croaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seek- 628
ing a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, 624
joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge oc- 476
cur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally [439]
involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means 438
of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-opera- 628
tion as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands 621
is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum 628
economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

2: Turnbull R-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fer

P 621 628 volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

P 439 621 121 This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen C to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic 439 necessity. What needs to be emphasised, perhaps, is that there can in 621 effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial 121 band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of C either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in [611] composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than [597] the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

P 439 621 608 571 The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another P band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in [156] this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

P 439 608 571 The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *kard* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"* of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

* These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions concerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

[P.181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
56 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[618] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
522 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analysis]

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

157 particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no in-
[595] terest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*).
554 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his
156 penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and
593 was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He
554 had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember
555 him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was
157 among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed,
[224] four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the
[648] hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However,
156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or
152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him
554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of
604 children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the
596 same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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When Njobo was away from the band for a
number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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156 554 558 627 201 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, 156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al- 629 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby 621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis- 648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, 554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked 156 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" 627 Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to [202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon 554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he 578 152

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbuaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbuaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbuaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbuaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbuaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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554 627 [478] [152] sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically and morally, beyond the forest.

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of 602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special 604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil- 554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké [621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as 602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any- [608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names [614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be- [621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*). [354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such 621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that [354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was, 621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would 578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man 626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with [152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is generally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rigorously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Closer to an indigenous system of punishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo* society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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224 626 621 158 166 618 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of friction).

There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masini and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 621 221 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 593 182 281 621 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 593 621 166 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 626 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem- [221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

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their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest *if it* split badly, and it was splitting badly ("*ape ndano aké ninema*"). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: "*kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi*") and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

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that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

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year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *ekami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *helele* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*ekami a mu nd:ra*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*ekami a mu mukina*).

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626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152
[537 The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
537] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.
[431]

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
534 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
261 One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
[781] tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

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gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women 224
were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed 461
behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they 626
had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game 578
was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not [535] go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and [482] the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of gen- 578
eral shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and [261] are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will [857] find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on [883] the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but 626
these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen 578
such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The 224
only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 629 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [965] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

someone's hut.[5] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe 685
named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given 157
a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it 685
had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of 157
the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, 578
a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, [251]
and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated [627]
as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly [554]
respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, [627]
Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, 685
brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, 627
saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if 578
he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and [152]
saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was 627
brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most fre- 431
quently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[5] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nip- 685
pold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African 157
pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. 421
It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only [114]
obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [421] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[621] [156] [6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not 626 683
definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domes- 593
tic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is 578
late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some 152
precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, 593
Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was 578
suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao 152
said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was 765
going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married [337]
him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), 765
had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone 593
made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She 578
told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it [787]
carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying [534]

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself. [177]*

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765 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this
593 point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in
578 the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp
626 that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was
593 dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

834 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

578 13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

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Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do 578
that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and 589
Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted 581
desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It 589
was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké 581
had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill 753
that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but [577]
it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are counte- 836
nanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately [578]
descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become en- 836
raged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, 578
Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

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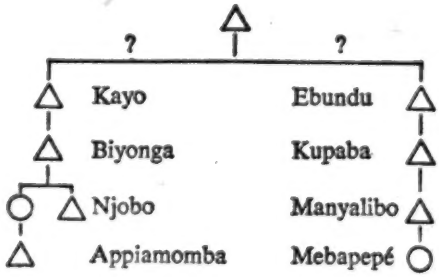
836 578 upset her father so much as all the accompanying noise. In particular he was irate when waked up by a suitor crawling over him in the middle of the night to get at his daughter. In this instance he gave chase, and woke the whole camp up with a harangue from midcamp. The accused's reply was effective—that if he had made noise and wakened Manyalibo, it was not as bad as Manyalibo's noise, which had awakened the whole camp for nothing.

16. By and large all that the parents can complain about in the sexual life of their children is the noise. If the noise becomes too much, however, it then becomes a matter for the band.

836 578 835 61 Such a matter became the affair between Appiamomba, nephew of Njobo, and Mebapepé, Manyalibo's flighty daughter. The situation was aggravated by the relationship between the two lovers, Appiamomba's mother being descended in the male line from the allegedly same great-grandfather as Manyalibo. When accused of being of the same clan (using the village term) as Mebapepé, Appiamomba denied it and said they shared different hearths. He was then asked, "You cannot deny your mother was a Mupuemi; then so are you."[8] However, his argument about being of a different hearth carried weight, the more so as Njobo was not at this time in the same section of the camp as Manyalibo, and had not been for nearly a year.

One night Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya, chased Appiamomba away and called on the other youths to beat the offender. The others demanded what offense had been committed; there had been no noise. This was the beginning of a major argument which quickly spread all over the camp. Manyalibo went to the midcamp site and said, "Appiamomba is my child and he does not listen to me. Mebapepé is my child and she does not listen. My children are sleeping together and this is bad, for they are making noise all the



[8] An example of a common confusion concerning lineal descent among the Mbuti.

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time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 578 835 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the fact that there were far too many young people around who should be married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582] shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view. 578 579 152 883

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, [829] and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact. 578 833 834 177*

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

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the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

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Everyone agreed that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and that her belly should not become big again until her child became big.

One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense, all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed. Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

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is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant.

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours. 593 593 516

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal." 593 [554]

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

152 A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [881] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

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685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
186 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
[621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

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village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *esumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

DISPUTE	*Number Recorded*	*Number of Decisions or Judgments made*	*Instances of Positive Action*
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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forest as an incentive toward good behavior is far more important and far more strong than its negative aspect as a deterrent against bad behavior.

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likely to be highly disruptive but where disputes nonetheless occur. Any personal intervention or judgment would only be likely to lead to further disputes. The impersonal nature of the forest as arbitrator and judge maintains the impersonality of the laws; or if the forest is considered as endowed with personality, it is a spiritual personality and owes no more allegiance to one Mbuti than to another, and so is still impersonal in this context.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.218]

CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 621 *Marriage*

As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 584 574 571 561 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass. The third, probably the most important structurally, is the interfamily visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns, each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 584 574 [591] If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands, it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial exchange, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 584 561 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-

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tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary 584
complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level 561
of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band 628
where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of 591
whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict.

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the 628
balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, 591
this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only 583
called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation.

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily 628
adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic 582
strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue 583
that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue [561]
is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem-

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 582 583 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. 628 581 594 182 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 224 131 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 224 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange.

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial, and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going elsewhere to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage relationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

Karé/Karé

Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individuals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initiations which take place periodically (every three years for the past twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initiation camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, although any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed. They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 439 594 563 571 177 for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

P 439 594 571 *177 P 621

P 621 608 *177 571 There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

C 563 177 608 571

P 621 439 571 *177 C 563 439 571 177 P C [622] Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-A]

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[412
439] 21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-B]

142
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22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

142
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23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-D]

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25. Akidinimba celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage during an *elima* dance.

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26. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to fondle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 229]

CHAPTER 13

Magic, Witchcraft and Sorcery

MAGIC

To separate the world of magic from the world of religion is perhaps a dangerous pursuit, and not always profitable. In this instance it is done because we can thereby achieve a significant contrast between the world of the village and the world of the forest. By and large the village world is full of magic, witchcraft and sorcery, leaving little room for what might be considered the more spiritual, or religious, aspects of belief, faith or even hope, and certainly none for worship in the sense of devotion. C 754 789 771 P 771 789 754 177*

The forest world, on the other hand, is remarkably lacking in the former elements, and filled with the latter. But there is an overlapping and, necessarily, a meeting ground where any further overlapping is rejected and which becomes an area of conflict. The Mbuti have their own very simple forms of magic, but no witchcraft or sorcery, which they utterly reject. However, when faced with it in a village context, they are forced to come to terms with it and they have learned to turn these village institutions to their own advantage, in much the same way that they accept other village institutions such as the *nkumbi* initiation.

Increasingly one is aware of a curious ambivalence in the Mbuti attitude toward the village. This is not surprising in itself, when two opposed societies are in such close juxtaposition. But the vehemence of the Mbuti denial of witchcraft and sorcery seems at odds with the meekness of their acceptance, however nominal, of village domination in the village context. The answer lies mainly in the Mbuti attitude to the unknown, an attitude that is optimistic but open. In the realm of the known they can afford to be vehement, and they are perfectly aware of the social values of an institution such as witchcraft, and make use of it without accepting the belief. Similarly with the P 771 754 177*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

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222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
823 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

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Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck [534] in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, [533] and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened.

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

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P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 P *177 754 554 761 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of

P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect

P *177 754 than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

[182] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

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for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

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Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1]), both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" ("*bachei ba bo*"), "for elephants are like villagers" ("*bambongu bua sopilabatu*"). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analyst]

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539 186 825 245 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They began to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 186 825 245 776 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He walked with two spears.[2] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 186 829 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [2] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

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539 rest I put in a place where the tree had two arms [i.e., in a fork]. I
222 sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, but I shall give it all to my
571 *kpara*." I came down.
439

"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" My *kpara* looks at the basket.

"Ah! My master. I came to search for my honey, but there is only a little of it. It is a bad year. It is heavy work. You must go back with my honey; if I get any more I shall come with it."

The *kpara* took my honey with him and returned to the village to say that he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity! [*Ndamdama nda'e!* or *Mbafu yaké!*] When he had gone I quickly climbed up above and I collected all the honey from the place I had put it, and I came down to return to the camp and share it with all my relatives. I walked, I walked, I walked. I arrived at the big river. Darkness began to come. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?" I climbed up a big tree and lay there.

539 Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke up. A little
222 way off I saw two firebrands. "Ah! Who is walking in the middle of
776 the night like that, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit." I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice. "Ah! My child, where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very, very old woman. I was surprised. "Ha! Grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost the trail."

I remained quiet, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree. It was truly an evil spirit, but he had changed into my grandmother. I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"Yes, Grandmother. I am here. I was searching for honey, but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Oh, child, you have done badly, for when you did not return I thought you were dead and I left camp to search for you, and I have found you well. You have done very badly toward me. Give me my honey."

"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, I, myself. We shall return together."

"Nonsense! You are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with my honey. Give it." I was afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit. I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more." I threw down more. "Give me more."

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"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

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Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

" 'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.246]

CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

114 771 In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

*177 184 771 Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

771 181 822 813 This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [775]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunt- 181
ing in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti us- [192]
ing, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo, keti, boru, roho, satani.* These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

771 nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage
778 of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

771 This power derives from a single source whose physical manifesta-
778 tion is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the
824 vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*ndura*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

778 Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain
776 disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

828 The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essen-
tially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with
[826] conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

771 The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general
778 concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 [761] 776 828 [772] 776 828 159 534

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers. [535] [765]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try.
828 He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine
159 choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was
534 not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However,
776 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if
778 the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place
[224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778
761 A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as
826 for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh
[192] and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as re-
778 quiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed
761 out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape
826 through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti
831 recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the
[535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual
[765] apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ROHO

The personality of the individual dies with the body and is the combination of a particular *boru* and *pepo*. It is associated with the heart and is spoken of as being hot or cold, sometimes as noisy or quiet. Hot and noisy are generally bad qualities, cool and quiet are good. But properly controlled heat and noise can be useful, though dangerous, for both are sometimes thought of as being "strong." The state of an individual's *roho* may be cited as justification for his actions, and nobody can gainsay him, for it is bad to go against one's *roho*. However, a man or woman who is constantly calling on his or her *roho* to justify antisocial acts such as laziness or quarrelsomeness may be said to have a bad *roho*, and will be shunned. 828 778 [192]

SATANI (also *Shaitani*)

This is a concept derived from the villagers, and is for the Mbuti more in the realm of folklore than belief, for *satani* are, to the villagers, malevolent and dangerous forest spirits. The Mbuti use the term in this sense only when recounting a village tale or a tale concerning villagers, for they essentially disbelieve in such evil spirits. However, they sometimes use the term, particularly if talking in Ngwana (to which language it belongs), as synonymous with *keti*. An additional complication: When talking in Bira, they may use *keti* (a Bira word) in the sense of the village Bira, which is the same as the Ngwana *satani*, or evil spirits. However, in the forest context there is no concept of *keti* or *satani* as conceived by the villager, the only spirits being the *keti* as described above, invisible mirror images of the Mbuti themselves, no better and no worse. (Conversely, in the village world all the spirits of the forest are malevolent and dangerous; there is no concept parallel to that of the Mbuti concept of forest spirit.) 177* 776 [192]

THE GODHEAD

As the Mbuti themselves strenuously refuse to admit there is any sense in trying to describe what we here call "the godhead" unless you have seen it, there is not much sense in our trying to do so. Rather, by looking at various aspects of Mbuti life we can discern the exis- 776 778

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
[621] [628] posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as
776 *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any
778 different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate
184 significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré*, *e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- 114
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon 776
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; piku'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound. 778 822 533

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti. 533 [822]

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.) 533 881 [844] [585]

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or 000

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*. [192]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

533 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or
765 female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more impor-
462 tance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the
821 concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the
765 contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of con-
182 cern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death,
181 but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are
[561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail. [765]

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

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822 [198] [192] "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. 822 198 [178] [761] [533] The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and [533] [765] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely [821] [789] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 824 [198] [192] All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt- [222] [825] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the
761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74
[594] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is 535
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 561
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and 372

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765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

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never lost sight of. The trumpet itself, while avowedly an "animal" 765
whose animal noises (mainly in imitation of elephant and leopard) 534
are designed to scare women and children and keep them in their huts, is the only sign of the presence of a supernatural power. The main function of the trumpet is to sing, and to pass on the song of the Mbuti into the forest. It is taken off to a distance from where it picks up the song from the men around the *molimo* hearth and echoes it on into the night. This way, the Mbuti say, the forest is sure to hear it and be pleased.

Normally a trumpet is kept high up, concealed in a tree. During a festival, however, it is kept in water except when in use, for it is considered to represent the power of the forest for chastisement. Keeping it in water keeps it "cool." It acts, it seems, as an intermediary, passing on the song of the Mbuti to the forest, but returning in the morning with power, and sometimes with anger. When it appears in the [533]
morning, just before dawn, the men have had at the most an hour's sleep, and this is a signal for them to begin singing again. An adult male who fails to sing during a greater *molimo* festival is allegedly killed, and when the trumpet appears in the morning its first act is to search for sleeping men. It is held by a number of youths, who run up and down the camp in search (this may also happen during the evening). But then, to show its power, the trumpet is carried from hut to hut, the youths beating on each with branches and tearing leaves off the roofs. The huts of any troublemakers are particularly singled out, though with due regard for the process described under "Government," by which individual blame is avoided. The older men and even the women may yell at the *molimo* to go away, or to go back to the water, but on this occasion the youths are effectively in charge. There is generally a mock battle in which some of the youths will try to block the path of the trumpet, borne by other youths, or to deflect it in another direction. There may even be a tug-of-war, with some youths pulling it in one direction, some in another, though such contests are formal and enacted more as a dance than as an actual test of strength. All the time, those carrying the trumpet keep it concealed behind leafy branches, or simply by holding it between them. In the end it is carried out of the camp triumphantly as dawn breaks, and with a few defiant bellows returns to its secret hiding place in the water. A vine stretched across the stream warns women [784]
and children to keep away.

It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as

765 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as
534 sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance
778 when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used
[613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern
534 of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced
[611] emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a
[194] noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it.
[621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the impor-
621 tance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life,
771 and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as
778 it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can,
181 for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other
182 things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analysis]

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 765

the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, 621
which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of 771
the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The associa- 778
tion with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and 181
earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to 182
create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

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[P.268]

CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 602 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 601 593 [561] We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[114] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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602 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think
561 in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionaliza-
121 tion of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and
561 only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and
562 *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the inter-
462 dependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines.
[224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during
[222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to
[193] indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *taté* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: *"Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter 602 621 term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is 561 to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as 121 used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more 602 effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that 121 kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction 582 among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apud'i*, and in- 621 deed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two 602 couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual [561] does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-A]

142
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27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P276-B]

142
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[462]

28. Moké, an elder and a peacemaker, with two of his adopted families. It is considered no shame for an Mbuti male to fondle and care for the needs of even the youngest children.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

142
302
291
415
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372

29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-D]

224
137

30. The hunt sets off, well camouflaged against the leafy background. The men and youths

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-E]

142
301
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482
372

31. Cephu's wife, carrying an cmber of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
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[222]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-F]

224
411
137

[184]

32. Masisi stops on his way to the hunt to try for a monkey in the treetops. For net-hunters the bow and arrow is only an incidental means of food-getting. As seen here, poisoned arrows are preferred to those with metal tips provided by the villagers.

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[882]

33. Two youths, armed with spears, carry their fathers' hunting nets. They will not have nets of their own until they are married but may, on occasion, take the place of their fathers on the hunt.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-G]

142
302
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883
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34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[881
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-H]

224
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35. When an animal falls into the net it is quickly caught by the hunters and carefully extracted before it damages the netting. A youth stands by for the kill.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P-276-I]

142
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96. When the kill is assured, a youth signals back to the camp and to other hunters, to let them know what kind of game has fallen into whose net. Relatively complex messages can be signaled in this way, variations in rhythm combining with variations in pitch achieved by flexing the elbow, which forms a sound box when clapped with the other hand.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-J]

222
142
302
291
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37. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

38. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemoké's uncle, Masalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

142
302
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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the *molimo* and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

40. Balekimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long *molimo* festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-L]

137

[965]
[784]
[534]

41. A spot like this, in the Lelo River, was the resting place of the *molimo* trumpets used in honor of Balekimito. Vines are stretched across the stream to warn intruders to keep away. The precaution, however, is as much for fear of theft as for fear of desecration.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is resident. It is seldom that he refers merely to geographical boundaries, for trespass, as seen, is rare and of little consequence. Yet it is a term he frequently uses, and as an organizational principle it is equal in importance to age. 621

While agreeing with Steward that the environment may to some extent be determinant as well as permissive of certain elements of social organization, I find it impossible to see the validity of his wider deterministic claims for cultural ecology.[5] But while Steward seems to have overreached himself, or rather overreached his material, in trying to draw up general principles of culture change, nonetheless in regarding cultural ecological adaptations as "creative processes" (1955, p. 34), his stress on cultural ecology as a particular factor is highly relevant to the Mbuti and in itself an important contribution. We have seen throughout the importance of the economic abundance offered by the forest, permitting economic independence to each band. While the presence of the village tribes is sufficient indication of the permissibility of cultivation, at the technological level of the Mbuti one might say that the environment determines hunting and gathering. It is certainly relevant to say that the Mbuti, at least, would agree with Steward, for they say it is the only way they can live, that if they cultivate they will die. The truth of their assertion is not relevant here; its importance lies in that it reveals the depth of their felt dependence upon the forest. 114 182 621

Nothing is gained, however, by saying that the Mbuti exploitative

[5] Indeed, it would be impossible to do so since Steward uses the Mbuti as an example of an ecologically determined patrilineal band, content to base his analysis on Putnam (1948) as interviewed by Carleton Coon and represented in a brief and obviously general and sketchy article. Steward's only other Mbuti reference is to Schebesta's preliminary seventeen-page field report in *Anthropos* (1931). A minimum of inquiry would have revealed numerous other sources, which while admittedly unsatisfactory would, through their very divergence, at least have demonstrated the inadvisability of relying on the two sources quoted (ref. Turnbull, 1965). Further evidence to support his theory, for the Central African Negritos, was drawn by Steward from the reports of Schmidt (1910) and Trilles (1932). Not one of the many articles in *Zaïre*, *Congo*, or *Kongo-Overzee*, is cited, nor is Schebesta's major work, *Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri*, nor the abridged and revised edition of that work which appeared in French in 1952, *Les Pygmées du Congo Belge*. Unsupported assertions such as that "the exploitative patterns produced the features typical of the patrilineal band" (Steward, 1955, p. 128) are bad enough; the apparent ignorance of major texts (for Steward nowhere gives any reasons for not using them) is worse; but still worse is the sheer misrepresentation of the facts he does claim to have at his disposal. Thus he claims that the populations he has selected to illustrate patrilineal bands—the Bushman, Congo Negritos, Australians, Tasmanians and Fuegians, "and others"—are similar "because the nature of the game and therefore of their subsistence problems is the same in each case" (1955, p. 38). It is difficult to see much similarity between subsistence problems of the Kalahari Desert and the Equatorial Rain Forest, even if they are on the same continent.

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
121 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

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Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three 577
principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, 778
even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the 626
forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experi- 121
ence it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which [114]
kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism —is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the ob- 621
vious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological 778
determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of or- 181
ganization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total ab- 778
sence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as 533
such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have [789]
seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure 765
from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be 181
regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society 121
and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of re- 182
ligious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and 761
inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens 182
more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

372 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
372 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

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in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177]*
concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

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CHAPTER 16

Principles of Organization (2)

THE VILLAGE CONTEXT

* 177 The principles of organization that have begun to emerge with
171 reference to the forest world of the Mbuti only become fully com-
121 prehensible when we relate them to the village world. Gluckman (1960) gave some general but highly pertinent indications of a somewhat similar situation involving a dichotomy in the lives of Africans in North Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In that situation the conflict, or rather the opposition, was between the ancestral land and the town. The land represented subsistence to some extent, but primarily security; the town was a place to raid for money. While Gluckman did not see any "detribalization" involved, he pointed out that the African is tribalized, in towns and in rural areas, in two different ways, tribal attachments in urban areas having to work within a setting of urban associations: "Hence the African in rural areas and in town is two different men; for the social situation of tribal home and of urban employment determine his actions and associations, within the major politico-economic system covering both areas" (1960, p. 11).

Gluckman refers to the consequent social and mental conflict, and sees "considerable resolution of this conflict through the separation
* 177 of the spheres of activities" (1960, p. 11). In assessing the Forest/
121 Village relationship we see a similar situation, with the village being
182 regarded as a place to raid, creating numerous social and mental conflicts which again are largely resolved by separation in what I have called a system of indigenous apartheid. There is more to it than that, however. We cannot suppose, however complete the barrier, that the Mbuti live an utterly schizophrenic existence; even within the opposition there must be order. Nor can we suppose that the order comes from a mere dilution of forest values when the Mbuti come to the village; it is rather, as Gluckman says, that the same values have to work within a setting of urban (village) associations.

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Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apud'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

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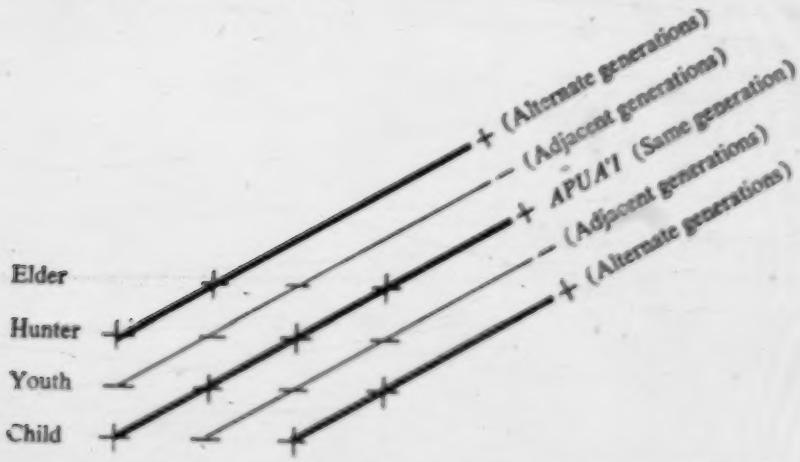
602 would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between
121 *f/s* and *mb/zs*.
561 *b/z* and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative
571 briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential
593 of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

602 Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick
121 lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points
561 at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the cor-
593 respondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

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Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 131 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] [192] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 778 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also represents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

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593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonethe- 578 less concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

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bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Maku- 593
basi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" 578
(*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its con- 626
notations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu 593
no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even 626
before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off get- 822
ting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is some- 577
thing else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. 183
As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the 822
hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[5] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*" —"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The 577
concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, 183
or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is 828
brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good [822]
weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[5] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

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deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 121 *177 571 C 121 177 571 in the Mbuti/Villager situation. The basis of the proximity and distance elements does not rest on kinship, and the relationship is as much between the two groups as it is between individuals, otherwise the situation conforms to Radcliffe-Brown's model quite clearly—viz. (1952, p. 95): "The show of hostility, the perpetual disrespect, is a continual expression of that social disjunction which is an essential part of the whole structural situation, but over which, without destroying or even weakening it, there is provided the social conjunction of friendliness and mutual aid."

In the Mbuti/Villager situation the relationship appears to be symmetrical and permissive, though both sides do occasionally take offense, the village side even sometimes taking counteraction. The ineffectiveness of taking offense or action, however, only serves to heighten the characteristic "social disjunction," and there is no doubt that beneath the display of hostility and disrespect there is cooperation, and even considerable amity. Considering the completely opposed value systems of the two worlds, this is, indeed, the only way in which the two peoples could meet and still retain a separate identity. The reasons for the meeting taking place at all, as we have already seen, are circumstantial—the historical invasion of the forest by the villagers, and their use of the Mbuti as guides; the continued parasitism of the Mbuti upon the villagers long after the original need for cooperation had gone; the contemporary mutual convenience of economic exchange; sheer territorial propinquity. These reasons do not lead automatically or easily to a structured relationship, particularly when the values of the two peoples are so divergent, so while a form of joking relationship helps to stabilize the alliance, maintaining the combination of Radcliffe-Brown's "conjunctive and disjunctive components," it is not by itself enough.

C 563 177 608 881 439 P *177 439 621 We have seen the methods by which the villagers have sought to further stabilize the situation, through a formal economic-exchange system, a fictive parallel-kinship system, and through introduction to village supernatural sanctions by establishment of magico-religious bonds through *kwé* blood brotherhood and *nkumbi* initiation. Any one of these, had it worked, would have reduced the Mbuti to subordination, yet this plainly has not been done. The defense of the Mbuti has lain in their own indigenous forest system, which works not only to maintain internal cohesion but also to maintain the utmost possible structural distance from the village world while allowing a minimal amount of "mutually convenient" economic exchange.

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Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,* it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.† The emphasis on age is con-

* The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*ndumbura na wendi, ndumunji na wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sula banyama, sula Batubungi*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *ndumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, our father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Na wendi bambunga na pati mani ndu'bo*).

† Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 189) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

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sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any measure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

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are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

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(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as 186
assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount 577
of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no ques- 177 *
tion but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and there- 186
fore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not 577
actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very 626
much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt 177 *
that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a 578
village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more 626
ekimi than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

[8] Vita is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kelele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of *vita* clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayelé*, or trickery. [192]

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the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be 177* supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action 18 and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the 186 *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power 224 over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by [88] Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as [89] Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs 177* into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural oppo- 754 sition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible sym- 177* bolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppo- 761 sitions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, 182 unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the [576] Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with [578] which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immoral- 182 ity, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death 761 for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and con- 765 tinuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called 561 that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces [578] those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

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cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

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C 563 ing the Mbuti, are not only trying to subject the Mbuti to the authority of village supernatural sanctions but are also trying to assimilate from the Mbuti some of the spiritual power they believe to reside in the forest.

P *177 105 621 648 The ultimate nature of the relationship between the two people cannot be determined until further studies have been made of similar situations from both the Mbuti point of view and, a major need at the moment, from the village point of view. For now, it seems sufficiently clear that the general nature of the relationship is one of opposition, and that Mbuti society, in response to the demands of the situation or by fortuitous chance, meets it with an organization based upon the very antithesis of village organization. Against political centralization C [621] it offers complete decentralization and diffusion of authority. Against a sedentary, patrilineal, patrilocal village it matches the nomadic, nonlineal, territorial band. The vertical village kinship system is countered by a horizontal age-level system. Village values are directly opposed by forest values. And within itself Mbuti society uses these same principles, in a state of almost perpetual flux, to maintain a cohesion fully as powerful as that found among the villagers. Instead P C [181] of looking to the more conventional structural principles for the source of unity of Mbuti society, we have had to look rather to values, and it is in terms of values that the over-all society, of Mbuti and villagers, has its ultimate being and significance.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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APPENDIX I

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The Legend of Double Trickery
and
The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation

[P.302 is blank]

[P.303]

THE LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

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me ke nandura ka ba boki.
I went to the forest to collect honey.

me ke a'i, me ke a'i, me ke a'i.
I went, I went, I went.

me ke akurahwa, ku pia libo mangbo.
I went very far, beyond the big river.

moki li suanjoki. me oni neko kuma boki.
I heard the sound of bees. I saw up high the place of honey.

me lufudo, "toka bo nangoli; nde mendamo; nde boki ndamo."
I said, "Nobody has enclosed the tree with vine, it is mine; it is my honey."

me poki loka phelea, phelae bekbekbe'i.
I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed.

me teningoli. ke kongi isa, me piai ise mbeso.
I cut a vine. I fanned my fire, and put the fire in my basket.

me pedi oda phangoli; me daphi, me daphi.
I began to climb; I climbed, I climbed.

boki neko kurahwa. nde boki, boki aendamengo, kanga piao.
The honey was very far. It was honey, real honey, not *ophema*.

me kidi. me boingoli, me liki. me piai ise mbe ebowo.
I reached it. I fastened the vine, I sat. I put fire into the hole.

me kophi. me ki abi bekbekbe'i, me ebe'i bawoki.
I blew. I got much smoke, I drove out many bees.

me ko iti, me ko iti, me ko iti.
I chopped, I chopped, I chopped.

me ko iti, me muai kito, a muai piko na dodo.
While I was chopping I heard someone walking below.

"na ambua a muai piko pwoba me?" nde moakpara ndamo.
"Who is walking below me?" It is my master.

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539 *"a oki kuete mboki ndamo, a me beli." me wenzi nimbo.*
222 "He heard me cutting my honey, he followed me." I began to sing.
439

me nimbi bekbekbei, akini melufu. kenga me oki.
I sang loudly, but he called me. I did not hear.

me nimbi, akini me kweti.
I sang, but I chopped.

me nimbi, "Ha! me kweti boki. me ko oka kapu'i akpara mamo."
I sang, "Ha! I am chopping honey to give to my *kpara*."

me kweti biae, me kweti boka. boki a bi lengi'i.
I chopped slowly, I chopped honey. There was much honey.

akini me piae dapha mbano.
But I only put part of it in my basket.

me piai ndetina a na zero kokomea.
The rest I put where the tree had two arms.

me nimbi, "Ah! boki a bi dapha, me ka bokbu akpara mamo." me ki a dodo.
I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! mambuti mamo, me aye ema?" mubire a si pi so.
"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" The Mubira looks at the basket.

"Ah! akpara mamo, me piki ka ba boki ndamo, akini me peti na cha.
"Ah! My Master, I came to search for my honey, but I got only a little.

"me muae ka pa'i bokbu. me sia be'u."
"I am going to give it all. I will stay empty."

"ue nde mambuti mamaa. me ka pa choko mbeye nibi namji."
"You are a good Mbuti. I shall give you bananas when you come to the village."

"Ah! akpara mamo, me lika namdure a ka be boki, akini nde dapha."
"Ah! My Master, I shall stay in the forest to search for honey, but there is little."

"nde mwaka ainana. nde kani ndangbo."
"It is a bad year. It is hard work."

"ue nikia namji na boki ndamo. me peti ndetina, me piki na'u."
"You go to the village with my honey. If I get more, I shall come with it."

akpara a ba boki ndamo, a nki namji nda'a.
The *kpara* took my honey, he went to the village with it.

anibende a bi boki ndamo bokbu. ndandamo nda'a!
He would say he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity!

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ake me daphi umma'o, me bu boki ngbokbu, kumande me piiibi. 539
I quickly climbed up again, I took all the honey from the place where I had put it. 222 439

me simi ya dodo a sia n'apa a kapa banama bame.
I came down to return to the camp and shared it with everyone.

me tambi, me tambi, me tambi. me kidi apua libo mangbo.
I walked, I walked, I walked, I arrived at the big river.

tokwaba a wewzi piku. me lufu. "ha! tudu a me pedi a me mandula? me ao maibo?"
Darkness began to settle. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?"

me daphi kua me mangbo, me langi neko.
I climbed up into a big tree, I lay there.

ame mangondo moki liso. me oni kurshwa iau eberé. 539
Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke. I saw far away two firebrands. 776

"mondea na tambu kifa, na iau ebara bende? nde ketibal"
"Who is walking in the middle of the night, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit!"

me kobi nengo. m'oki liso kali.
I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice.

"a miki mamo, miki mamo; miki mamo mu ma?" liso a tata, mozea nengo.
"Ah! My child, my child; where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very old person.

me moboki nengo. "Ah! tatamua kaba me amemangondo? nde tata mamo nengo?"
I was very afraid. "Ah! My grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"ah miki mamo mu ma? au moli a pedi, au a bungi?"
"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost his way?"

me kobi nengo, akini iau eberé akidi tina me.
I kept quiet completely, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree.

nde keti nengo, akini akoki tatamamo.
It was truly an evil spirit, but it had turned into my grandmother.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 776 *me teni kisio. "Ah! miki mamo amu neko?"*
I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"e'i tata, me mu be'i. me ka bi boki tudaha a me pedi a phe."
"Yes, Grandmother, I am here. I was searching for honey but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Ah! miki, ue mesi sinana. ue a bia sinia abende neku, me toli akaba'o; me tondi mota'o. ue si sinana nengo. piaa boki ndamo."
"Ah! Child, you have done badly. When you did not return, I thought you were dead and I left to search for you; I found you strong. You have done very badly towards me. Give me my honey."

"ah! tata, nde tida'i; me kumbandi mania kumekadi."
"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, we shall return together."

"mbe, ueche todahwa; ue lika ma. me sia na boki ndamo. pikiaa."
"Nonsense, you are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with the honey. Give it."

me che'i nengo gunde me upi a bi keti.
I was very afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit.

me maké boki na dodo. "pikaaa ndetina, pikaaa ndetina."
I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more."

me maké ndetina. "pikaaa ndetina."
I threw down more. "Give me more."

"ndetina a munda, tata." "mbe, pikiaa, miki maninma."
"There is no more, Grandmother." "Nonsense, give, my bad child."

me che'i nengo, me maké bokbui me lufu:
I was very afraid, I threw it all down; I said:

"e ngbokbu, tata, bo'a, ue ke, ndetina amunda. peda ue sia nda'o. me lika oma."
"That is all, Grandmother, take it, you go, there is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall remain here."

"ebo. nde bonga'i, miki mamo. me siki a'o. ue likato."
"Good. It is good, my child. I shall return. You stay on."

"ue kato'e, tata."
"Go then, Grandmother."

me liki na siu, me bonji mané. mané a piki, me simia a dodo.
I sat with eyes, I waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down to the ground.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

me ka bi anga batu; anga munda.
I looked for footprints of humans. There were no footprints.

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"Ah!" *me lufu, "nde kuti mabobo. me si ndawa me ka boki bokbu. a bia mua me nengo."*
"Ah!" I said, "It was an evil spirit, truly. I did well to throw down all my honey. It would have killed me completely."

akini, gunda me nbo.
But, empty-handed I return.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.308]

THE LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

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mosa besu bambuti subud'ini eboko. mosa ma batu banji.
In olden times we Mbuti had bananas, before the people of the village.

batu banji baku bisi eboko ndasu. su kangia'i.
The people of the village stole the bananas from us. We shared them.

besu bambuti sukonia ekasa, bakpara bua'i poko. Seyuma mayeli bendo.
We Mbuti took the leaves, the *kpara* took the roots. That was their trickery.

samba ndaso nde mosa bindanza. akini bambongu pikisi dongasu.
539 Our plantations of old were good. But the elephants came and troubled us.
825
186

bandongia'isu. ba bumia'i tiko su.
They troubled us. They killed our plantations.

bambuti balufa'i, "su samabo? bambongu besu dongibé, babuniasu tiko ndasu."
The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants trouble us so and are killing our plantations."

mangesé, mangesé mangbo, alufa'i, "bambongu bapiké su lufua nabé."
An elder, a very old man indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them."

bachalwa balufa'i, "se samabo?" mangesé a lufa'i, "se sipa, bamiki."
The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man said, "You wait, children."

bambongu bakidi. bawanji a loa'eboko bokbu. ba wanjia'i buna tiko.
The elephants came. They began to eat the bananas. They began to destroy the plantation.

bachalwa bache'i aka mangesé, balufua'i, "ombo, epa, bambongu bikidi; ba bunia tiko ndasu."
The youths were afraid and ran to the old man, saying, "Oh! Father, the elephants have come; they are destroying our plantation."

"ndasa. me mua ka totiambino. bewingbokbu mu liksna; nekobi ewenengo." mangesé a ke d'i na tiko.
"Good. I shall go to chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet." The old man went to the plantation.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

a kamia'e nengo. engbue na dodo nengo. bambongu ba li sipi.
He cried greatly. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him.

539
825
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balufu, "nde'i'i? bachahwa kabapiki dongazu, paka mangesé a piki ngamo nde ndanza sulea kobia nasu."
They said, "What is this? The youths have not come to trouble us. Only an old man has come. Good, we shall eat quietly."

bales ebokosu, bachahwa bakobia nengo apa.
They ate many bananas, the youths stayed very quiet in the camp.

mangesé a kami, "Ah! bamiki bamo bau. Ah! bamiki bamo buma?"
The old man cried, "Ah! my children, all are dead. Ah! my children, where are they?"

bambongu ba'oki, balufu'aka mangesé, "angbe ue ka mi? bachahwa buma? su lea tiko bokbu."
The elephants heard, they said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? The youths are where? We shall eat the whole plantation."

mangesé a lufu, "lea, lea ngbokbu. bamiki bamo baku." a kami.
The old man said, "Eat, eat everything. My children are all dead." He continued crying.

bambongu balufu, "akini ue mua bamiki si angbe a'ebaku?"
The elephants said, "But you have many children, how did they die?"

mangesé a lufu, "nde keti, keti mu phala'a. a tambi na kongi aberé nde bia nengo, arwa na ue.
The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. It walked with two spears. It was very fat, like you.

"siku bokbu, me mengia na'u kapié eboko, keti a mua'e, a nia'e.
"Every day I sent someone to cut bananas, the evil spirit killed him, it ate him.

"nakati i'o'alea', bamiki bamo bokbu. a siainbende nde tiko nda'e, batu bakidié, a muangbokbu.
"Now it has eaten all my children. It said it was its plantation and whoever came it would kill them all.

"ah! bamiki bamo baku bo'u. angbe'e keti kadongimbe tiko ndetina?
"Ah! My children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not trouble some other plantation?

"angbe a loki tiko ndamo?" mangesé a kami, a ke.
"Why did it curse mine?" The old man cried, he went away.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539
825
186

bambongu balufu, "Ah! akini keti nde sinana, a loki tiko ndamané, su bua ka komanda; suke umana, kabe su mua."
The elephants said, "Ah! But if the spirit is that bad, and has cursed the plantation, we had better go elsewhere; let us go quickly, before it kills us."

gunde bambongu bua sopilabatu bananji, bache'i baketi bobo.
Because elephants are like people of the village, they are very afraid of spirits.

ba ke, ba ke, kurahwa. mangesé e oki bamiki bokbu.
They went, they went very far. The old man called all his children.

a lufu, "bambongu ka ba piké noma. ba bia sisia kuma keti masinana.
He said, "The elephants will not come back again. They think this is a place full of bad spirits.

"su likia kobia nasu tiko ndasu.
"We shall remain quietly in our plantation.

"batu betina bunda bandonga."
"Nobody else will bother us."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.311]

APPENDIX II

Medical Treatment

[P.312 is blank]

[P.313]

MEDICAL TREATMENT

The following list represents only a third of the total number of [757] treatments noted; for the rest it was not possible to obtain exact [824] identification of the plants used. Only the general identification is [122] given below of the treatments cited here, the full details being lodged with Smith, Kline, & French, who generously supported the project.

HEADACHE: *amongolo pepé* (menispermaceae)
Leaves are pounded and rubbed into forehead.

doré (violaceae)
Seeds are pressed, and the juice is lightly rubbed on the forehead.

sungusungu (orchidaceae)
Leaves are roasted, then rubbed into light incisions in the skin of the forehead.

KNEE ACHE: *amakokosu* (uragoga pedunculari)
Stem, leaf and bloom are roasted, then rubbed into incisions on knee.

tapha (strychnos icaja)
Leaves are roasted and applied to incisions.

SORE THROAT: *kasa* (mapana bieleri)
Leaves are wrapped tightly around the throat.

EYE INFLAMMATION: *manoka* (manotes pruinosa)
Leaves are rubbed well between the hands, then put into a leaf cone. A little water is poured into the cone and allowed to drip into the eye.

STOMACHACHE: *amasobo* (violacese)
The bark is stripped from young shoots, the core being pounded and roasted. The ashes are rubbed into incisions made over the afflicted area.

apisikalukba (araceae)
Leaves are pounded, water added, warmed, and drunk.

karama (dracaena maculata)
The leaves are pounded with salt, mixed with water, the concoction drunk. (The juice of the pounded leaf, without salt, is also put in the eyes of children "to make them see well.")

ebambu (annonacese)
Bark is cut into small pieces, water is poured over it; when the water is red, a small quantity is drunk.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

757 824 [833] IMPOTENCE IN MALE: *tededani* (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and the ashes rubbed into light incisions made above the penis.

teba (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and if the penis pains, the ashes are rubbed into incisions in the skin of the penis itself.

757 752 824 TOE ROT: *apatekuku* (hippocrateaceae)
Leaves are roasted and rubbed into incisions.

FOOT SORES: *ikenghe* (ochnaceae)
Stem of plant is warmed over a fire, then blown through, so that the juice enters the sores.

ikenghe (convolvulaceae)
Same as above.

HEART PAINS: *bunga bamemé* (compositae)
Leaves are pounded, soaked with water, which is drunk when it becomes red.

HEMORRHOIDS: *amekulu* (beilschmiedia spp.)
Stem is roasted, the ashes rubbed well into the buttocks around the affected area, and left on. Repeated after three days.

TOOTHACHE: *amabulubulubu* (tiliaceae)
Leaves are pulped to a juice, diluted with water for a child, funneled through a leaf into the nostrils. Said to afford instantaneous relief.

mangenza (lecaceae)
Berries are roasted, crushed, and the ashes rubbed into incisions on the jaw.

OPEN WOUNDS: *ndindimia* (connaraceae)
The bark of a twig is carefully shaved, and the juice blown through the twig into the sore or wound. The bark is then packed into the wound to stop bleeding and to prevent dirt from entering. After three days the bark is removed and a fresh application is made, using less bark shavings to allow the wound to close gradually.

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.315]

APPENDIX III

Maps, Tables and Plans

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1963 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

102
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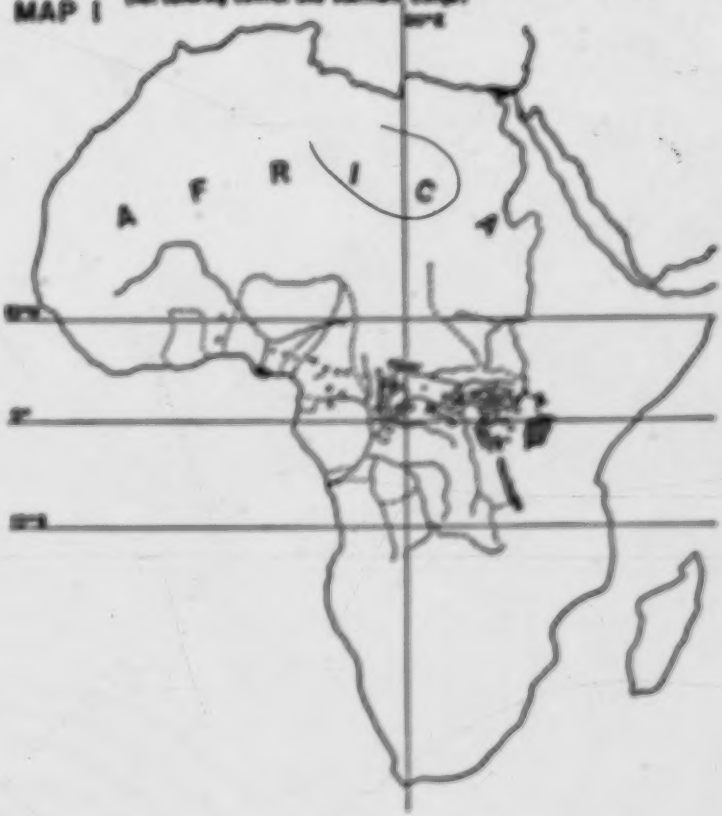
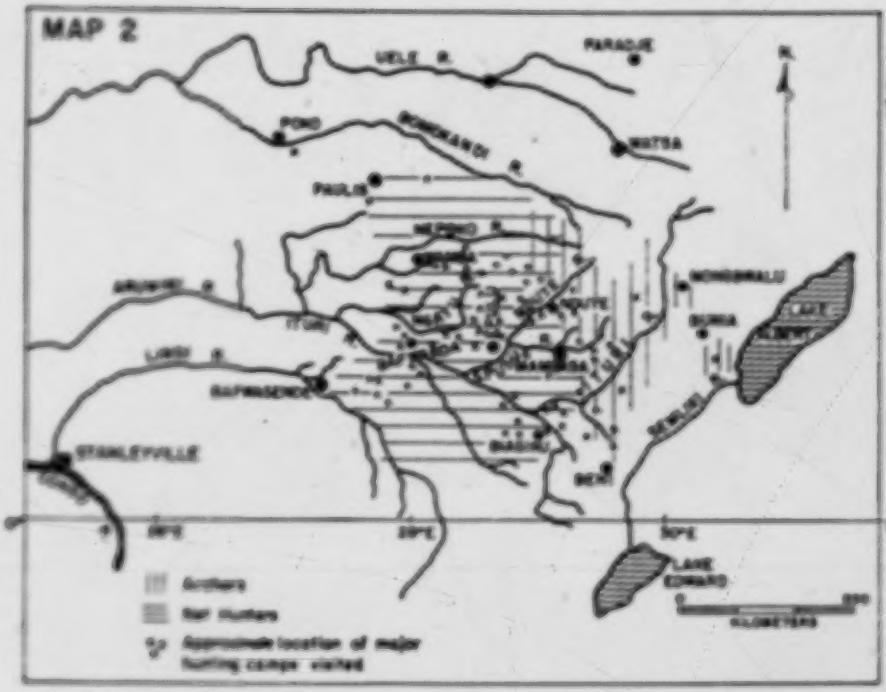
3
133

MAP I

Extent of personal knowledge of pygmy groups according to accounts heard in situ and personal contact made during 1957/8 field trip (not including central and southern Congo)



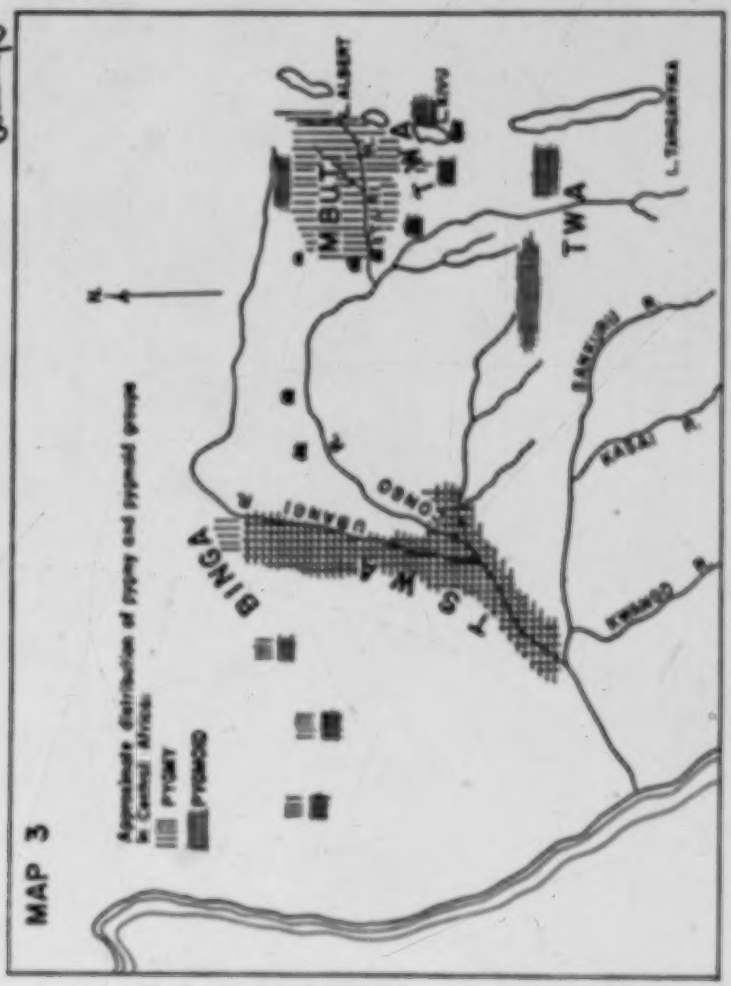
2: Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

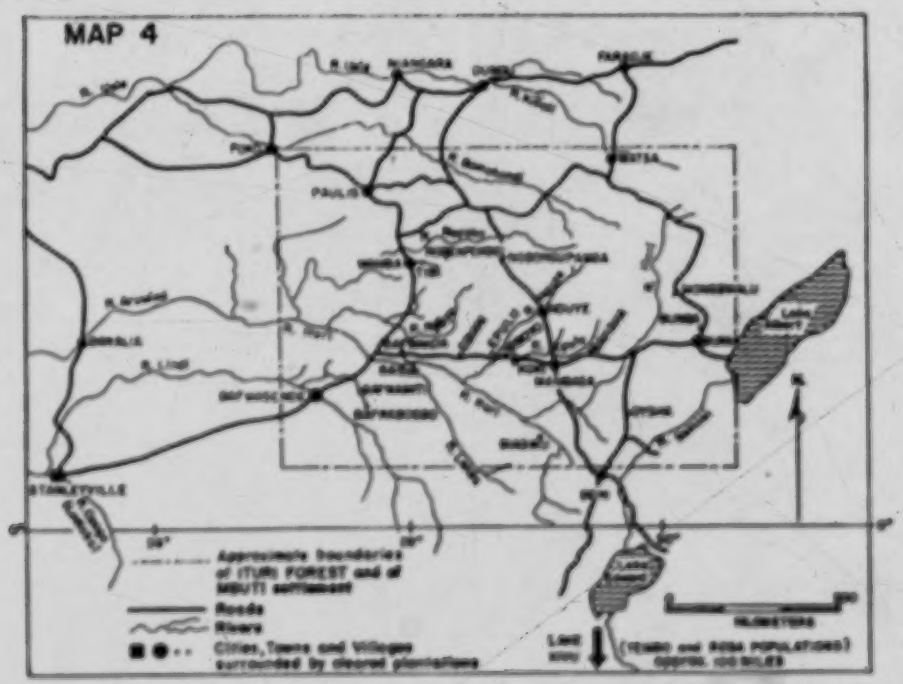


Approximate location of hunting bands visited in the Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

102
101
131
133





Boundaries of Ituri Forest and of Mbuti settlement.

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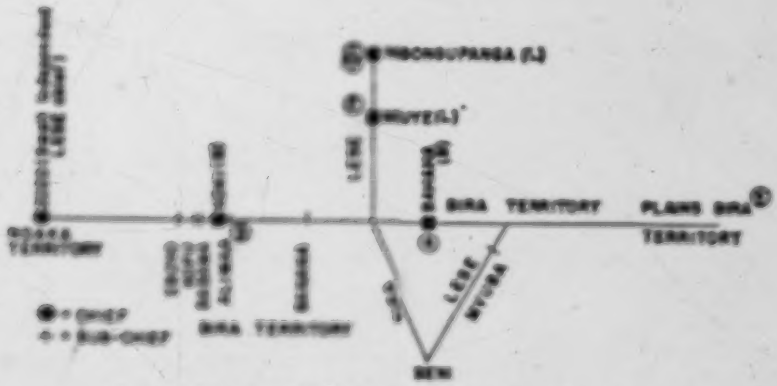
133
361

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

MAP 5



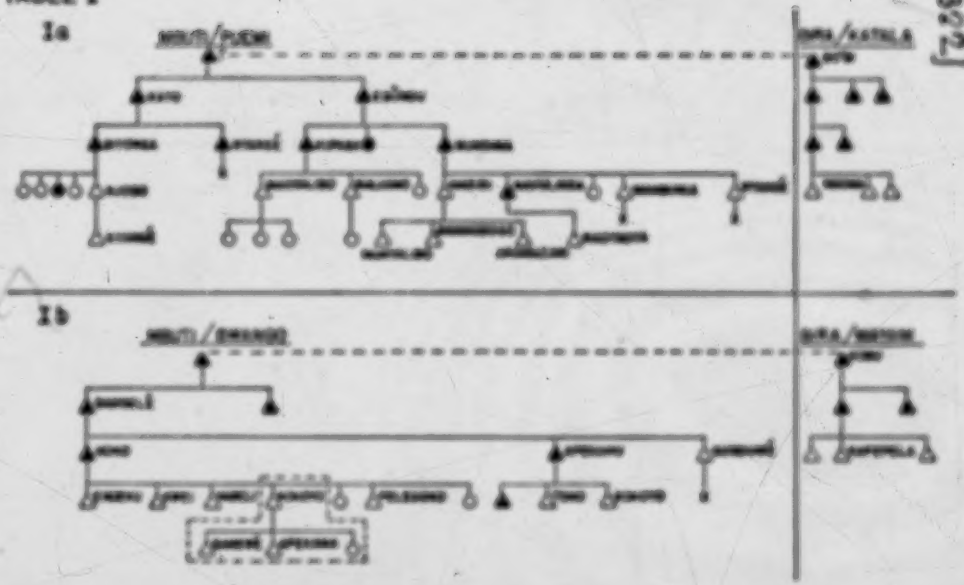
Village tribes and location of tribal Chiefs in the Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The Epulu hunting territory.

TABLE I

Ia



Ib

TABLE 1a
Mbuti/Puemi: *All living members make regular prestations to Ngoma, their hereditary kpata, though he is permanently absent from the area. Njobo and Ngoma independently declared that Kayo's father allied with Ngoma's great-grandfather, Bo'bi. His offspring have been inherited by the senior member of Bo'bi's lineage since, and still recognize reciprocal obligations.*

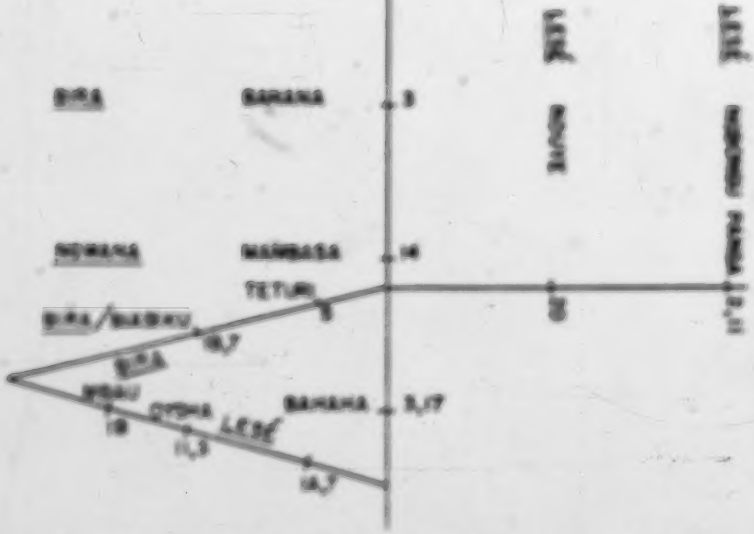
TABLE 1b
Mbuti/Bwango: *All but Kokoyo and family, who hunt with the Epulu band, still hunt in the territory around Kapapela's village, moving, when he does, as a unit. They all claim to have been inherited from Gobu.*

Both Ngoma and Kapapela are renowned for their affection for "their" Mbuti.

2: Turnbull B-5 (1951-1960) 1965 PD4 Pygmies PD4
Mbuti

TABLE 2

TRIBE	VILLAGE	Scatter of Mbuti clans found in Epulu band
NDAKA	EBAWI	5,19
LESE	ZOZO	11,16
NGWANA	DAR ES SALAAM	16
NDAKA	EPULU	1-20
BIRA	EBOYO	2,11,20
NGWANA	EFFUNDI-DOMALI	3,18
BIRA	KOPU	13,19
	NYASI	14
	KATALA	14,18,7,8,10,12
	MAYANI	5
	NERAFU	7,8,13
	BABAMA	4,6,15
	BIANZE	3
	KOKI	20
	ALIMAA	18,3,9
BIRA	BAHANA	3
NGWANA	MAMBASA	14
BIRA/BABAKU	TETURI	5
BIRA		18,7
NDAKU		18
	OYSHA	11,3
	BAHAHA	3,17
LESE		16,7



[1] *Distribution of Mbuti "clans" found in the Epulu band.*

1974
614

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

TABLE 32

FOREST/VILLAGE EXCHANGE

P
*177
439
433
C
177
439
433

To illustrate the major areas in which an exchange of goods or services does or could take place.

The Village

	Forest Produce	*Village Produce*
SHELTER:	Phrynium leaves, small saplings, firewood.	House poles; large saplings; leaves; mud for walls; wood for doors, furniture, etc.; clothing.
FOOD:	Meat, rarely nuts and honey.	Bananas, manioc, peanuts, rice, corn, beans, palm oil, dried fish (trade).
LABOR:	Partial hut-building, guarding plantations, carrying goods to market, drawing water, entertainment.	All major building, furniture-making, marketing, plantation work, clearing, canoe-building, fishing, road work.
SKILLS:	Effective medicines.	Pottery, metalwork, toolmaking, divination, ritual specialization (circumcision).

The Forest

SHELTER:	Phrynium leaves, saplings, firewood, clothing, furniture.	Nil
FOOD:	Meat, mushrooms, fruits, nuts, berries, roots, honey.	Bananas, manioc, corn, beans, palm oil, rice (with relevant utensils).
LABOR:	Hut-building, bark-cloth-making, hunting, gathering.	Nil
SKILLS:	Effective medicine, manufacture of hunting equipment, dance and song.	Metalwork (metal tips for arrows and spears, blades for knives and axes).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

TABLE 3b

ACTUAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN VILLAGE FAMILY AND MBUTI FAMILY DURING FIVE-DAY VISIT OF LATTER TO EPULU VILLAGE

P 177* 439 C 177 439

Brought for villagers:

One *mboloko* antelope (enough for two adults for one meal)
Two loads of leaves (enough for ⅙ roof, or for one over-all temporary repair)

P 461 177*

Work done for villagers:

Woman:
husks rice: four hours
watches over cooking: twelve hours
helps fetch water: two hours
carries one load of bananas to market: three hours
takes part in two dances: two evenings

Man:
fetches one load of firewood: four hours
helps re-leaf roof: three hours
takes part in two dances: two evenings

Two children: watch plantation for three mornings

P 177* 439 C 177 439

Obtained during stay from the villagers:

Village food for four, or five, days
1½ packets of cigarettes
1 bottle of palm oil
1 musical instrument (*lukembi*)
2 arrow points
1 ax blade
1 bottle of beer
1 shirt
1 bar of soap

Taken back to forest after five days:

1 stem of bananas (enough for the family for fourteen meals)
manioc (enough for four meals)
beans (enough for two meals)
corn (enough for three meals)
peanuts (enough for one meal)
½ bottle palm oil
1 bar soap
1 handful of salt
1 handful loose tobacco

[*Table 4 is located inside back cover.*]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

TABLE 5

613 LINEAGES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPOSITION OF
621 THE EPULU NET-HUNTING BAND DURING 1957–1958, NOT
162 INCLUDING VISITORS STAYING LESS THAN THE DURATION OF ONE CAMP

		married		*unmarried*
Bambaka		14	13	15
Bandobwa		1	—	3
Bi		—	2	4
Bokele	(1)	2	3	4
	(2)	9	5	11
	(3)	—	1	—
Bolima		2	—	—
Bomasua		3	8	8
Bongwana		2	5	5
Buela		1	1	—
Bwango		2	1	3
Meki		—	2	2
Molomba		—	2	1
Ngamo		5	—	7
Pasama		—	1	—
Pokama		1	—	4
Pokbaya		2	2	5
Poté		—	1	—
Poteba		3	2	5
Potola		1	2	—
Poya		2	—	5
Poemi	(1)	5	4	7
	(2)	6	3	12
Pukena		—	2	2
Puma		1	2	4
Pumasa		—	1	—
Pusa		—	2	5
Pusei		—	1	1
Tisi		—	—	1
Ungbusu		3	—	7
Totals:		65	66	121

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Individual members mentioned in text by name are indicated on Table 4. 613

To get some idea of the extent of mobility from band to band, the figures in Table 5 (total) should be compared with figures that could be reasonably expected to apply to an average-sized camp of this band; *i.e.*, of 17 huts, each containing a married couple and three or four unmarried children. 621 162

Any one such "average" camp would be composed of little more than a quarter of all those who, at one time or another during the year, would be band members.

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1956) 1961 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa-F01

TABLE 6

P
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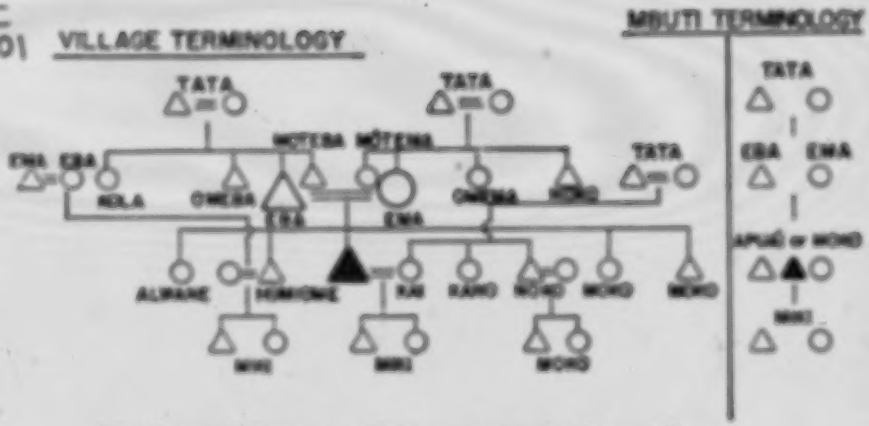
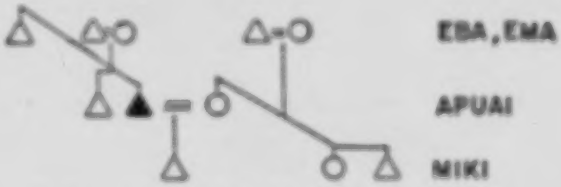


Mbuti terminology may also vary according to age, if one brother or sister is much older than another, thus:



Village and Mbuti kinship terminology.

R: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PD4 Pygmies PD4
Mbuti

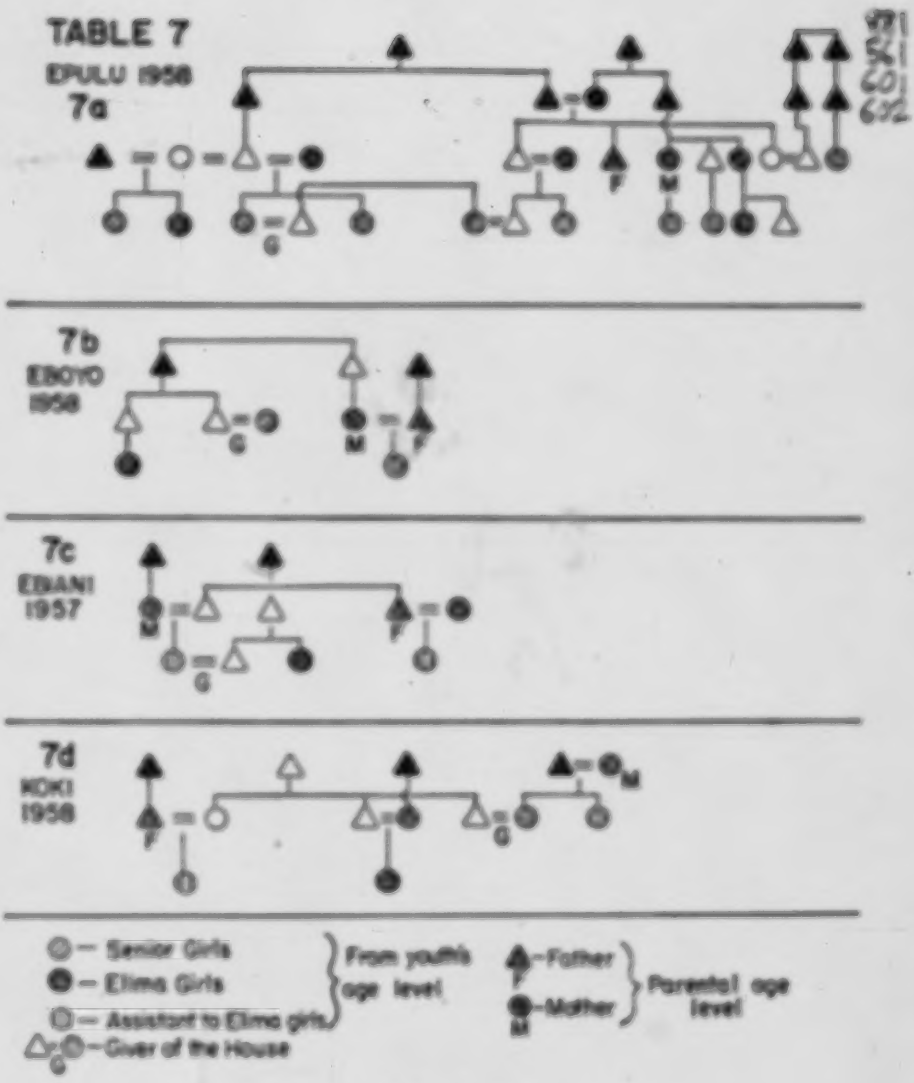


TABLE 7a–d elima participation

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 8

621 561 554 562

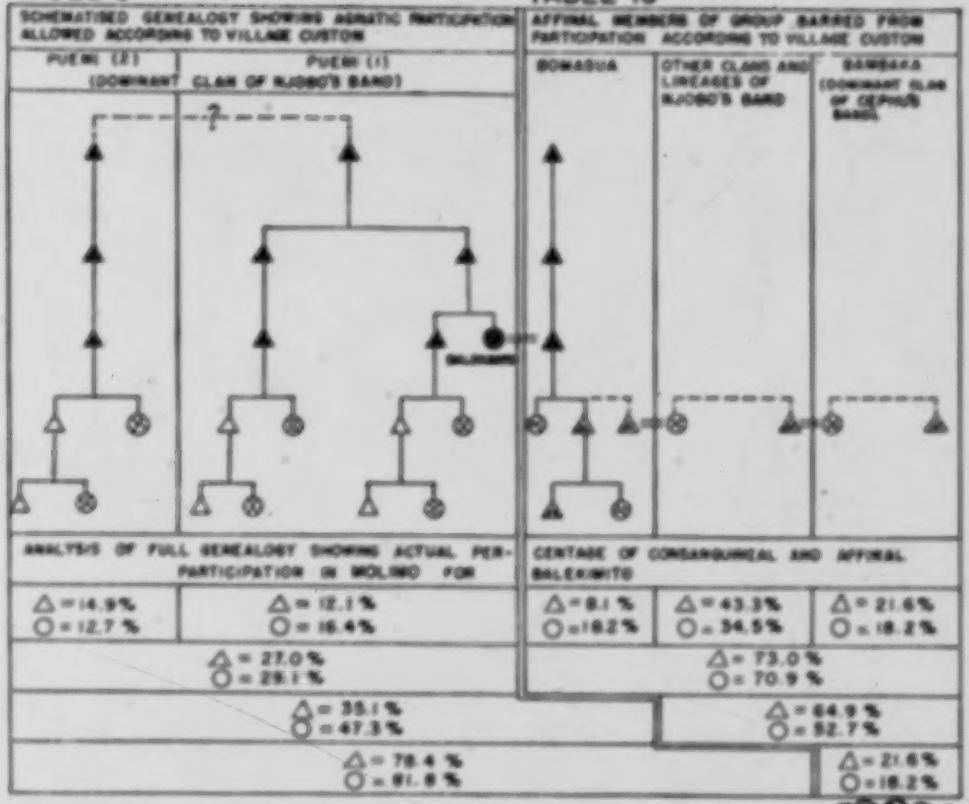
FIELDS OF AUTHORITY	Nuclear Family	Youths	Hunters	Elders
1. *Economic*				
Hunting (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			△	
Gathering (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			○	
Honey collecting			△	
Exchange with village	△○			
Industry (manufacture of material possessions)	△○			
Camp supervision (in absence of the hunt)		△○		△○
2. *Ritual*				
Birth	△○			
Puberty, betrothal and marriage: the *elima*		○		○
Death: the *molimo*		△		△
3. *Legal*				
Conjugal harmony	△○			
Individual disputes (personal insults, abuse, failure to share food or property, etc.)			△○	
Group disputes (any of the former that become enlarged beyond the realm of those directly concerned)				△○

Thus distribution of authority according to age and sex is almost equal as follows:

Family:	4	Male:	12
Youths:	3	Female:	11
Hunters:	4		
Elders:	4		

TABLE 9

TABLE 10



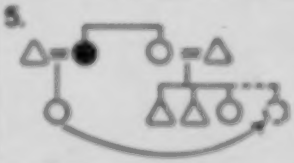
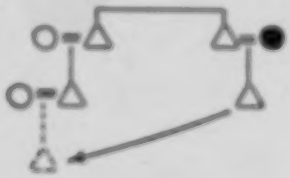
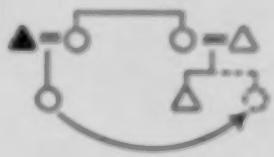
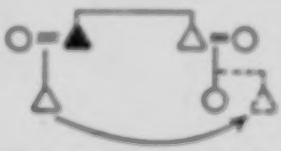
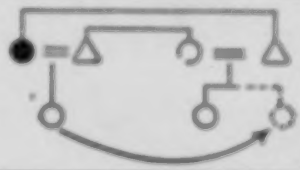
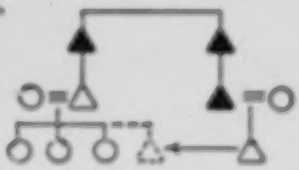
1114
6001
6262
6313
6314
7425

2: Turnbull E-6 (1901-1958) 1961 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

597

TABLE II

ADOPTION

MALE	FEMALE
1.	5. 
2. 	6. 
3. 	7. 
4. 	In all cases except 3 and 6 the child did not have to change locality

Patterns of adoption.

Tr Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 FD4 Pygmies FD4
Ituri
Congo-Kinshasa FD1

Plan Ia

C 102 361 P 177 102

Tunbull B-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

2: Turnbull 8-6 (1951-1958) 1963 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

C
439
177
7
177
439
361
614
122
221
102

PLAN 2a–d *Village camp of Epulu Mbuti, October 1957–March 1958.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

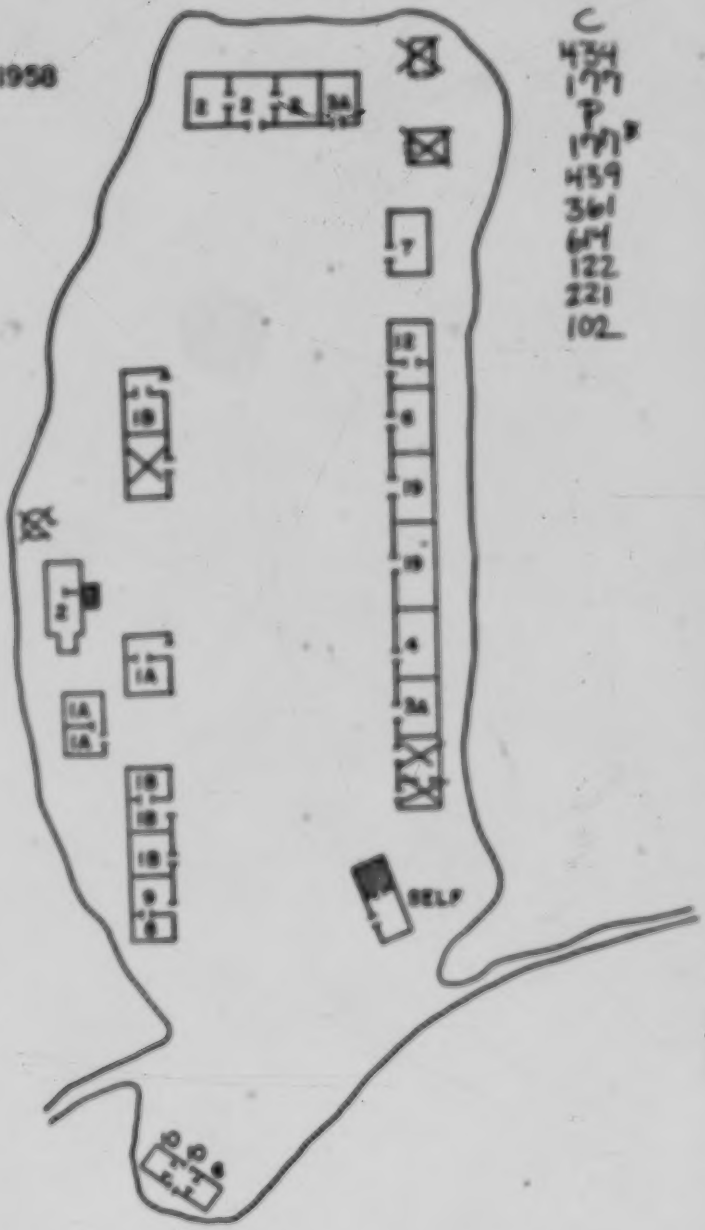
C
459
177
P
177
459
361
614
122
221
102

Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957

34A
2
2
2
7
6
5
4
3
34
34
34

Sr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 RO4 Pygmies RO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa RO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958



C
434
177
P
171
459
361
674
122
221
102

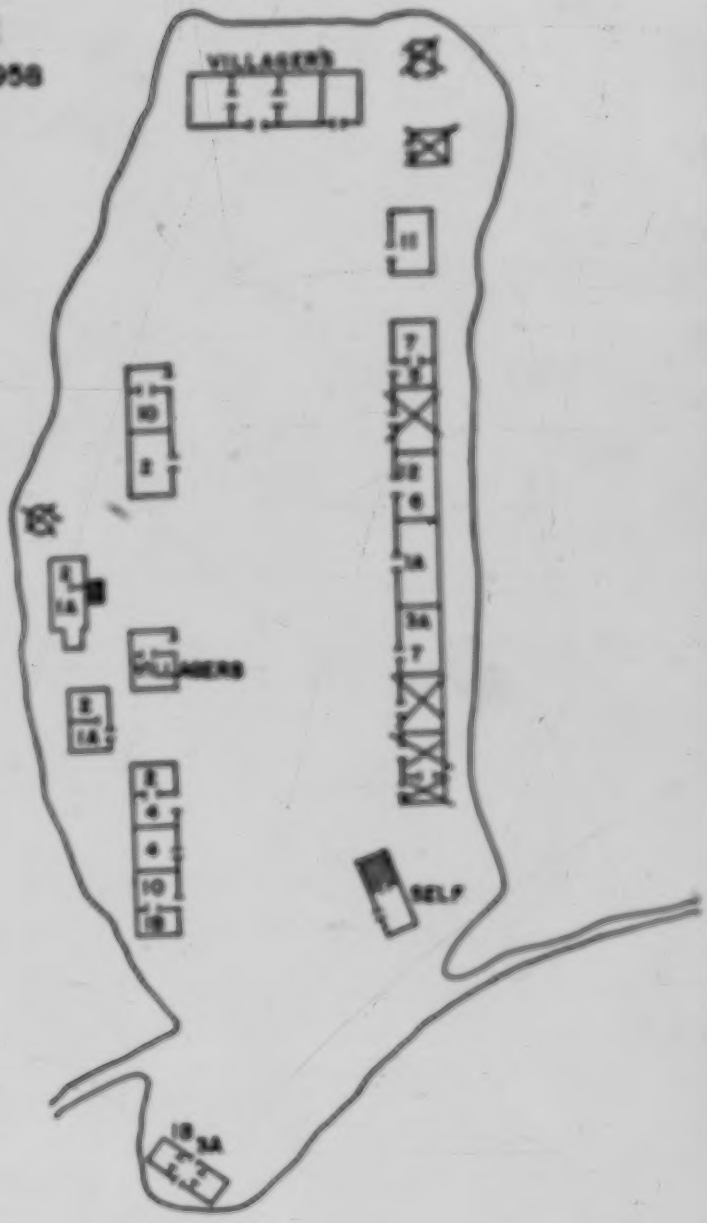
Tunkhill B-5 (1951-1956) 1963 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

338

C
459
177
P
177
459
361
614
122
221
102

Plan 2d

MARCH 1958



Dr Turnbull B-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
@ Mbuti

Plan 3a-g KEY

361
614
512
122

= Boraza (meeting veranda)

= Hut

= Abandoned hut

= Living but not in camp

= Hearth, used by more than one nuclear family

= Brush and tree trunks that effectively divide a camp

	CLAN	TOTEM		CLAN	TOTEM
1A,1B	PUEMI	2	11*	NSAMO	1
2	BOMASUA	1	12	BANDOHWA	2
3A,3C	BOKELÉ	3,1,6	13	POVA	4
4	BAMBAKA	6	14	MOLOMBA	4
5	BWANGO	1	15	POTOLA	1
6	UNGBAUDU	2	16	PASAMA	5
7	MEKI	4	17	PONOWANA	2
8	POKSAHA	1	18	PUKENA	1
9	POHAMA	6	19	PUSA	7
10	POTEBA	1	20	PUMA	4

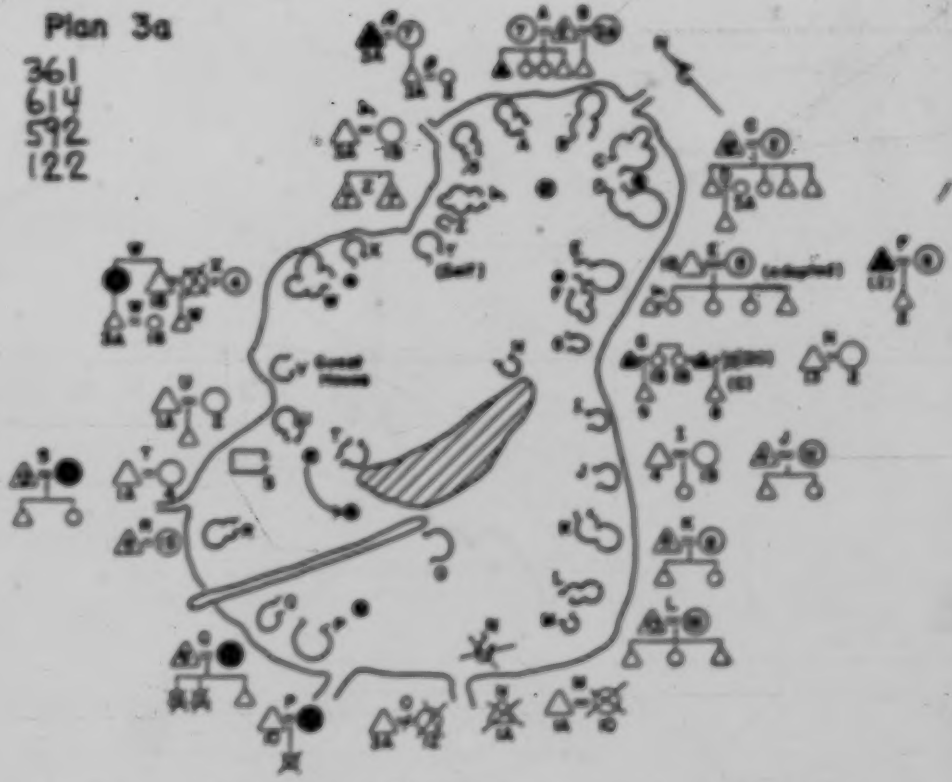
TOTEMS: 1 LEOPARD
2 CHIMPANZEE
3 BUFFALO
4 SNAKE
5, 6, 7 Different kinds of rare antelope

Jr Tumbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3a

361
614
592
122

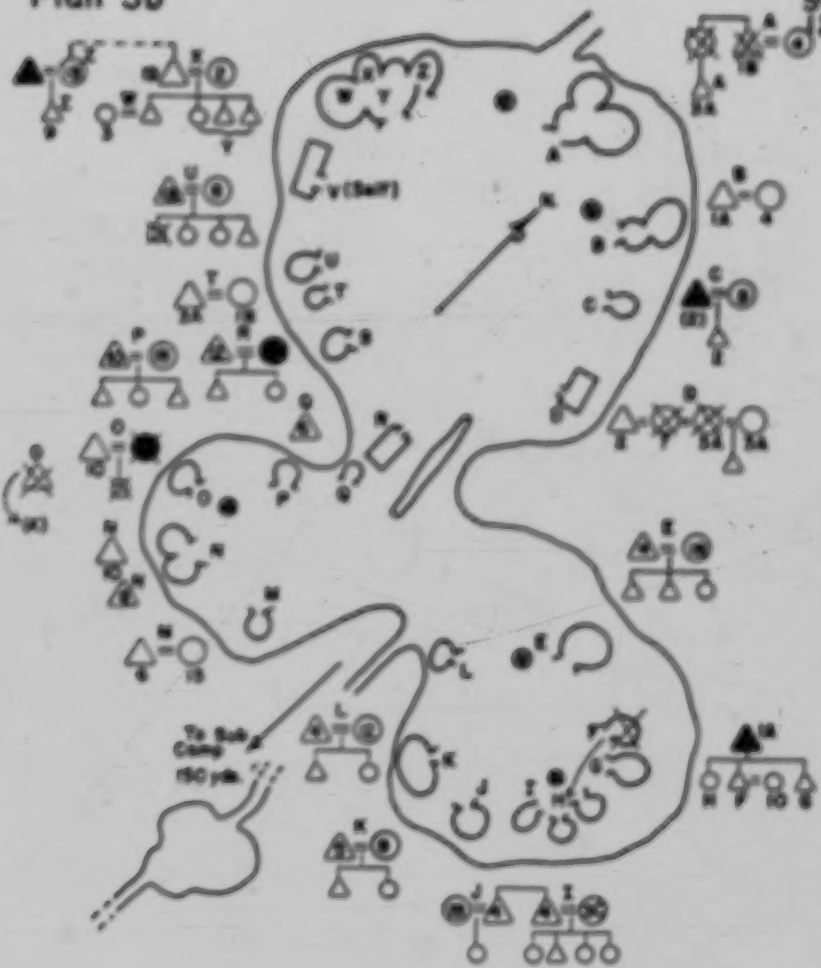


PLAN 32-g Composition of hunting camps cited p. 98 for large and small camps of Epulu band.

Dr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pyramids FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3b

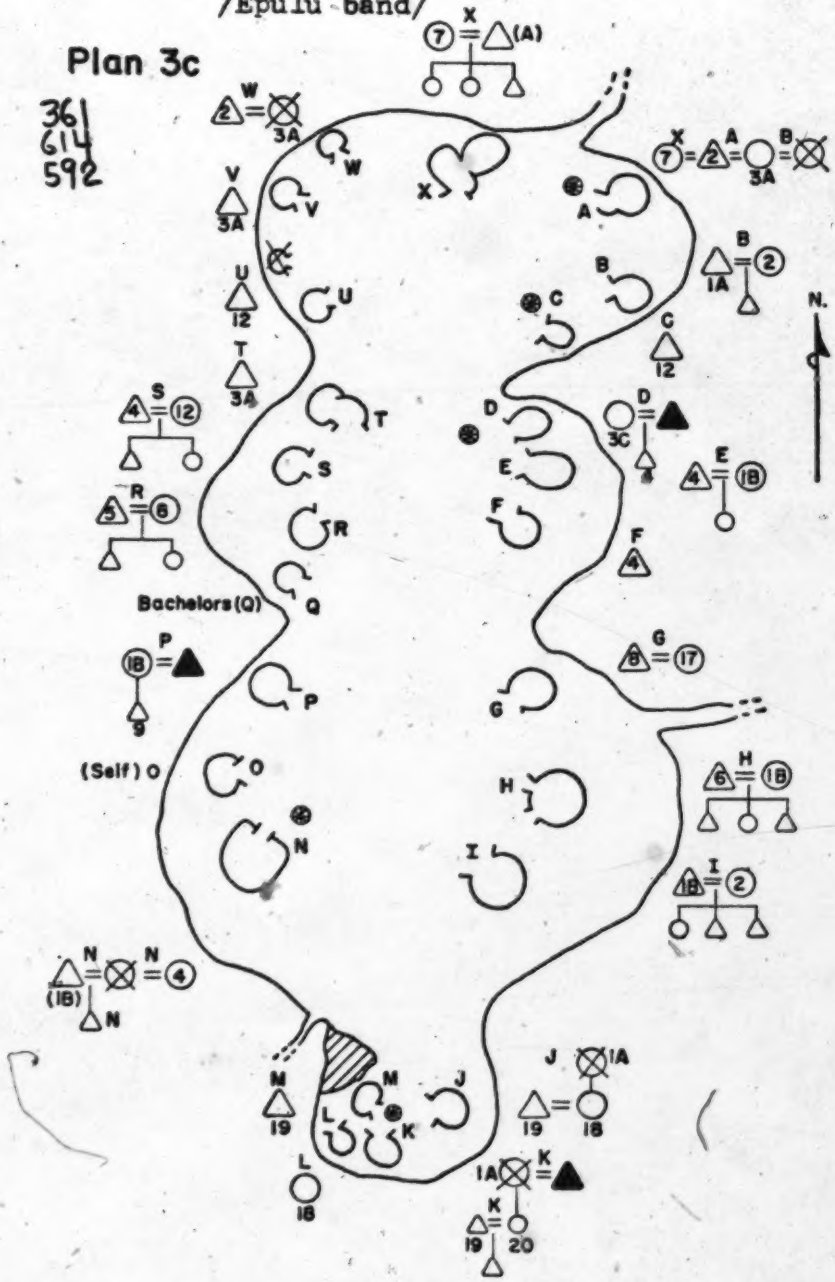


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3c

361
614
592

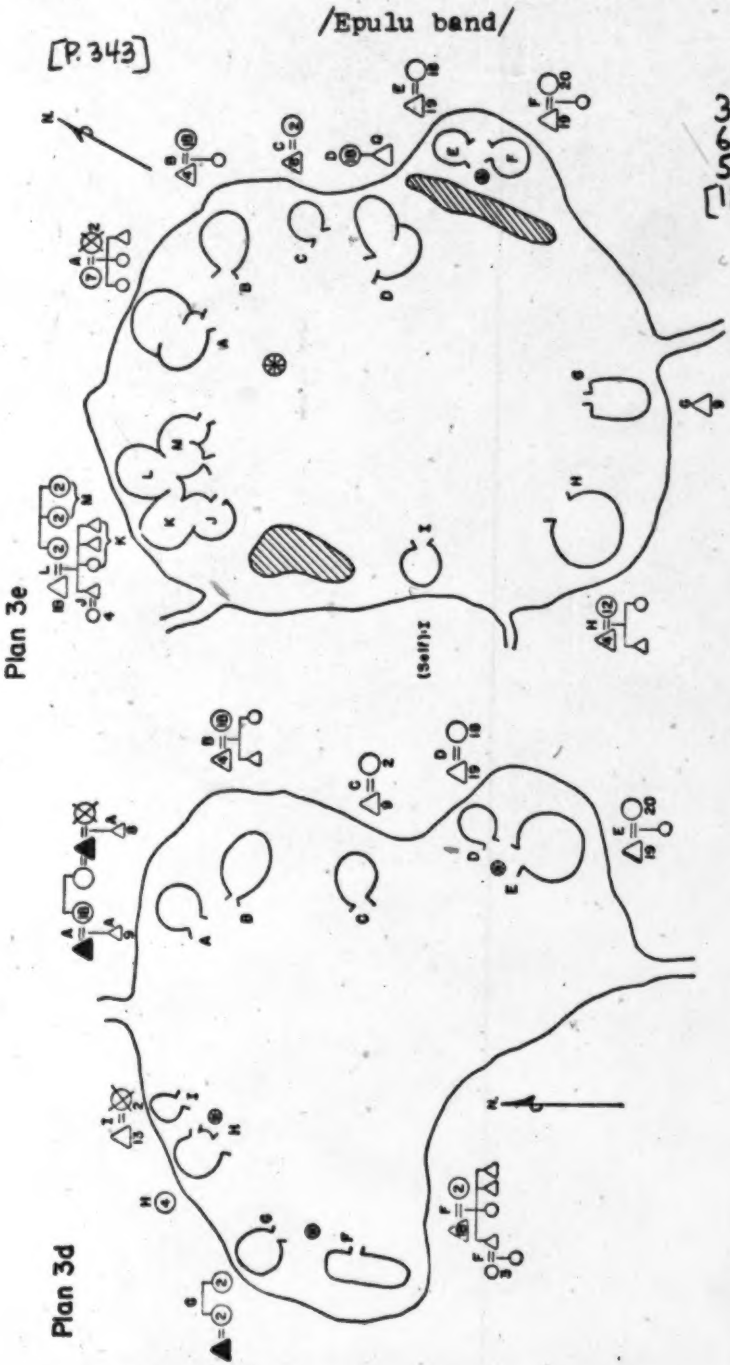


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

[P. 343]

361
614
592
[122]

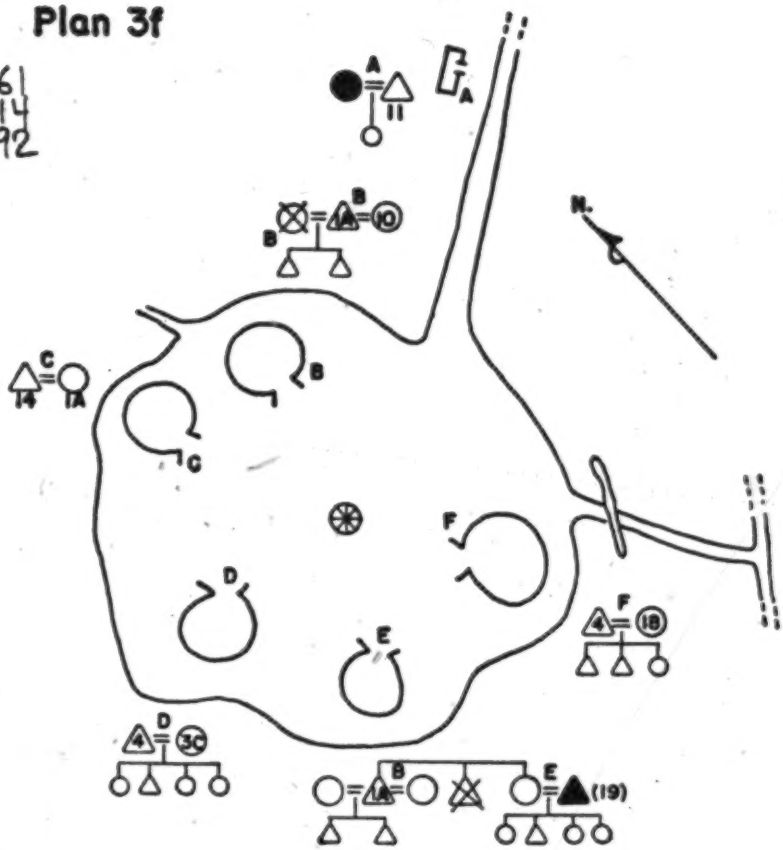


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3f

361
614
592

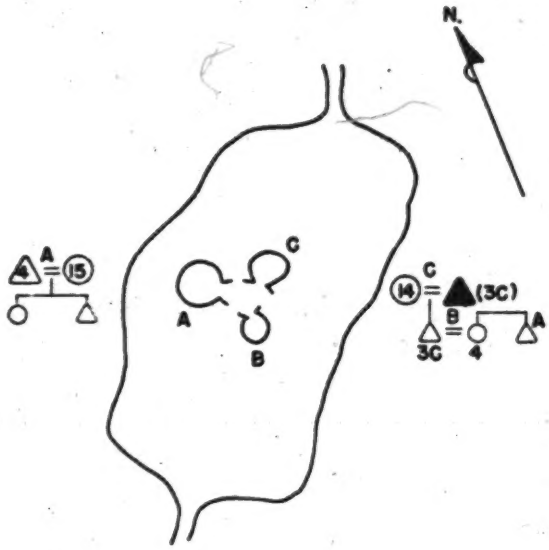


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

361
614
592

Plan 3g



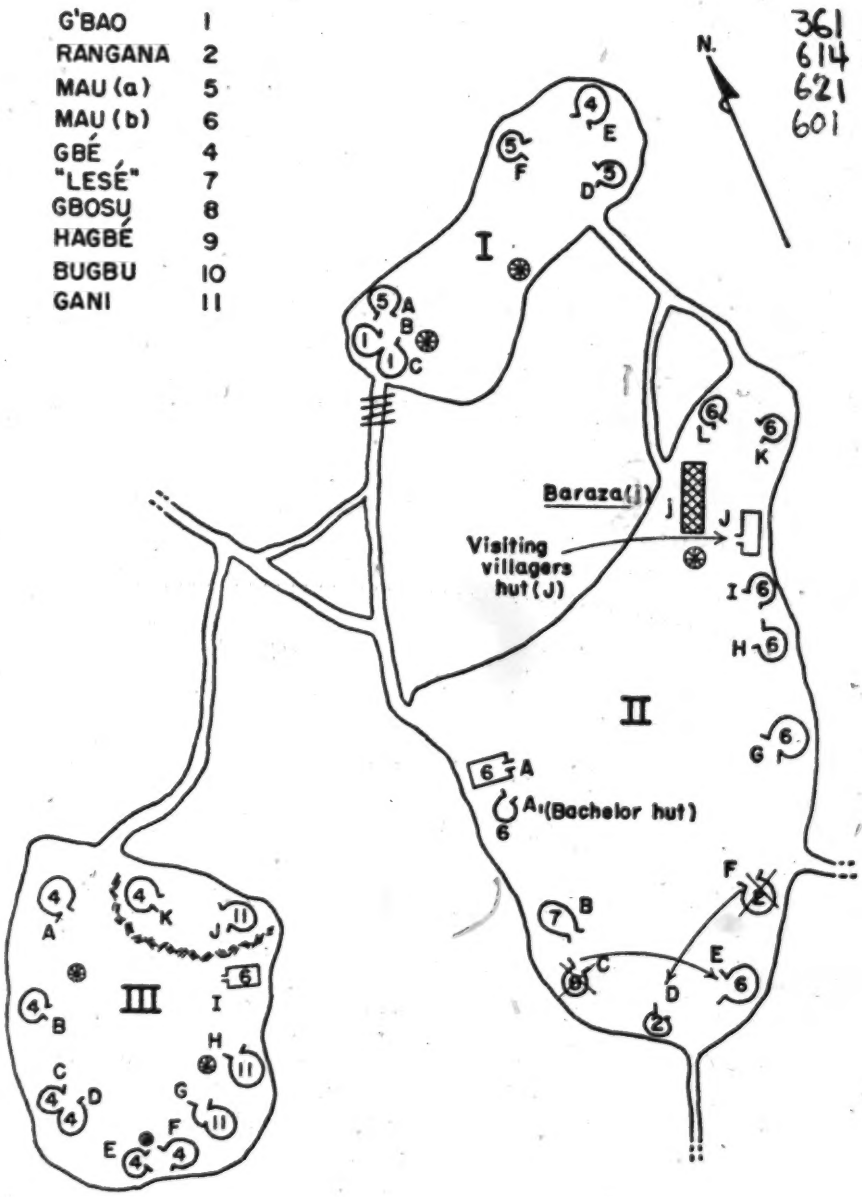
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.346]

Plan 4a

G'BAO	1
RANGANA	2
MAU (a)	5
MAU (b)	6
GBÉ	4
"LESÉ"	7
GBOSU	8
HAGBÉ	9
BUGBU	10
GANI	11

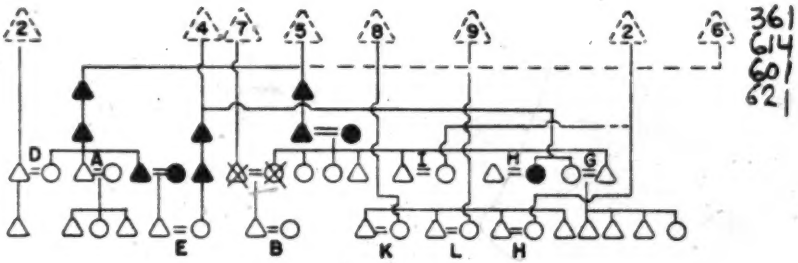
361
614
621
601



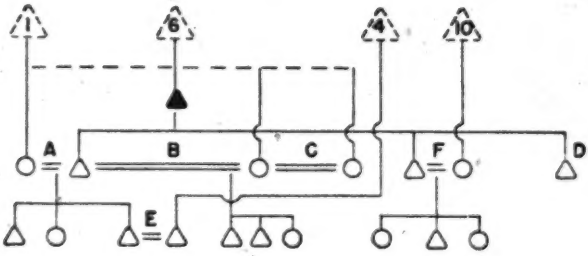
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 347]

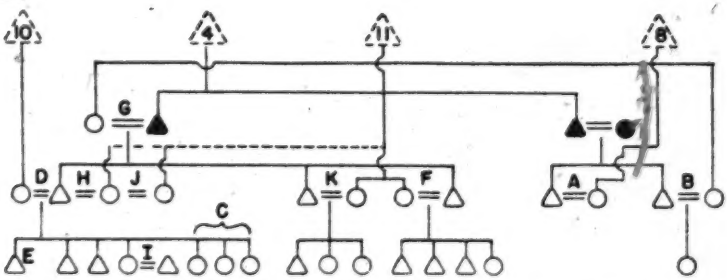
I



II



III



PLAN 42–m *Hunting camps of net-hunters and archers other than at Epulu, showing composition.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 348]

36
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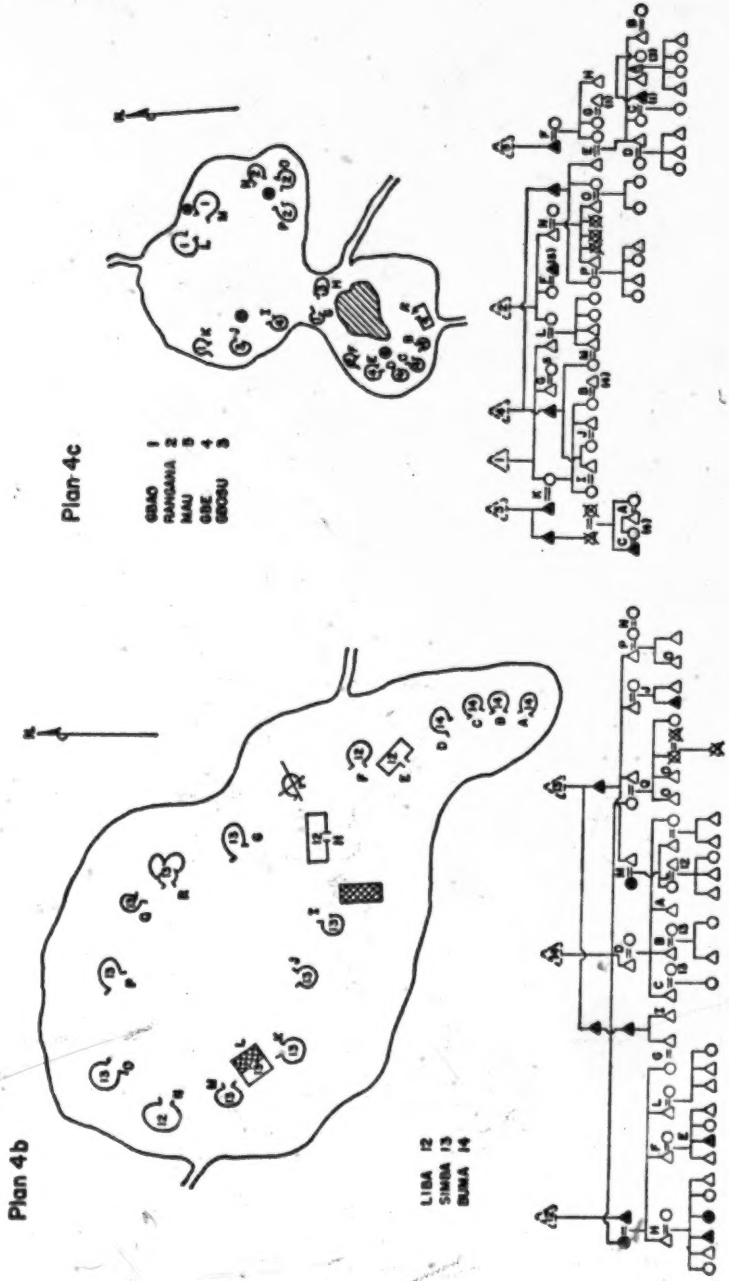
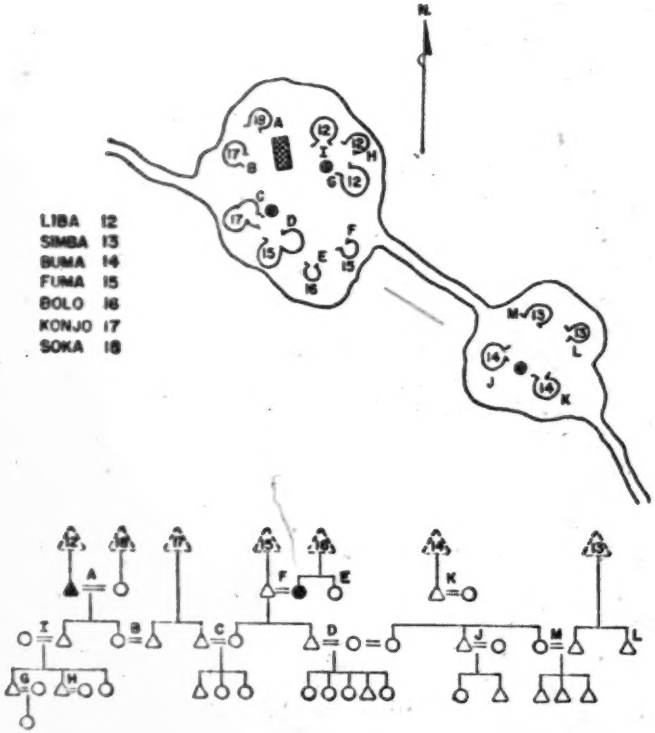
61
62



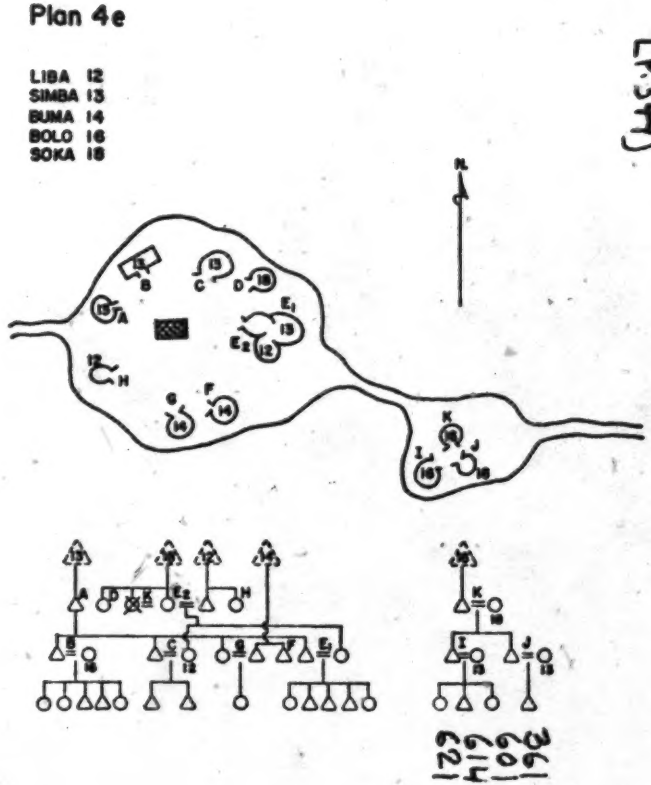
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

[P.349]

Plan 4d



Plan 4e



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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4f

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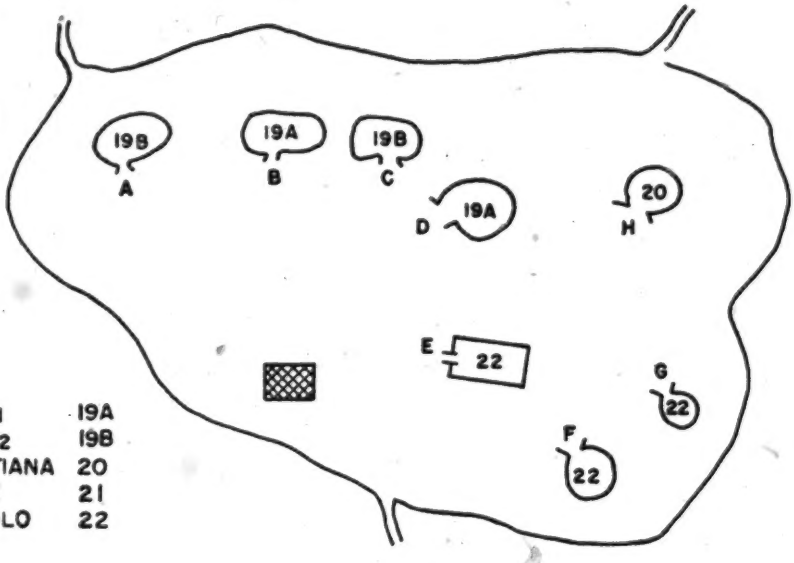
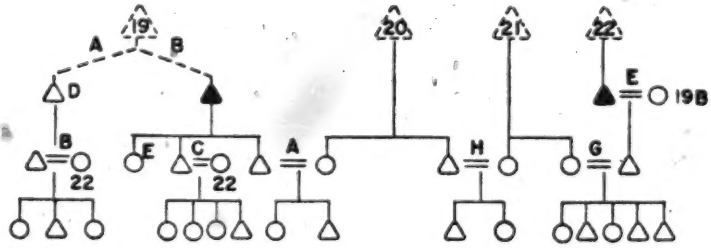
621



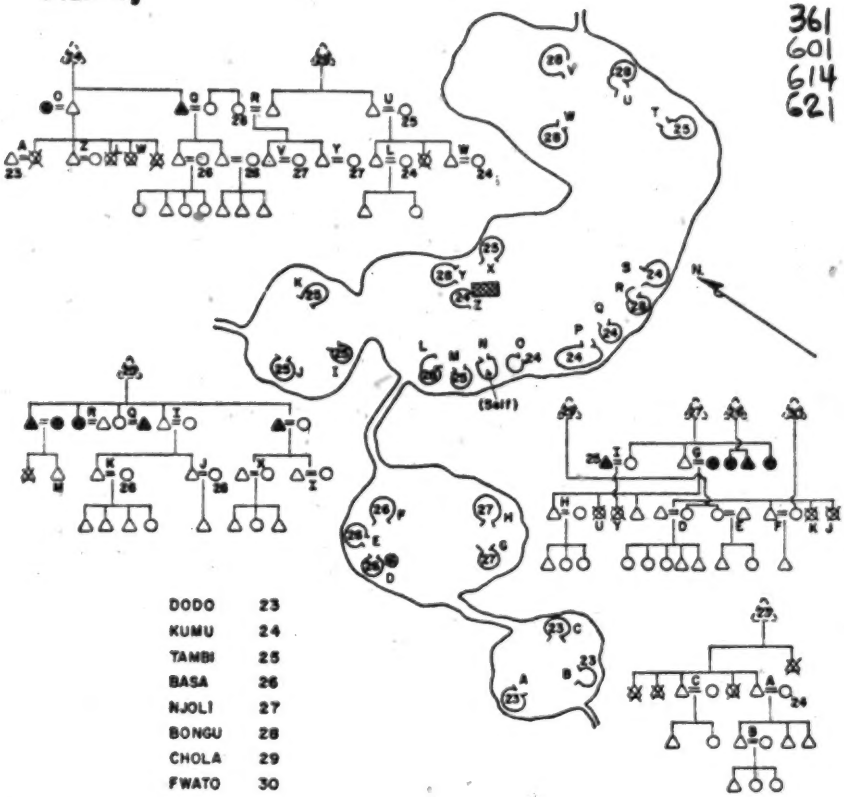
KIMA1	19A
KIMA2	19B
PIPUTIANA	20
DOLÉ	21
TOBOLO	22



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4g

361
601
614
621



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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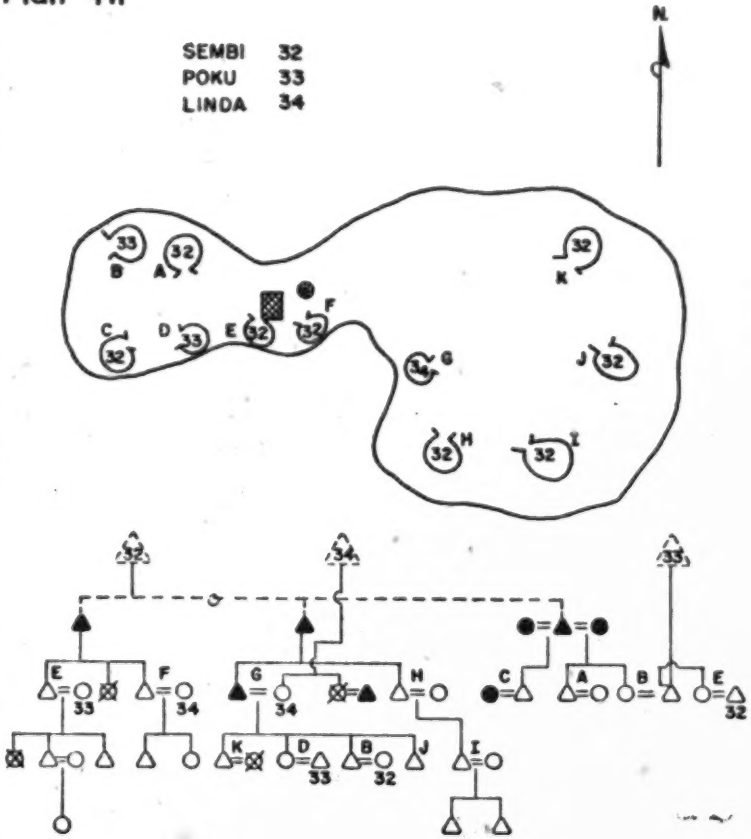
201
614
621

[P.352]

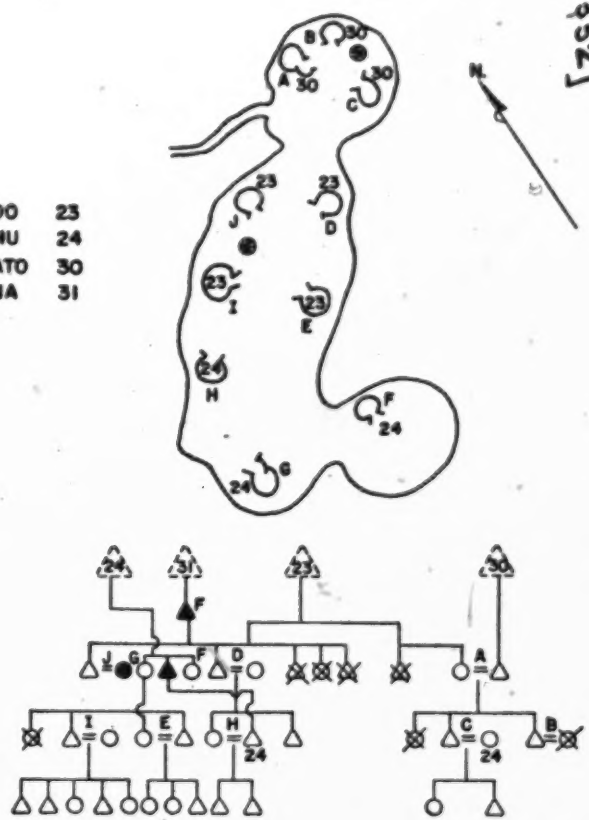
Plan 4h

SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34



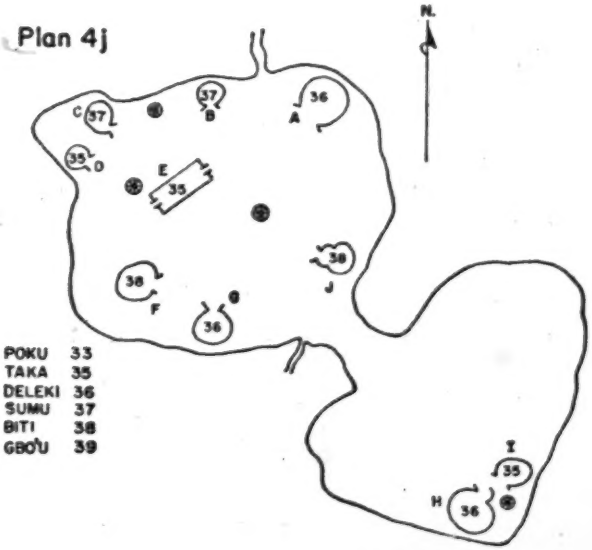
Plan 4i

DODO 23
KUMU 24
FWATO 30
DENA 31

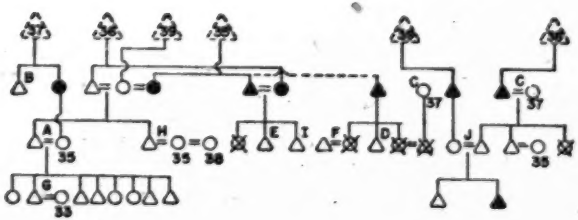


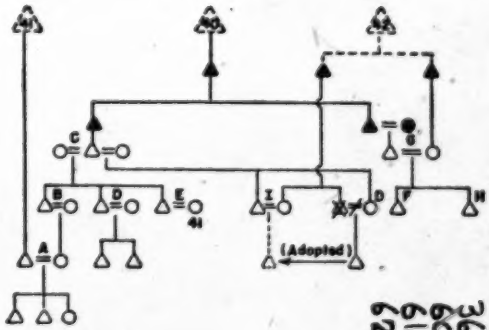
[P.353]

Plan 4j



Plan 4k





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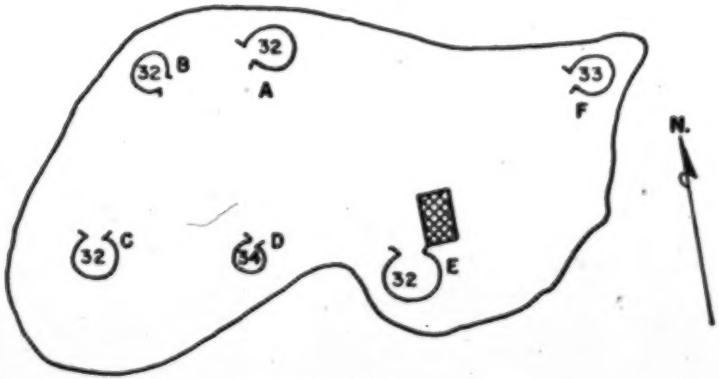
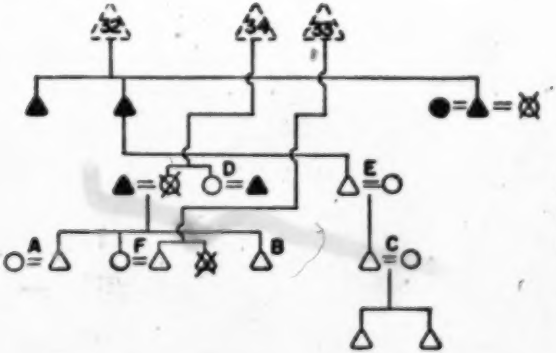
[P.354]

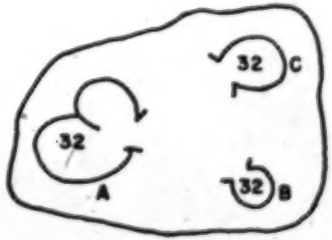
Plan 4L



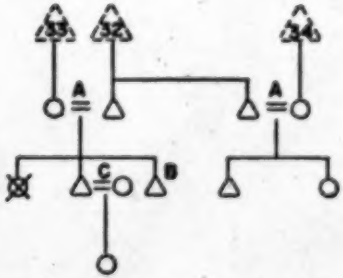


SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34

Plan 4m



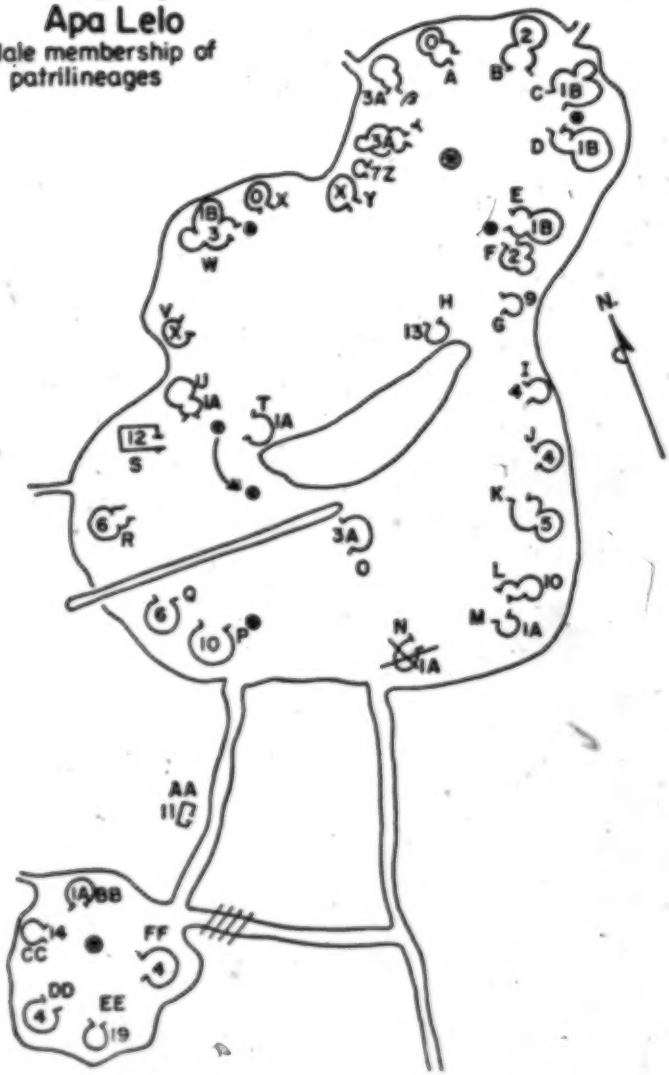
SEMBI 32



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
613

Plan 5
Apa Lelo
Male membership of patrilineages

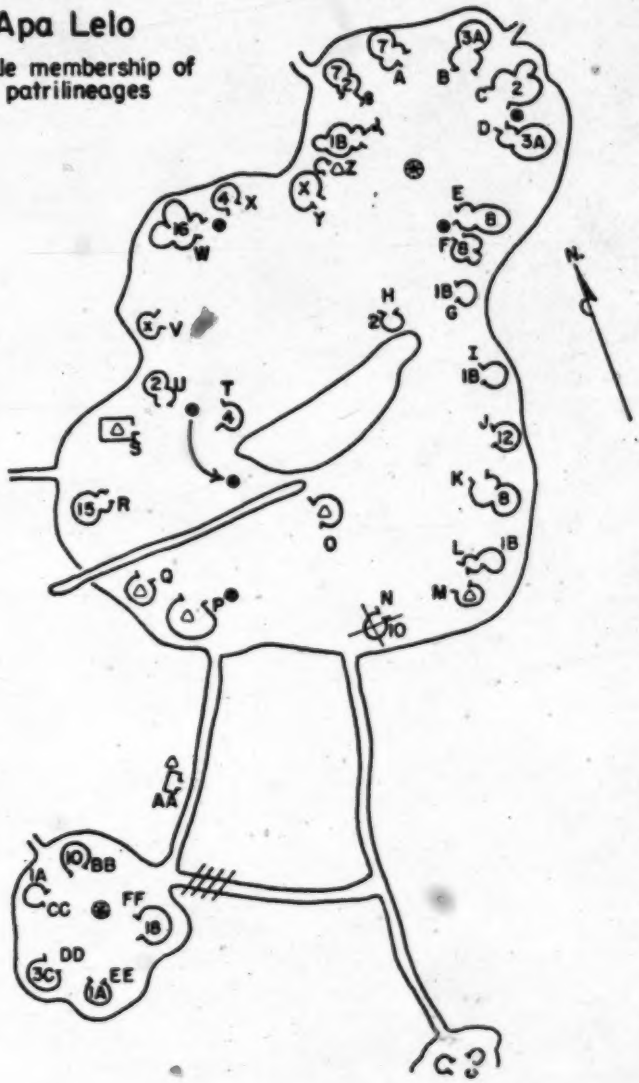


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
613

Plan 6
Apa Lelo

Female membership of patrilineages



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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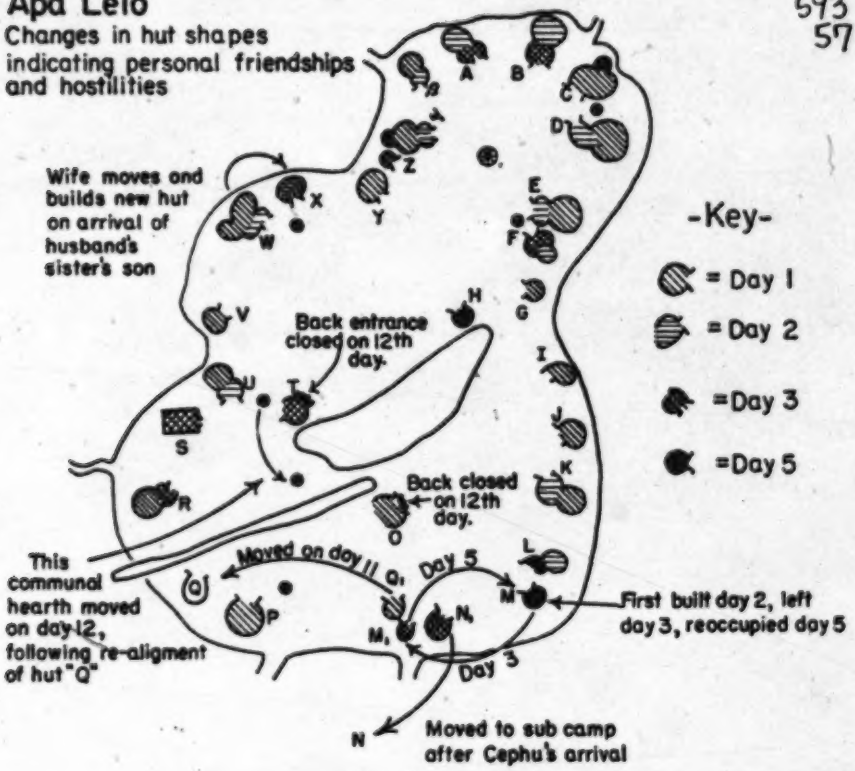
593
57

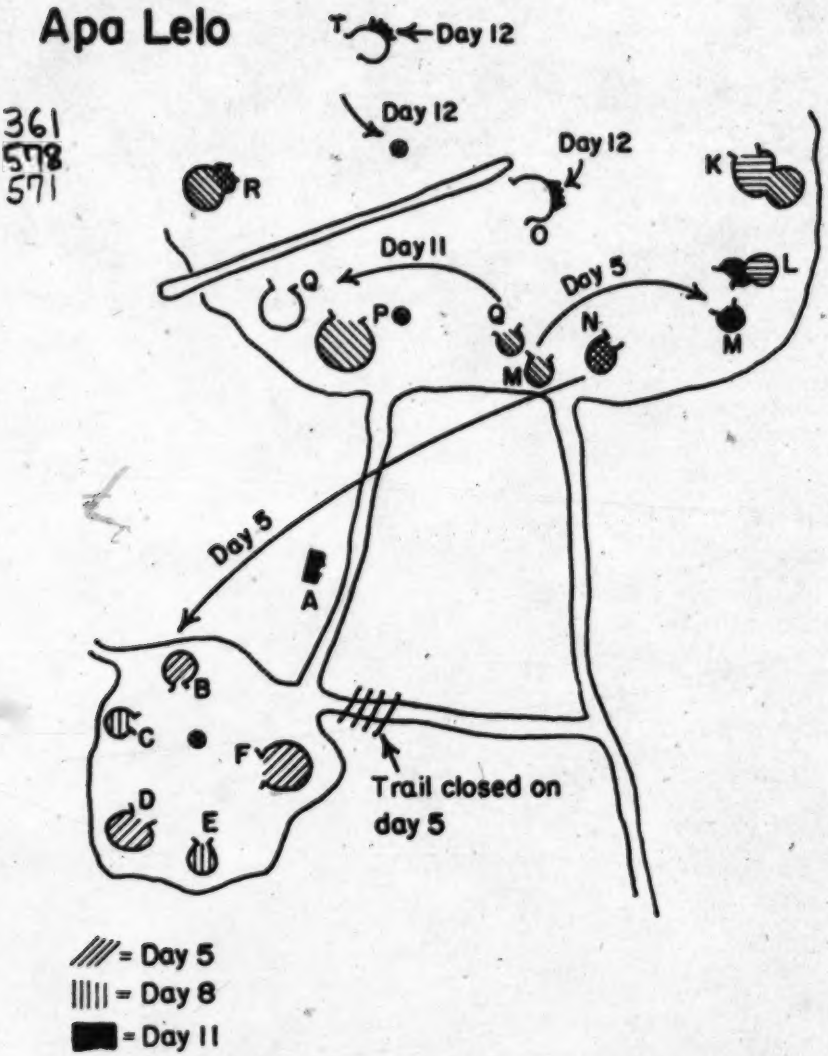
Plan 7
Apa Lelo

Changes in hut shapes indicating personal friendships and hostilities



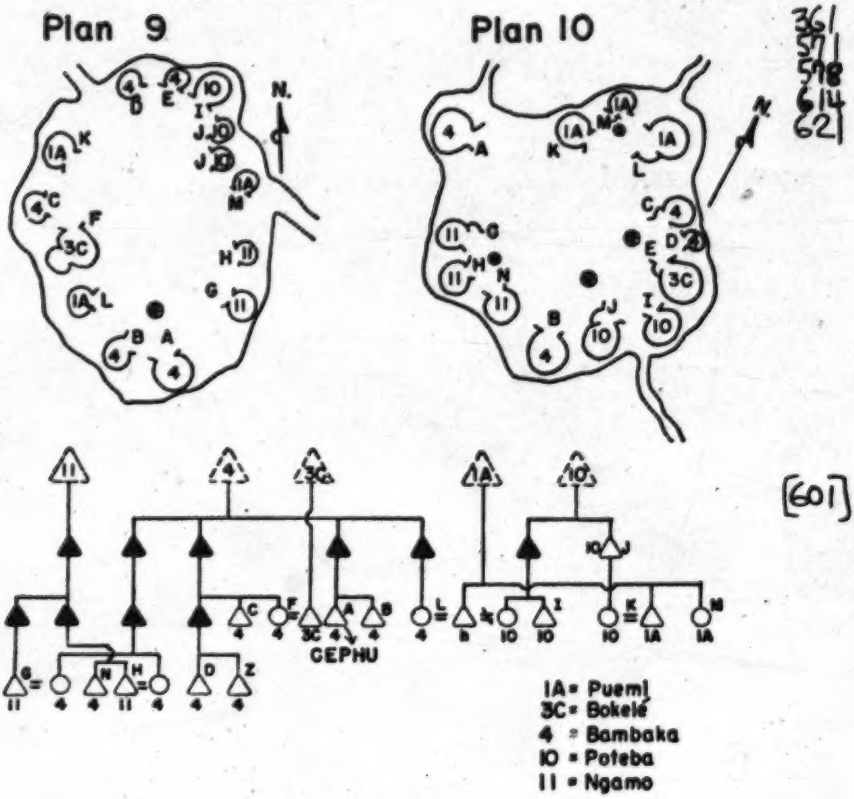
2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 8
Apa Lelo



Apa *Lelo: changes at southern end of camp due to Cephu's arrival.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

[P.360 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.361]

Glossary

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[P.362 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 363]

104

This is a glossary of terms used by Epulu Mbuti, as cited in the text. Owing to the frequency with which the Mbuti mingle words originating from different local languages, while most of the words given here are of Bira origin, some derive from KiNgwana. Further, owing to the Mbuti habit of dropping or adding vowels or consonants for the sake of euphony, and to their ambivalent attitude toward prefixes, I give the words as used in speech without attempting to reduce them to roots, except where there is no doubt. Thus "*bo'o*" in Mbuti usage I give as the KiBira original, "*bobo*"; where in doubt I suggest a possible derivation such as "*ekimi*" from "*kimia*" (KG). Wherever the derivation is apparently from KiNgwana, I insert (KG).

[193]

akami: noise (from *kami:* to cry?).
angbe: a tree and the wood from the tree, important for honey.
angbelu: medicine for honey season (from *lu-* to talk, call?).
anjo: hunting medicine.
anza: good.
apua'i: friend, sibling.
bamiki ba ndura: children of the forest.
batu ba ndura: people of the forest.
batu banji: people of the village.
bekbekbe'i: very (much).
bera'i: melody (solo).
bo: good.
bobo: empty.
boki: honey.
bokbu: all.
bonga: good (in a fuller sense than *bo*).
bongisa: to make good, to rejoice.
bopi: children's playground.
boru: the "house" (*endu*) of the soul; i.e., the body.
bulé: (KG) empty, worthless, troublesome.
chahwa: youth(s).
chanja: (KG) to make light incisions in the skin, for tattoo or for insertion of medicines.
chawi: (KG) witch.
che'i: fear.
eboko: banana.
ekimi: (ref. *kimia* [KG]) quiet.
ekokomea: erotic dance for *molimo* and for honey season.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

104 *ekonga:* spear.
ekondi: love.
elima: premarital festival in which girls and boys both take part, signaled by a girl's first menstruation.
ema: mother.
endu: house, hut, room.
epa: father.
esumba: (KG) ritual originally associated with elephant-hunting for Arab slavers, sometimes used interchangeably with the word *molimo*.
furahisa: (KG) to rejoice, make festive.
ganga: to mend, bind together, cure; hence *mganga* or *muganga*, doctor.
imia'i: chorus, refrain.
isa: fire.
ishumbwa: another form of *esumba* (KG), possibly of slightly different significance to the Ngwana, not to the Mbuti.
itaba: edible forest root.
kali: girl, woman.
kalisia: a name sometimes used for the godhead (forest).
kami: to cry, which is defined as making a noise (*akami* or *kelelé* [KG]).
karé: brotherhood in the *nkumbi* initiation.
kelelé: (KG) noise.
keti: a forest spirit, neither good nor bad to the Mbuti, but evil to the Bira.
kidi: come, arrive.
kimia: (KG) quiet (ref. *imia'i*, chorus, and association of song with the value of *ekimi*).
kiyana: (KG) youth(s).
kobi(a): fear, be wary or cautious, but more often used as:
kobi: to keep very quiet.
kobinengo: silence.
kondi: to love, have affection for.
kuma: hearth.
kuya: hunting net.
langé toro: sleep; lit., "to lie sleep."
le: eat.
leahwa: food.
lendu: an antelope.
lozi: (KG) sorcerer.
lufu: say, talk, call.
lukembi: (KG) musical instrument, an idiophone better known as *sanza* in Swahili.
madé: wooden whistle.
madé: lesser (as in *molimo madé*).
mangbo: great.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

104

mangesé: elder.
mavi: (KG) excrement.
mbafu: (KG) stupidity.
mboko: buffalo.
mboloko: small antelope.
mbongu: elephant.
miki: child.
moko: brother.
molimo: men's religious association, a festival of crisis among both the Mbuti and the Bira, and also associated with a musical instrument among both, but otherwise quite distinct.
mongongo: phrynium leaves used for roofing (ref. *makongo* [KG]).
mota: hard, difficult, dangerous.
mukira: hunt, hunter (also in KG).
mungu: (KG) God.
nanji: village.
ndandama: stupidity.
ndasi: too much.
ndura: forest.
nengo: very.
ngbengbe: wooden clappers used in honey season.
nguvu: (KG) difficult, hard, heavy.
njelani: vine used for making baskets.
nkumbi: initiation of the Bira for boys.
nkusa: vine used in making twine and nets.
nyama: animal.
oki: hear.
oni: see.
pati: take to oneself, cover oneself, become.
pepo: vital essence, vital breath, life force of the forest.
pika: to come, bring.
piki: whistle of wood.
pisa: give, pass over, put.
ponisa: (KG) punish.
roho: individual self, personality (with different connotations when used by Bira or Ngwana).
satani: (KG, also *shaitani, saitani*) spirit, ghost, evil if used by villagers, or by Mbuti if referring to village "satani."
segbe: wooden whistle (as for *piki, madé*) for magical use.
shamba: (KG, also *samba*) plantation.
sinana: bad.
sindula: water chevrotain.
sondu: a large antelope.

songé: moon.
suba: within.
s'uti: sound.
tata: grandparent.
teré: the godhead, primarily in its judicial, authoritative aspect (ref. morning *molimo* cries of "*e teré*": "it is *teré*").
tiko: plantation.
toré: as for *teré*.
wendi: to hunt.

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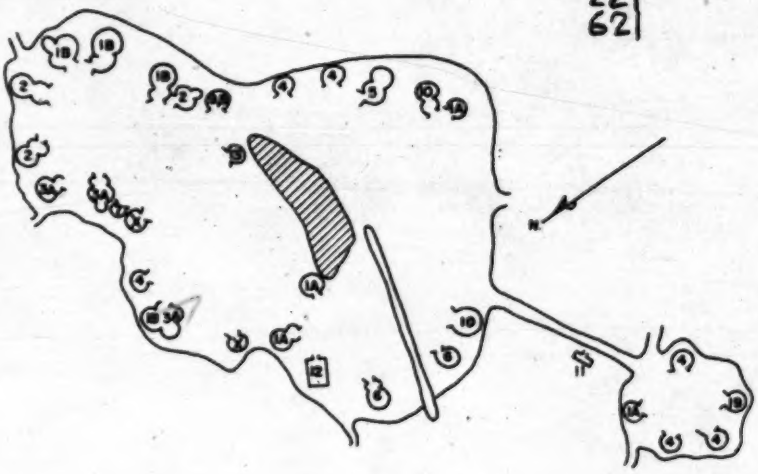
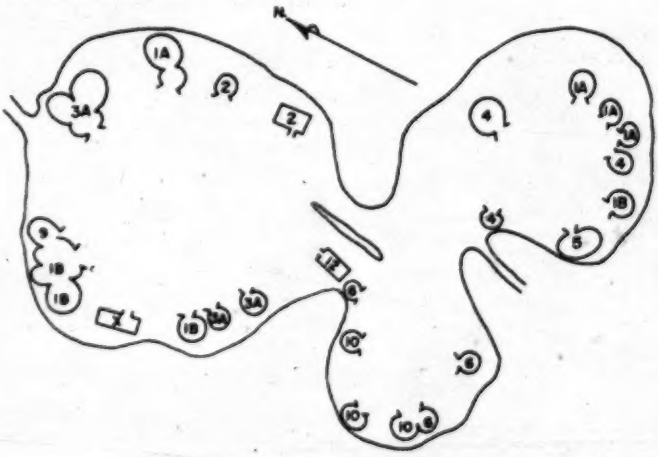
11A
AUGUST 1957



11B
NOV./DECEMBER 1957



[End Chart 1,(A)]

Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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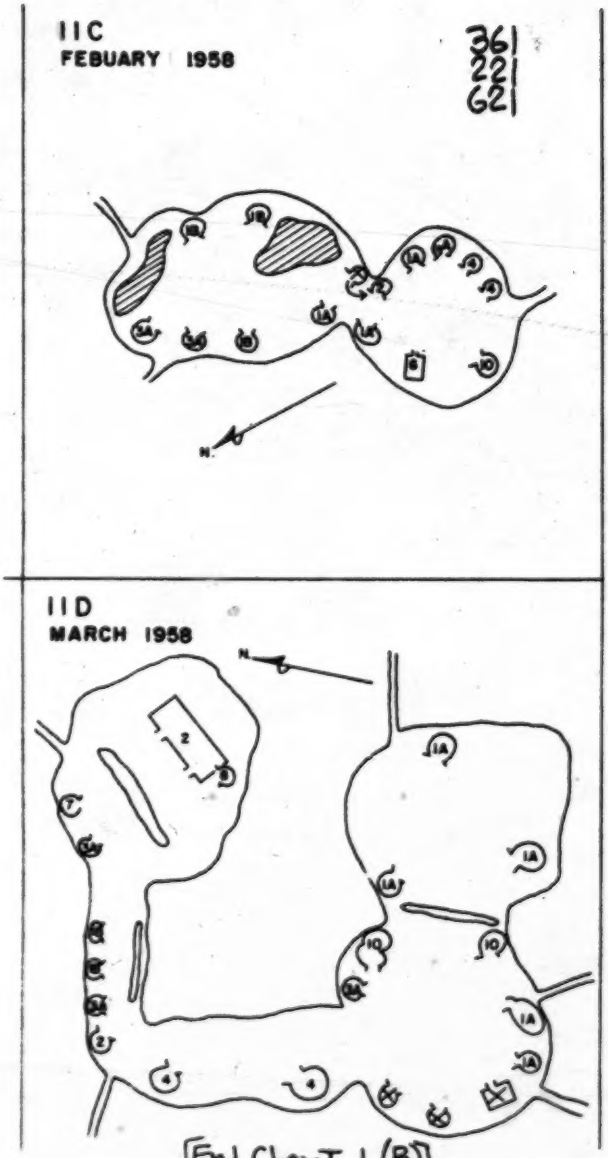
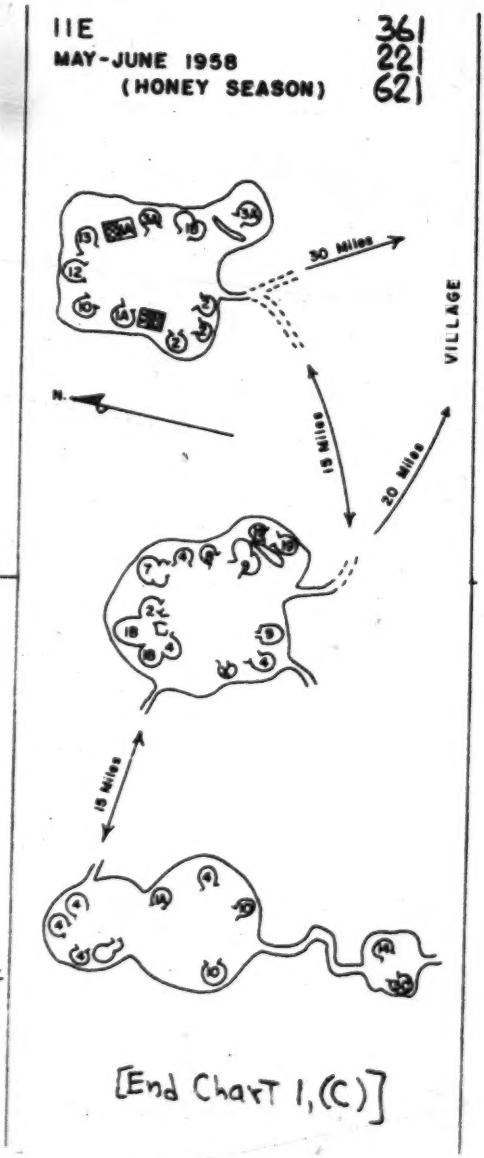


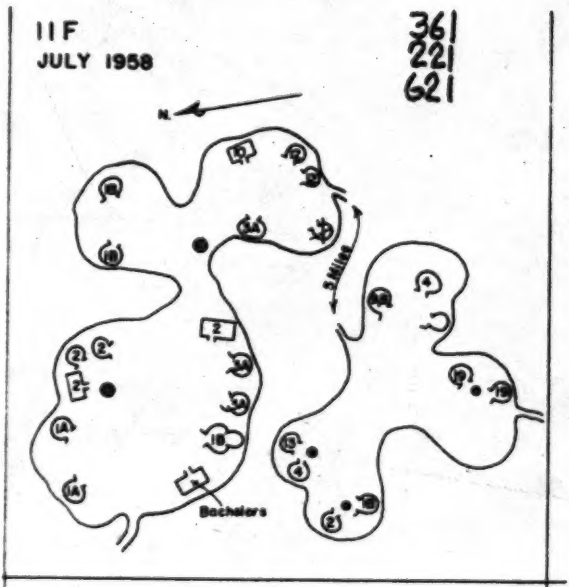
[End Chart 1,(B)]

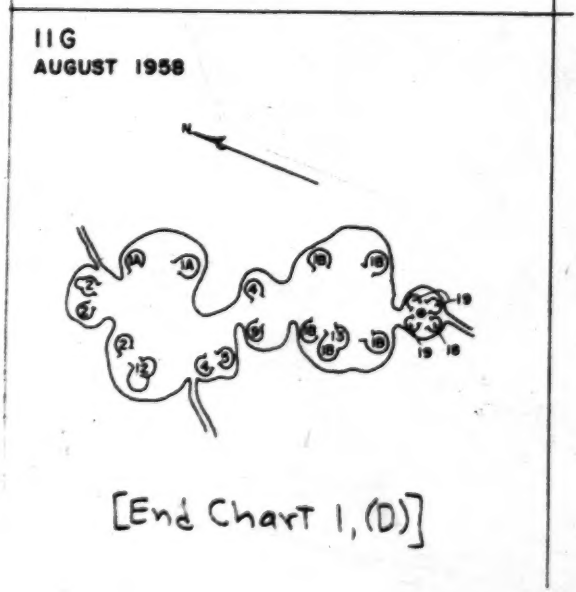
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 1,(C)]

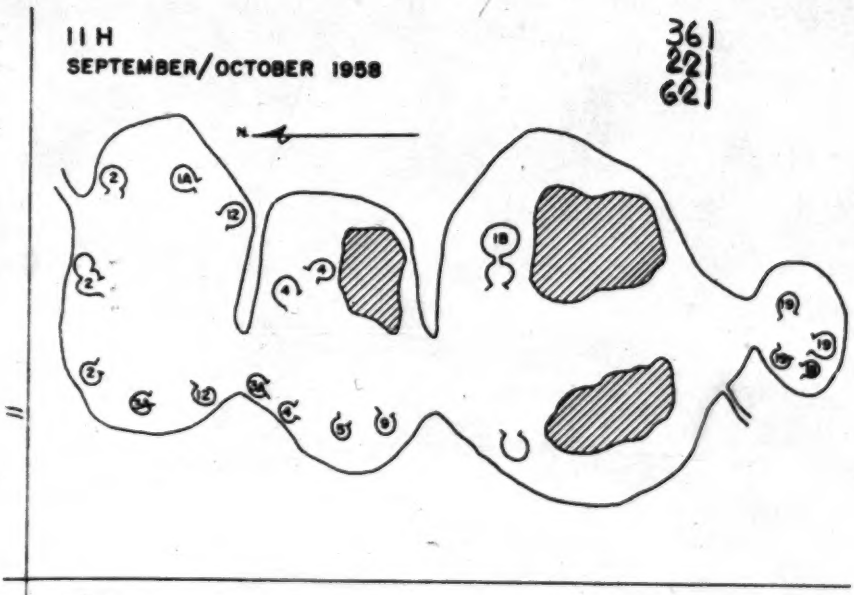
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

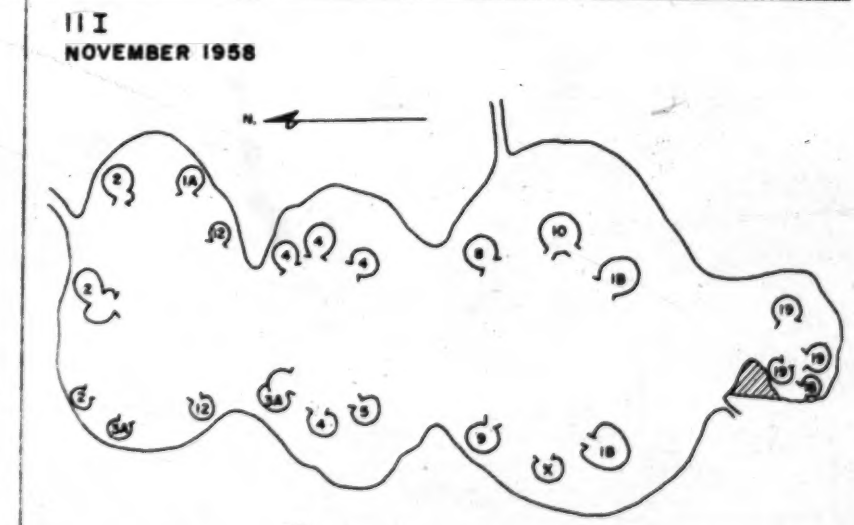




[End Chart 1, (D)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti





[End Chart 1, (E)]

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(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)

Chart of Positions of End Plate 2 (Table 4).
[facing End Chart 2]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 4

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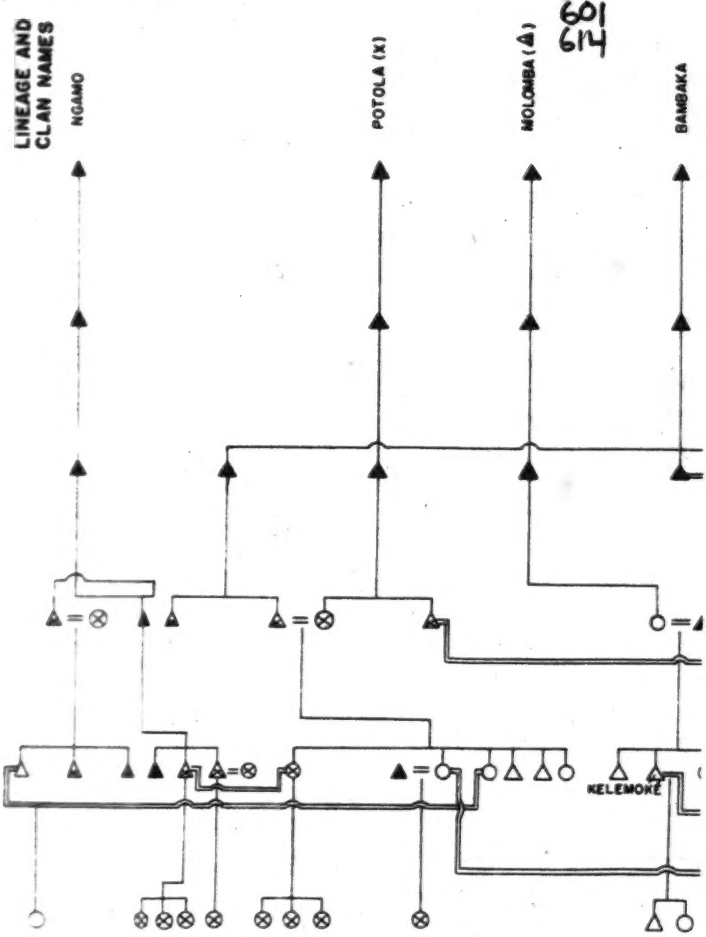

[Fr. Chart 2, (A)]

LINEAGE AND CLAN NAMES:

PUEMI (1):(2): indicates different totemic branches of the same clan.

▲; ⊗: Living members of other hunting bands not present at the molimo

: An extended form of the conventional marriage symbol (=)

: is used when for convenience the eldest sibling has had to be placed on the right

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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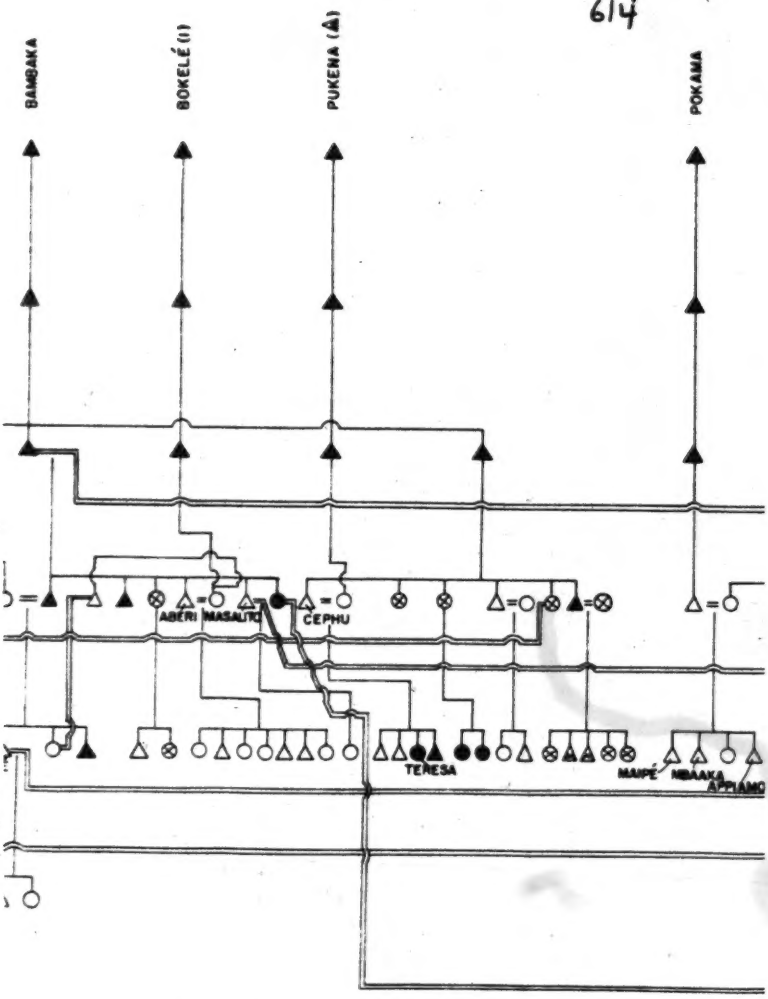

[End Chart 2, (B)]

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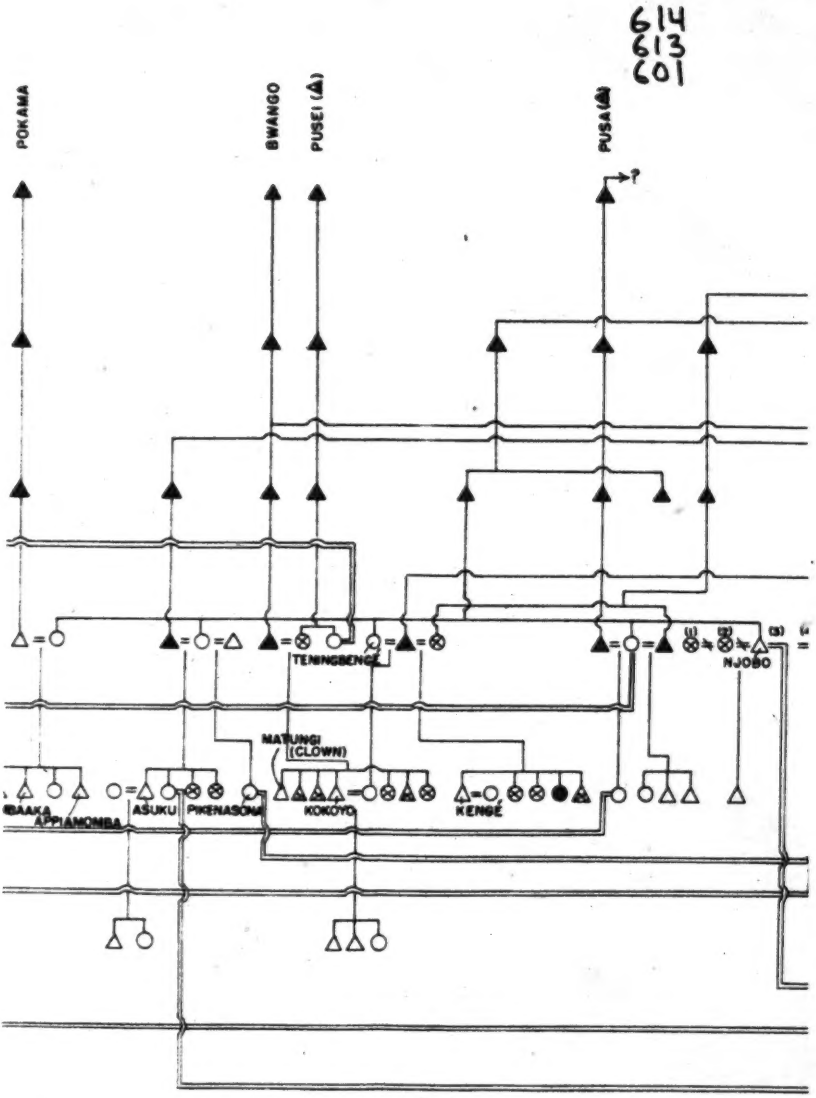
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 2. (C)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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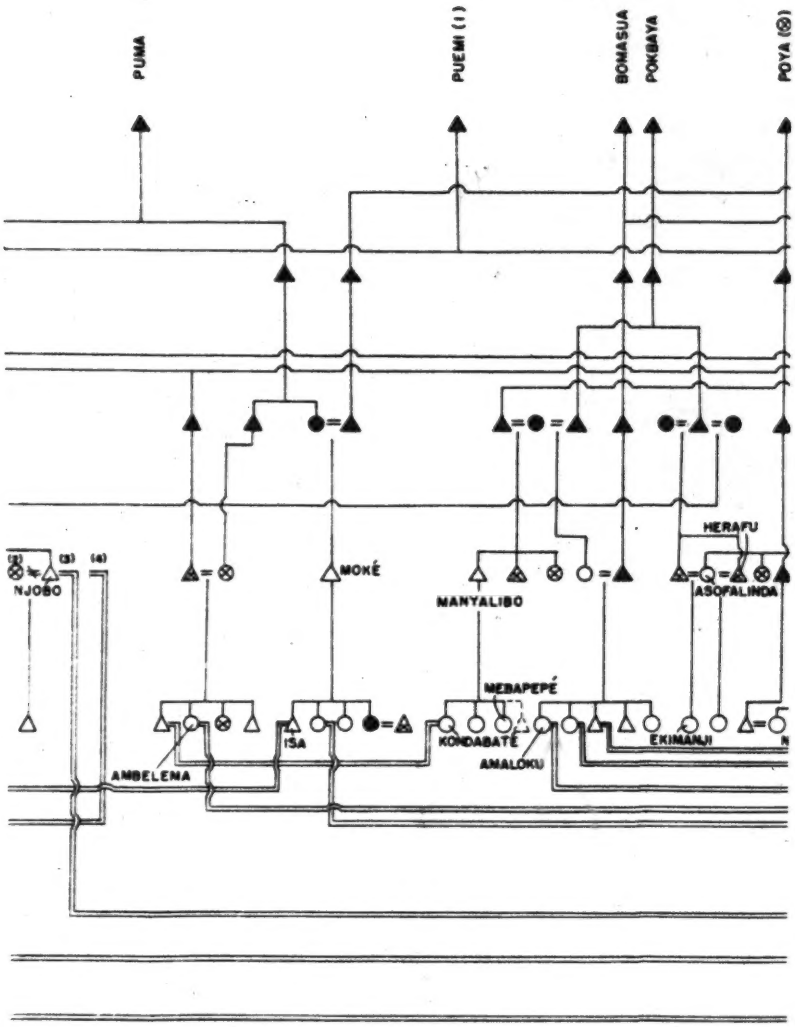

Composition of Epulu Net-Hunting Mbuti

[End Chart 2, (D)]

OCT.–DEC. 1957

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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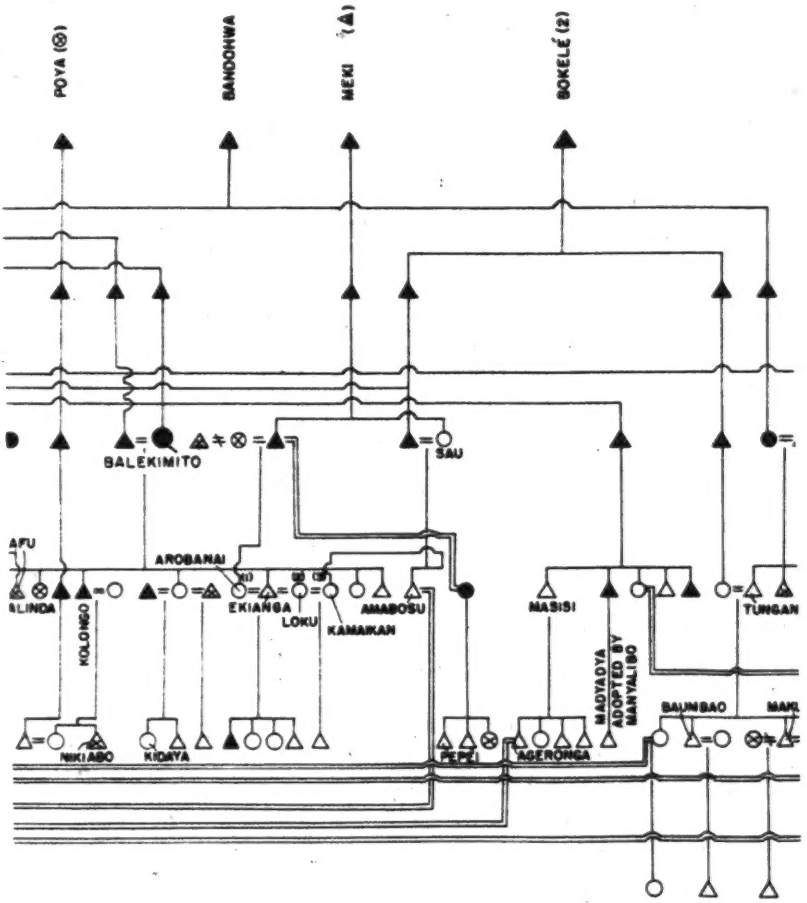

[End Chart 2, (E)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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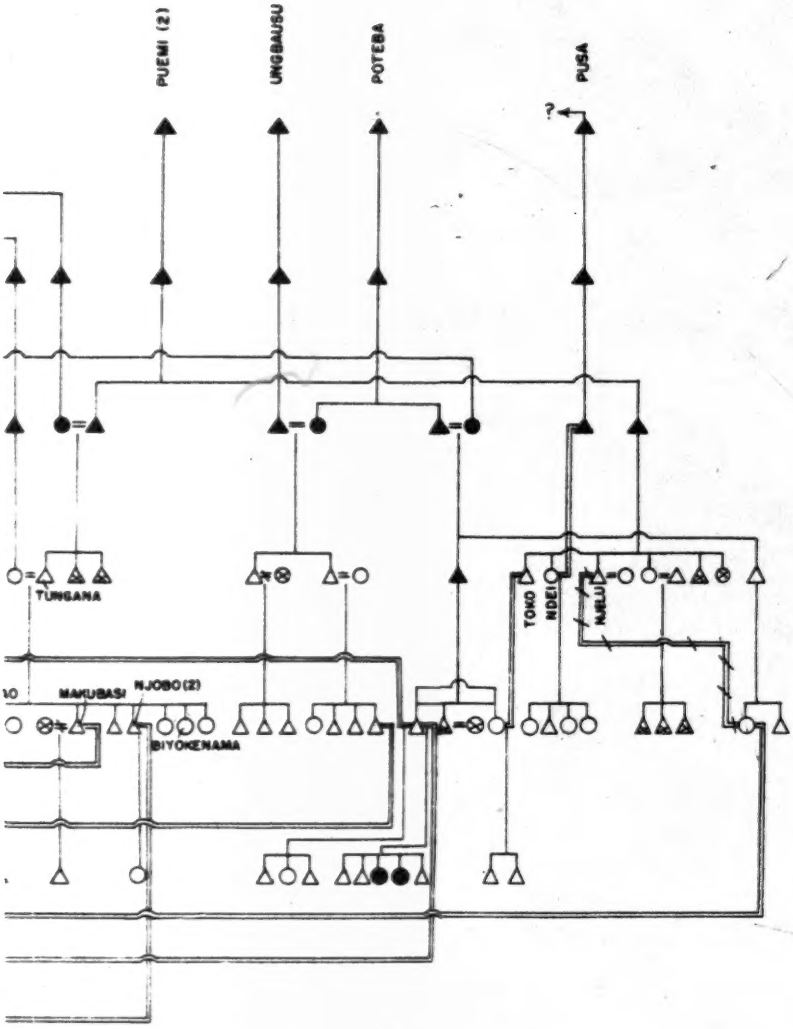

[End Chart 2, (F)]

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COLIN M. TURNBULL was born in London and now lives in New York City, where he is Associate Curator of African Ethnology at The American Museum of Natural History. He was educated at the Westminster School and at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he studied philosophy and politics. After serving in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve during the war, he held a research grant for two years in the Department of Indian Religion and Philosophy at Banaras Hindu University, in India, and then returned to Oxford, where he studied anthropology, specializing in the African field. 114

He has made three extended field trips to Africa, from which he drew the material for this volume, as well as his two previous books, *The Forest People*, a more informal study of the Congo Pygmies, and *The Lonely African*, a study of tribalism and cultural change in modern Africa. He is a Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute, and a Corresponding Member of Le Musée Royal d'Afrique Centrale.

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Chart of Positions of End Chart 1 (Plan 11).
[facing End Chart 1]

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[For general information on culture contacts and acculturation processes between the Mbuti bands and the villagers, see the following pages in category 116: 8, 15-17, 22, 27-29, 33-38, 44-54, 56-80, 83-88, 108J, 108K, 109, 128, 143, 145, 150, 156-157, 177-178, 180, 201, 205, 214-215, 225-228, 229-231, 234-239, 243-244, 246, 251, 273, 281-283, 291-292, 294-300, 322-325, 331, 333-338.]

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[For additional information on Villager/Mbuti relationships in which interpersonal and/or kpara/kare (artificial kin) aspects predominate, see also 608, 571, 578.]

[For additional information on the honey season, but only as it pertains to the effect of that season's activities on community relations and structure, see 621, 628 and 221.]

[For additional information on the kpara-type relationship of villager to individual Mbuti Pygmies, see categories 177 and 571.]

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[For general discussions of "authority" in Mbuti society, see category 554.]

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[For additional information on the question of Villager influence on the Mbuti, and Villager/Mbuti cultural differences, see also Congo-Kinshasa FO1, categories 101, 241, 105, 628, 361.]

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825 Mbuti
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[For information on personification of "forest" as Provider, on reification of "forest" as a single mighty being or force to be placated, and on projection onto forest of both man-like emotions and impersonal supernatural power and sanctity: see 778.]

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Colin M. Turnbull 000

THE FOREST PEOPLE

Simon and Schuster · New York

[Title Page]

[P. 1]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

To Kenge

000

for whom the forest was Mother and Father, Lover and Friend; and who showed me something of the love that all his people share in a world that is still kind and good . . . And without evil.

[P.3]
[P.4 is blank]

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Mbuti

Acknowledgments

THIS BOOK tries to convey something of the lives and feelings of a 000 people who live in a forest world, something of their intense love for that world and their trust in it. It is a world that will soon be gone forever, and with it the people.

In whatever measure the book succeeds it is due to those who by their example have taught the way to understanding. More than any I must thank my parents, who first taught me the meaning of love, and Anandamai Ma, who for two years in India showed how the qualities of truth, goodness and beauty can be found wherever we care to look for them.

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000 And then I must thank Professor Evans Pritchard, a more austere teacher, who teaches all his students that the study of man should be approached not necessarily without emotion but with careful, scientific impartiality.

To my colleagues at the American Museum of Natural History, particularly Professor Harry L. Shapiro, I am grateful for their encouragement and interest and for their constant reminder that an anthropologist can still be human as well as scientific.

There are many other friends who should be thanked for help in divers ways, not the least one who prefers to remain anonymous but who painstakingly read and reread every page. But Patrick Putnam deserves special mention, because it was through his friendship and hospitality, and that of his wife, that I first came to know the forest. I only wish he had lived to write this book himself. I must also acknowledge a debt to Dr. Paul Schebesta, who was the first to open the way to this wonderful world, my thanks for his encouragement and my great respect for his tolerance of dissenting youth.

And finally I must acknowledge a debt of gratitude that can never be repaid to all those people of the forest who can neither read nor write but who are infinitely wise and who taught me something of their wisdom. I hope this book will convey a small part of their intense love for the forest and their belief that it is better and kinder than the outside world that threatens to destroy it.

C. M. T.

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Foreword

THE FOREST PEOPLE is about the life of a Pygmy people living in the Ituri Forest in the Congo. Its author is an anthropologist. The book is exceptional. 114

These three statements do not—alas—form a syllogism, but they do have some connection with each other; and together they help to explain why reading *The Forest People* is an unusual and satisfying experience. Most of the literature on the life of "primitive" people is in the form of fairly technical reports in which individuals are swallowed up by abstractions and feeling is replaced by analysis.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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There is nothing wrong with this for the purpose it serves. But you get little idea from these monographs of what it is like to lead the kind of life they describe, or what the people observed are really like as human beings.

One might conclude from this that anthropologists with their special orientation were not the best suited to give us a non-technical, humanized, and personalized view of primitive people. It is my belief that the contrary is the case. Their special techniques, their sympathy, and their understanding make them in fact ideal interpreters. Indeed, it is the professional interest of the anthropologist in primitive societies, in the first place, that drives them to devote the years of patient study and observation that are required for the insight they seek. And, in the second, their rigorous analytical methods guarantee some measure of the objectivity without which the less wary observer is often led into sentiment and bias.

One of the reasons why *The Forest People* is an exceptional book is because its author, Colin M. Turnbull, is an anthropologist who knows the Pygmies intimately from years of living among them. In this book he has fortunately chosen the unusual course of writing about them as individuals, as his friends, each with a personality of his own. From his knowledge of their culture and its adapetation to the conditions of an African rain forest, he is able to provide another dimension to their lives that the casual visitor might easily miss altogether. As a result the reader can enter into some understanding of the meaning of their lives and enjoy the exhilaration of participating in a culture other than his own.

HARRY L. SHAPIRO
Chairman and Curator
of Physical Anthropology

January 1962
American Museum of Natural History

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Illustrations follow page 72

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Maps

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Maps by Nicholas Amorosi

[P. 10-A]

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MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

*Now Republic of the Congo

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3: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Area of Map 2

[P. 10-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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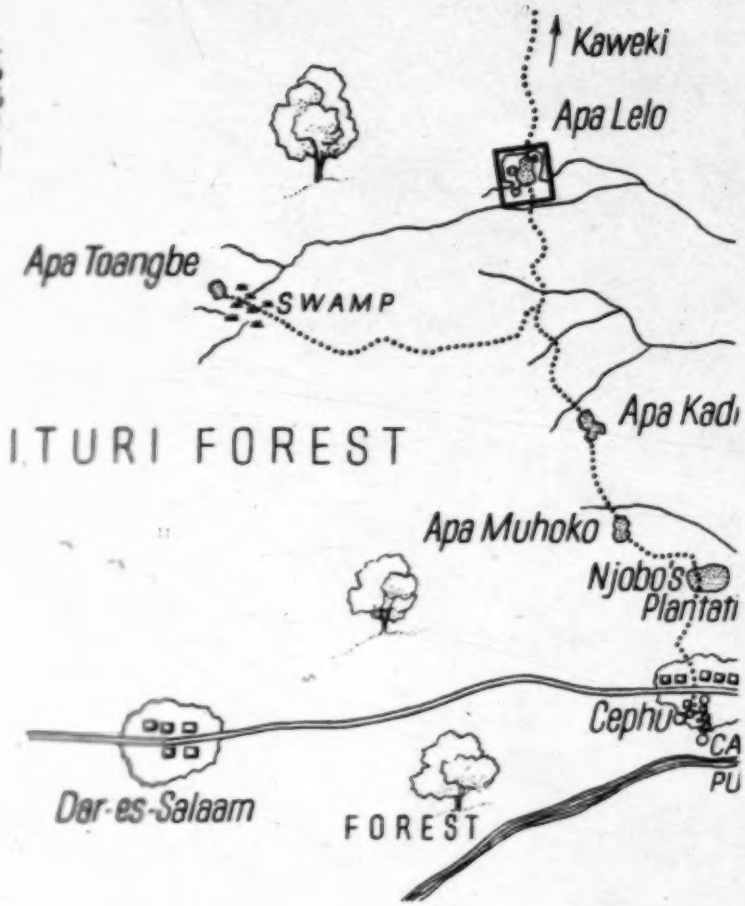

MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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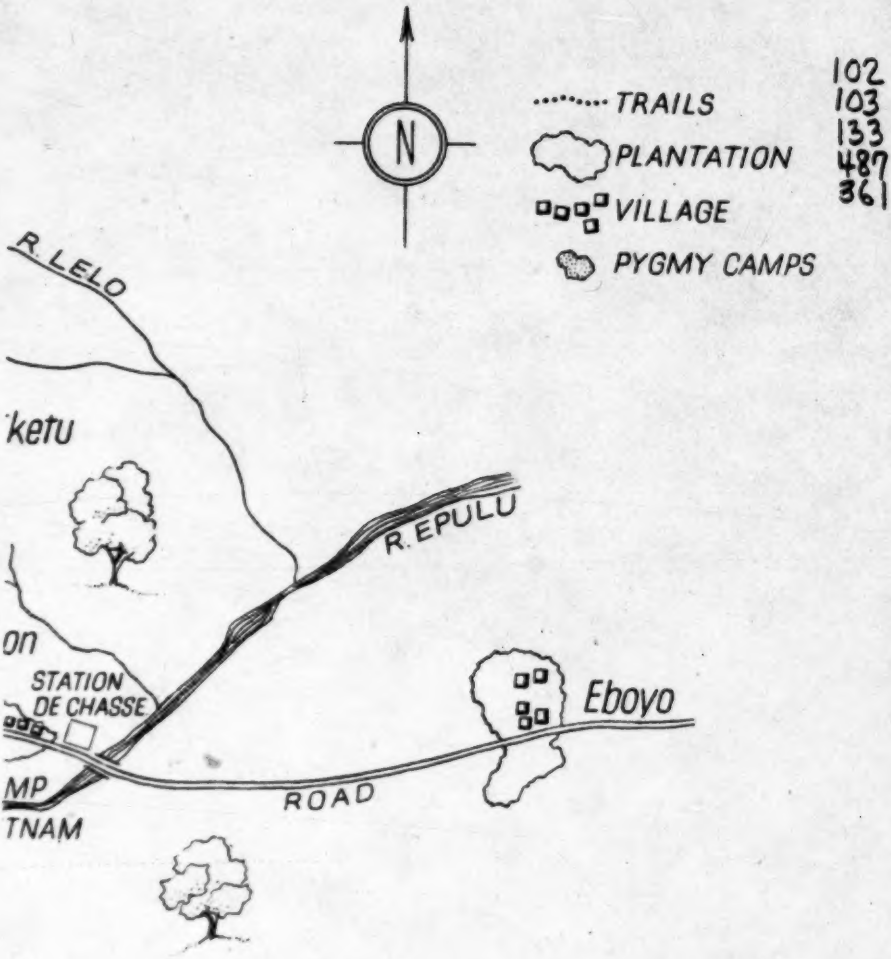

Area of Map 3

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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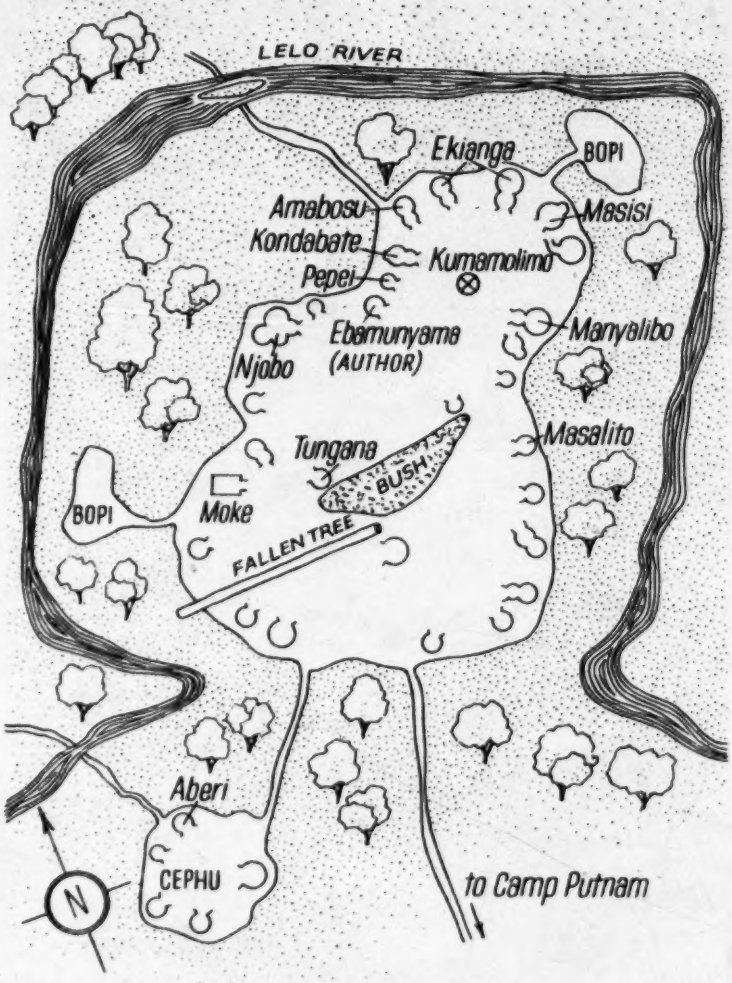

MAP 3: Apa Lelo
[P. 10-F]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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1

The World of the Forest

IN THE NORTHEAST CORNER of the Belgian Congo, almost exactly 131
in the middle of the map of Africa, . . . lies the Ituri Forest, a vast 175
expanse of dense, damp and inhospitable-looking darkness. Here is the heart of Stanley's Dark Continent, the country he loved and hated, the scene of his ill-fated expedition to relieve Emin Pasha, an expedition costing hundreds of lives and imposing almost unbearable hardships on the survivors, who trekked across the great forest not once, but three times, losing more lives each time through fighting, sickness and desertion.

Anyone who has stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain 000

132 Anyone who has
137 stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain forest must know how Stanley and his followers felt, coming as they all did from an open country of rolling plains, of sunlight and warmth. Many people who have visited the Ituri since, and many who have lived there, feel just the same, overpowered by the heaviness of everything—the damp air, the gigantic water-laden trees that are constantly dripping, never quite drying out between the violent storms that come with monotonous regularity, the very earth itself heavy and cloying after the slightest shower. And, above all, such people feel overpowered by the seeming silence and the age-old remoteness and loneliness of it all.

132 But these are the feelings of outsiders, of those who do not belong
137 to the forest. If you *are* of the forest it is a very different place. What
182 seems to other people to be eternal and depressing gloom becomes a cool, restful, shady world with light filtering lazily through the tree tops that meet high overhead and shut out the direct sunlight—the sunlight that dries up the non-forest world of the outsiders and makes it hot and dusty and dirty.

136 Even the silence is a myth. If you have ears for them, the forest
137 is full of sounds—exciting, mysterious, mournful, joyful. The shrill
182 trumpeting of an elephant, the sickening cough of a leopard (or the
825 hundred and one sounds that can be mistaken for it), always makes your heart beat a little unevenly, telling you that you are just the slightest bit scared, or even more. At night, in the honey season, you hear a weird, long-drawn-out, soulful cry high up in the trees. It seems to go on and on, and you wonder what kind of creature can cry for so long without taking breath. The people of the forest say it is the chameleon, telling them that there is honey nearby. Scientists will tell you that chameleons are unable to make any such sound. But the forest people of faraway Ceylon also know the song of the chameleon. Then in the early morning comes the pathetic cry of the pigeon, a plaintive cooing that slides from one note down to the next until it dies away in a soft, sad, little moan.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

There are a multitude of sounds, but most of them are as joyful as the brightly colored birds that chase one another through the trees, singing as they go, or the chatter of the handsome black-and-white Colobus monkeys as they leap from branch to branch, watching with curiosity everything that goes on down below. And the most joyful sound of all, to me, is the sound of the voices of the forest people as they sing a lusty chorus of praise to this wonderful world of theirs —a world that gives them everything they want. This cascade of sound echoes among the giant trees until it seems to come at you from all sides in sheer beauty and truth and goodness, full of the joy of living. But if you are an outsider from the non-forest world, I suppose this glorious song would just be another noise to grate on your nerves.

P 136 182 825 P 182 533

The world of the forest is a closed, possessive world, hostile to all those who do not understand it. At first sight you might think it hostile to all human beings, because in every village you find the same suspicion and fear of the forest, that blank, impenetrable wall. The villagers are friendly and hospitable to strangers, offering them the best of whatever food and drink they have, and always clearing out a house where the traveler can rest in comfort and safety. But these villages are set among plantations in great clearings cut from the heart of the forest around them. It is from the plantations that the food comes, not from the forest, and for the villagers life is a constant battle to prevent their plantations from being overgrown.

C 182 C [609] [574] C 182 241 361

They speak of the world beyond the plantations as being a fearful place, full of malevolent spirits and not fit to be lived in except by animals and BaMbuti, which is what the village people call the Pygmies. The villagers, some Bantu and some Sudanic, keep to their plantations and seldom go into the forest unless it is absolutely necessary. For them it is a place of evil. They are outsiders.

C 776 182 825 829

But the BaMbuti are the real people of the forest. Whereas the other tribes are relatively recent arrivals, the Pygmies have been in

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for
[141] belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

The earliest recorded reference to them is not Homer's famous 175
lines about the battle between the Pygmies and the cranes, as one might think, but a record of an expedition sent from Egypt in the Fourth Dynasty, some twenty-five hundred years before the Christian era, to discover the source of the Nile. In the tomb of the Pharaoh Nefrikare is preserved the report of his commander, Herkouf, who entered a great forest to the west of the Mountains of the Moon and discovered there a people of the trees, a tiny people who sing and dance to their god, a dance such as had never been seen before. Nefrikare sent a reply ordering Herkouf to bring one of these Dancers of God back with him, giving explicit instructions as to how he should be treated and cared for so that no harm would come to him. Unfortunately that is where the story ends, though later records show that the Egyptians had become relatively familiar with the Pygmies, who were evidently living, all those thousands of years back, just where they are living today, and leading much the same kind of life, characterized, as it still is, by dancing and singing to their god.

When Homer refers to the Pygmies, in describing a battle between Greek and Trojan forces in the *Iliad*, he may well be relying on information from Egyptian sources, but the element of myth is already creeping in.

> *When by their sev'ral chiefs the troops were rang'd,*
> *With noise and clamour, as a flight of birds,*
> *The men of Troy advanc'd; as when the cranes,*
> *Flying the wintry storms, send forth on high*
> *Their dissonant clamours, while o'er th'ocean stream*
> *They steer their course, and on their pinions bear*
> *Battle and death to the Pygmaean race.**

* Homer, *Iliad* (tr. Derby), iii, 1-7.

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175 By Aristotle's time the Western world was evidently still more inclined to treat the Pygmies as legend, because Aristotle himself has to state categorically that their existence is no fable, as some men believe, but the truth, and that they live in the land "from which flows the Nile." *

Mosaics in Pompeii show that, whether the Pygmies were believed to be fable or not, the makers of the mosaics in fact knew just how they lived, even the kinds of huts they built in the forest. But from then until the turn of the present century, our knowledge of the Pygmies decreased to the point where they were thought of as mythical creatures, semi-human, flying about in tree tops, dangling by their tails, and with the power of making themselves invisible. The cartographer who drew the thirteenth-century Mappa Mundi, preserved in Hereford Cathedral, England, located the Pygmies accurately enough, but his representations show them as subhuman monsters.

Evidently there was still some question as to their reality up to the seventeenth century, because the English anatomist Edward Tyson felt obliged to publish a treatise on "The Anatomy of a Pygmie compared with that of a Monkey, an Ape, and a Man." He had obtained from Africa the necessary skeletons, on which he based his conclusion that the so-called "pygmie" was, quite definitely, not human. The "pygmie" skeleton was preserved until recently in a London museum, and it was easy to see how Tyson arrived at so firm a conclusion. The skeleton was that of a chimpanzee.

Portuguese explorers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were responsible for many of the more extravagant accounts. It may well be that they actually did see Pygmies near the west coast of Africa, or they may have seen chimpanzees and mistaken them for Pygmies. But it is curious that they should have thought of the Pygmies as being able to make themselves invisible, and also as having the power, small as they were, to kill elephants.

[113] * Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* (tr. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson), vii, 2.

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ing the power, small as they were, to kill elephants. The Pygmies 000
today still kill elephants single-handed, armed only with a short- 224
handled spear. And they blend so well with the forest foliage that
you can pass right by without seeing them. As for their having tails, 291
it is easy enough to see how this story came into being, if the Pyg- [175]
mies seen by the Portuguese dressed as they do today, as is more
than likely. The loincloth they wear is made of the bark of a tree,
softened and hammered out until it is a long slender cloth, tucked
between the legs and over a belt, front and back. The women particularly like to have a long piece of cloth so that it hangs down behind, almost to the ground. They say it looks well when dancing.

Some of the accounts of nineteenth-century travelers in the Congo 175
are no less fanciful, and it was George Schweinfurth who first made known to the world, in his book *The Heart of Africa*, that Pygmies not only existed but were human. He was following in the path of the Italian explorer Miani, who a few years earlier had reached the Ituri but had died before he could return. One of the most curious of little-known stories about the Pygmies is that Miani actually sent two of them back to Italy, to the Geographic Association, which had sponsored his trip. The president of the association, Count Miniscalchi of Verona, took the two boys and educated them. Contemporary newspaper reports describe them as strolling the boulevards, arm in arm with their Italian friends, chatting in Italian. One of them even learned to play the piano. From the present Count Miniscalchi I learned that both Pygmies eventually returned to Africa, where one died and the other became a saddler in the Ethiopian army. He last heard from the latter, who must then have been an old man, just before the outbreak of World War II.

Stanley describes his meetings with the Pygmies in the Ituri, but 175
without telling us much about them, and indeed little was known 114
beyond the actual fact of their existence until a White Father, the

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175 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twen-
114 ties to study them.

114 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in
144 which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later
174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not
533 ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's
177 account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 177
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [161]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [174]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Sche- [177]
besta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three [411]
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

114 105 177 initiation camp, I could not accept this point of view at all. Yet it was one shared by others, some of whom had lived in the area for years.

114 177 The explanation was simple enough, and it was not that either one of us was right and the other wrong. Whereas Father Schebesta had always had to work through Negroes, and largely in Negro villages, I had been fortunate in being able to make direct contact with the Pygmies, and in fact had spent most of my time with them away from Negro influence. Other Europeans had also only seen the Pygmies either in Negro villages or on Negro plantations. But I had seen enough of them both in the forest and in the village to know that they were completely different people in the two sets of circumstances. All that we knew of them to date had been based on observations made either in the villages or in the presence of Negroes.

114 Whereas my first visit to the Ituri Forest, in 1951, had been made mainly out of curiosity, I had seen enough to make me want to return to this area for more intensive study. An ideal location was provided by a strange establishment set up on the banks of the Epulu River back in the nineteen-twenties by an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam.* He had gone there to do his field work but had liked the place and the people so much that he decided to stay. He built himself a huge mud mansion, and gradually a village grew up around him and became known as "Camp Putnam." The Pygmies treated it just as they treated any other Bantu village (the main Negro tribes nearby were the BaBira and BaNdaka, with a few Moslem BaNgwana), and used to visit it to trade their meat for plantation products. This was where I first met them.

* Patrick Putnam first went to the Belgian Congo in 1927 to do field work for Harvard University. Apart from one or two brief return visits to the United States he remained there until his death at the end of 1955. At Camp Putnam he established a dispensary and a leper colony, turning his home into a guest house to help pay the expenses of his hospital work.

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But on my second visit, in 1954, I was provided with a real opportunity for studying the relationship between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. The event was the decision of the local Negro chief to hold a tribal nkumbi initiation festival. This is a festival in which all boys between the ages of about nine and twelve are circumcised, then set apart and kept in an initiation camp where they are taught the secrets of tribal lore, to emerge after two or three months with the privileges and responsibilities of adult status. 114 177 881

The nkumbi is a village custom, but in areas where the practice prevails the Pygmies always send their children to be initiated along with the Negro boys. This has been cited as an example of their dependence on the Negroes and of their lack of an indigenous culture. The Negroes take all the leading roles in the festival, and as no Pygmy belongs to the tribe, none can become a ritual specialist, so the Pygmy boys always have to depend on the Negroes for admission to an initiation, and for the subsequent instruction. An uninitiated male, Pygmy or Negro, young or old, is considered as a child—half a man at best. 177 881

Only relatives of the boys undergoing initiation are allowed to live in the camp, though any adult initiated male can visit the camp during the daytime.

But it so happened that on this occasion there were no Negro boys of the right age for initiation, so the only men who could live in the camp and stay there all night were Pygmies. To go against the custom of allowing just relatives to live in the camp would have brought death and disaster. Nevertheless the Negroes went ahead with the festival because it has to be held to avoid offending the tribal ancestors. The Negro men would have liked to stay in the camp all night, as normally instruction goes on even then, the boys being allowed to sleep only for short periods. But custom was too strong, and they had to rely on the Pygmy fathers to maintain order in the camp after dark and not allow the children to have too much sleep.

123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
177 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
881 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco, palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested, but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions; on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
[352] the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between us by all the discomforts we had shared together as well as by all the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
177 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near [533] the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551] his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gouged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

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123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same
when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

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their songs of praise to the forest, the molimo answered them, first 123
on this side, then on that, moving around so swiftly and silently 533
that it seemed to be everywhere at once. 534

Then, still unseen, it was right beside me, not more than two feet away, on the other side of a small but thick wall of leaves. As it replied to the song of the men, who continued to sing as though nothing were happening, the sound was sad and wistful, and immensely beautiful. Several of the older men were sitting near me, and one of them, without even looking up, asked me if I wanted to see the molimo. He then continued singing as though he didn't particularly care what my reply was, but I knew that he did. I was so overcome by curiosity that I almost said "yes"; I had been fighting hard to stop myself from trying to peer through the leaves to where it was now growling away almost angrily. But I knew that Pygmy youths were not allowed to see it until they had proved themselves as hunters, as adults in Pygmy eyes, and although I now carried the marks on my forehead I still felt unqualified. So I simply said, no, I did not think I was ready to see it.

The molimo gave a great burst of song and with a wild rush swept across the camp, surrounded by a dozen youths packed so tightly together that I could see nothing, and disappeared into the forest. Those left in the camp made no comment; they just kept on with their song, and after a while the voice of the molimo, replying to them, became fainter and fainter and was finally lost in the night and in the depths of the forest from where it had come.

This experience convinced me that here was something that I 123
could do that was really worth while, and that I was not doing it justice by coming armed with cameras and recording equipment, as I had on this trip. The Pygmies were more than curiosities to be filmed, and their music was more than a quaint sound to be put on

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123 records. They were a people who had found in the forest something that made their life more than just worth living, something that made it, with all its hardships and problems and tragedies, a wonderful thing full of joy and happiness and free of care.

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2

The Good Death of Balekimito

After two years' further preparation at Oxford I felt ready to return to the Ituri, to try and understand just what it was that made the People of the Forest what they were, what made them so very different from the villagers all around them, what made them seem to adopt village ways with such enthusiasm, only to abandon them with utter unconcern the moment they left the treeless confines of the village and returned to the forest. 121

If you land at Lomé, you drive first of all along the coast of Togo and Dahomey, where the Atlantic surf pounds day and night on 000

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000 the sands, beating right up to the first line of tall, waving palm trees. Then you climb gently inland to the rolling hills of Nigeria, lightly wooded in places, but for the most part open and fertile. When you cross into the Cameroons there is an abrupt change. You pass steeply up into a massive range of mountains, through a narrow but dense belt of forest, and climb still higher until you are above tree line.

The road is appalling, covered with loose stones and boulders, with a gradient as much as one in four in places, deeply scoured with gulleys made by the heavy rains pouring off the mountainside. The road twists and turns until you lose all sense of direction, but at the top there is an open, flat stretch of grassland, and at the far side of that, in the French Cameroons, you find yourself faced with a descent as uncomfortable as the climb on the British side. But here, instead of looking down on rich farmland, open and sunny, you look out over a vast sea of dense, shimmering tree tops, so dark they are almost black. On all sides this ocean of forest stretches for as far as you can see, quiet and peaceful, asking only to be left undisturbed, or at least approached in peace. But the darkness also carries a threat, a warning to outsiders that they would do well to stay away. The same darkness welcomes those who understand, and there is no feeling quite the same as the refreshing coolness of the first shadows cast by the leafy giants at the forest edge, after years away from its shade and shelter.

131 From there on, the forest stretches east and south, silent and aloof,
133 for thousands of miles. To the west the Atlantic is only a short distance away; to the east the forest reaches all the way to the Mountains of the Moon. It is still with you when you cross the Ubangi Chari River, possessively covering the land right down to the water's edge. On the far side of that great river there is still another thousand miles before you reach the river Aruwimi, the wide and proud tributary of the even mightier Congo. After a few hundred miles the Aruwimi becomes less wide but more tempestuous and turbulent,

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion still stood.

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

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One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.
464 Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
[559] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, showing it to me with infinite pride.

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

to raid the Negro plantations myself, and to cut the huge banana leaves on which we used to sleep every night. On such occasions Kenge would return late, when he thought I was asleep, lie down beside me, and very soon begin to work the blanket off my back until he was comfortably covered. If I objected, he merely muttered something that I couldn't understand but that brought titters of laughter from all the other Pygmies lying around the fire. 115 123

When I told him he was fired, he took it as permission to take two or three days' holiday. Then one morning I would wake up to find a neatly dressed and unrepentant Kenge squatting over a smoky fire concocting an especially elaborate breakfast for the two of us. In the middle of eating breakfast, without asking me if I had had enough, he would often take the dish and pass it with a grand air to the other unmarried youths sitting hungrily around. If I protested he would simply tell me that I had eaten enough. If I said that I couldn't afford to feed all the bachelors in the camp, he would ask me how much my Leica camera had cost. Since it cost me four hundred dollars, and for four hundred dollars I could live in the Congo for four hundred weeks, there was no effective answer. Kenge knew it, and besides, he was on his own territory. I was a mere intruder.

So when I heard that Kenge had become chief bugler for the Animal Station I was both relieved and sad. I knew I had been saved a lot of headaches, but Kenge was worth them all, and more. I began to look around for someone else who could take his place. Then one morning, just a few days after I had arrived, I woke up, and there he was, a well-groomed Pygmy in buttonless shorts and shirt, a cup of coffee balanced expertly in one hand. I asked him about his bugling, and he said he was tired of having to get up so early every morning, and anyway it hurt his lips. He announced that he was going to work for me again. I told him I could not afford to pay him much, as I wanted to stay a long time and had to make my money last. Kenge looked at me in the frank, open-eyed way of the real

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

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hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Ageronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

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156

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with 578 the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [754] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to 578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp [583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

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The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naive Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies. 156 621 551 [194]

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njebo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest. 156 571 621 [674] [538]

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's 115 602

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115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. [301]
The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
[184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
522 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

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763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Agerongo were the chief diggers.
[179] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

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Kelemoke, although he was a close relative of the girl's, was in particularly good humor. P 764

Meanwhile the body had been bathed, scented, wrapped in a white cloth, tied up in a mat and placed on a rough wooden bier. This was strictly according to Negro custom. In the forest the Pygmies would have been unable to get the soap and scent and cloth, for one thing, and would not have had the tools to dig an elaborate grave, for another. The bier was brought to the graveyard, which lay behind the village, in a noisy, wailing procession of Pygmies and Negroes. The body was carefully lowered into the grave. Rather grotesquely they made sure which end was which by grasping the head and twisting it under its covering. The body was oriented, laid on its side in a niche that had been cut under one wall of the grave, and held in place with three stones. Sticks were placed at an angle over it, and these were covered with leaves, then with moist earth, so that no soil should fall on the body. Then the grave was filled, some people throwing in a handful of earth, others just standing and watching. The mother and older sister tried to throw themselves into the half-filled grave and had to be dragged away. Cephu was weeping so bitterly that he had to be supported. Among the Negroes there is a strict ruling about funeral protocol—who is allowed to wail and who is not, who is allowed to support the chief mourner, a purely formal gesture, and so on. But this funeral followed no such rules. Whenever it made no difference to them the Pygmies followed the Negro custom, but the moment they wanted to go their own way they did. P 764 177 C 764 152

Before the grave was completely covered the women left. The Negroes directed the operation of guiding the spirit safely away by pouring a bucket of water, first into a hole left in the earth above the head of the corpse, then down the grave and off in the direction of the forest, away from the village. To the Negroes the forest is the place for spirits of the dead; they must be kept away from the village at all costs. P 764 177 C 764 175

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000 village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as
P being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting
764 the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be
177 severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly
522 cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends
P in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be af-
[201] fected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

C The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of
761 settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no
764 death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was
P not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not
[761] co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and
[177] that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

P Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's
765 little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Móke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them [796] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect. [761]

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekianga and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekianga, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever. 763

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

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763 She looked up at me with eyes that already had a bluish film over them and caught hold of my hand. She said she wanted to die near her son and was glad to be back again. She agreed to take some white man's medicine, and the dispenser from the Station de Chasse was sent for. This was quite a departure, as this family had always resisted more strongly than any the use of modern medicine.

[057 177]

Ekianga was almost beside himself. Gray-haired Asofalinda, no longer stiff and rough, but full of kindness, tried to comfort her younger brother, but she was too full of grief herself. She knelt on the ground beside her mother and wept. The old lady was the only one who seemed fully in control of herself, though the room was filled with wailing men, women and children. When the dispenser came she flickered to life with a burst of her old flame and slapped feebly at him with a bony hand as he pulled gently at her bark cloth to give her an injection, telling him to mind what he was doing. I felt her wince as the needle went in, but she continued looking up and smiling her old sweet smile. She was among her relatives and her friends, and that was all she wanted; she knew the injection would do no good. She held onto me so tightly that I couldn't leave until she finally dozed off; then when her grasp relaxed I quietly left and went out into the sunlight. Everyone was sitting around morosely, almost angrily. Even the little children, whom I had seen playing contentedly through other funerals, were quiet, holding onto their mothers in a frightened way. Everyone was watching Ekianga's fine wooden door, waiting for the end, waiting for old Balekimito to die for ever.

It was only a matter of hours. She never woke up.

The demonstration of grief that followed was no mere formal expression ordained by custom; it was something very real and disturbing. I have seen death in a Negro village where the atmosphere was one of fear—fear of sorcery, of the power of evil that had been unleashed. Here it was quite different. It was not a feeling of

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fear, but a recognition of the completeness of a loss that could never 763
be made good. There was a finality and terrible emptiness in old Balekimito's death which could not be answered, for which there was no explanation, not even through sorcery or witchcraft. For the moment it seemed that the Pygmies, faced with the death of an old and well-loved and respected person such as this old lady, had nothing to cling to, and I was genuinely afraid that some of them would come to harm. Young and old alike crowded around the house, trying to force their way to Balekimito's deathbed. They were even fighting to get in, and once inside they fought to get out. At one point several children came flying out in a frenzy and threw themselves onto the ground, beating it with their arms and legs, kicking and biting at anyone who tried to comfort them. Inside, the commotion was even worse—Asofalinda, looking almost as old as her dead mother, had [762] put a noose around her neck and seemed to be trying to strangle herself, full of remorse at having let her mother die. It took three men to take the noose from her neck, and when they finally tore it from her she ran outside and collapsed on the ground, sobbing her heart out.

Even Moke quietly forced his way into the death room and stayed there for a few minutes, saying nothing, making no sound, while tears rolled down his wrinkled face. Then he went out again and helped Asofalinda into the shade. Only Tungana and his wife, Bonyo, remained where they were, outside their hut a few yards away. They were too old for the exertion, and they just sat and cried to themselves, unashamed.

I went to my half-finished veranda to get out of the sun and found Kenge and a number of youths sitting around a fire. No [372] matter how hot it is, there always has to be a fire. After a while the 763 rest of the men joined us and sat silently, as though waiting. Then 761 Moke came into the middle of the veranda and started talking, very softly and quietly, so that it was difficult to hear him at all. The

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763 761 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest." [745] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 [556] Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up [329] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said. [126] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we [148] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they [152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he [328] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [152]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

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3

The Making of Camp Lelo

484 WHEN KENGE WOKE ME the sun was not yet up, and the birds were still silent in the trees. It was three days after Balekimito's funeral, and the previous night it had been decided in a general discussion that we should all leave early in the morning and build a camp at the Lelo River, several hours' walk away.

[482] Already the Pygmy village was alive with women bundling up their household possessions in the baskets they would carry on their [224] backs. The men were busy checking their hunting nets, examining their arrow shafts and testing their bows, or sharpening the blades of their spears. The children were running about in the semi-darkness,

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The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko*, a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[197] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-
tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4452, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4479, Music of the Ituri Forest

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

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BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481 484
and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their 186
slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484 224
evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, [015]
he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131
Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484
what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [114]
lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222
and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114]
quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

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222 Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles
[482] and hitched them to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we
484 came up behind the women who had started early. They had also
[222] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the
[482] small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been
[136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we
484 passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

1 [i.e. bundles of mushrooms. - Analyst]

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night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, 372 484
keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by 484
recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now 133
and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main [515]
stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into [921]
the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally 361
arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. 484
It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most 361
114

361 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of
114 what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

139 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountain-
132 ous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective.
137 Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist.
[136] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all
[361] but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

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In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way
across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen
tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top
of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only
paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride.
He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food
and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-
clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they
turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Many-
alibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting
as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down
their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their
houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets
down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with
bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been
examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night
before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest
behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[546] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
[825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond. 361 342 412 [123]

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds. 342 314 48 114 123 [121] [487]

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground 314 114 123 [412]

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314 and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far
114 edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle
123 had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they
went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did
[222] they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to re-
fresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by
running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the
fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself.
With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we
set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

361 As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we
114 heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children
from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and
were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and
perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily up-
ward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

361 The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had ar-
342 rived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house.
Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses
side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for
Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son,
Agerongo, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and
Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my
hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the
342 path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for
[123] her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and
[122] leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she
[516] squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the
ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so
that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle
she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them
together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

3: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their 476
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But [622]
I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [155]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married. If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [965]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were
the only household to bother with a table. The others would build
[251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat
that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would
build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each
[284] about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around
the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with
a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable
352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to
516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over
515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they
do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple
chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking
out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf
from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy
578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the
finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently
have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had
built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of
their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives.
During the course of any one camp women are continually adding
to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good
[126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small
community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which
huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that
Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately
away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the
space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the suspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- 826
[842]

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156 Kondabaze still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts.
152 Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were children. Kondabaze
156 decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known,
156 and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed
152 her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black
302 juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked
[361] just a little dangerous. Kondabaze decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

765 During the afternoon Amabou, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the
[283] entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *ndusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabou tied the other in a
[282] noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut
765 the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket
392 was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

765 I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this
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was. He told me it was the *kumamolimo*, "the place of the molimo," and now that everyone was here we were going to start the festival. The food that had been collected from hut to hut was to feed the molimo, because the molimo was a hungry animal that ate a great deal. He added pointedly that it smoked a great deal too, and when I gave him several packets of cigarettes he solemnly put them with the food in the molimo basket.

About an hour later, when I was in my hut, I noticed that Makubasi and Ausu were standing outside, obviously wanting to say something. Usually they were not backward about interrupting, and I was puzzled when Ausu beckoned with his head that I should come outside. He whispered in my ear that a few of them were going off to get the molimos, as we were to start the festival that night. Masimongo, Kenge's brother-in-law, had said that he, as well as Manyalibo, wanted to bring out his molimo, and make it a doubly great festival. Half a dozen youths were waiting to see if I would go with them, but they told me that the place where the molimo lived was a long way off and we would have to run all the way and return when it was dark.

Of course I said I would go, and we started off immediately. But halfway across the camp Masimongo leaped into my way and shouted that I was not to go. For a moment there was a loud and sharp argument, most of which I could not follow. Finally Njobo, to whom everyone always listened, said that he had seen me in the forest and knew I could travel as well and as fast as the others, so that I would be safe. Masisi then objected with a shrill torrent of words, saying that the molimo was none of my business. For a moment I felt like saying I would not go, as I certainly did not want to cause any bad feeling. The others were already moving off at a run, down the path through the glade, not waiting for me.

Njobo pushed me on the shoulder and said to follow quickly, if I was sure I could keep up and would not be afraid of traveling in the

31 Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly
to Masinongo and Masini, that the molimo had already sung to me
[885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the
forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lele, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Asuu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was
[427] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Illustrations

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Photographs by Colin M. Turnbull

[P 72-A]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Tungana, a grandfather many times over, in a genet-skin cap.

[P. 72-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Mamu hunts birds and monkeys. The wooden point of his arrow is tipped with poison.

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[R 72-C]

I: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.

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Agemonga's wife prepares a bundle of mongongo leaves for thatching her hut.

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[P 72-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.
[P.72-E]

J: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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A group of men sets off for the hunt, some carrying their hunting

[P.72-F1]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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nets, others spears or bows and arrows.

[P. 72- F 2]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Opposite: Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with *kangay* juice for a wedding.

Akidinimba (in hat) celebrates her forthcoming wedding with the other girls of the *elima*.

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[P 72-G]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Masalito comforts the young Kaoya during the *nkumbi* rites at a Negro village.

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[EF '72-I]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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A Pygmy camp. This one is Cephu's.

[P-72-J]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P. 72-K]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

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Old Moke (in a sloth-skin hat) listens as Cephu tells a legend.

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[P 72-L]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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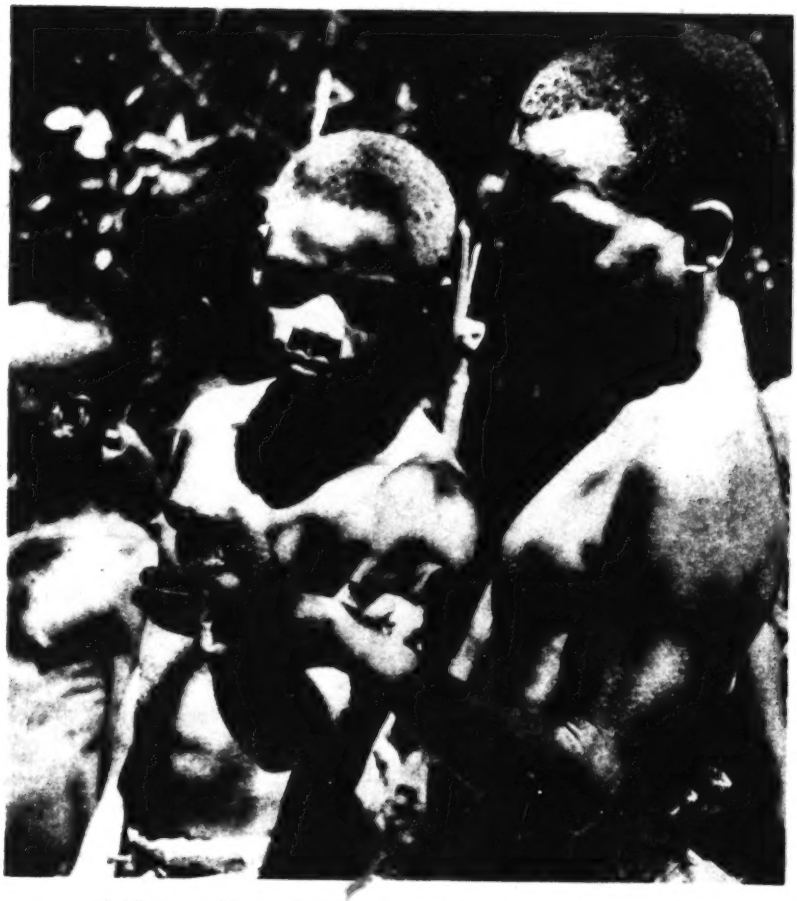

Kelekome and his uncle, Masalito, examine a piece of honeycomb to see if the hive is ready for raiding. Honey is probably the most prized food in the forest.

[P.72-M]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched the ground but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo,
534 which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen
123 from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional ma-
177 terials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer
[533] pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Ausu, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night.

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up.

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Ausu said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway."

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Ausu took the end of the

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that [534] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in [778] themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest [186] wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

765 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the 533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh- 534 ter Kondabate and her husband Ausu, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amabosu, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
539 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was sing- 765
ing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed 533
it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but 539
the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang 825
again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important 765
it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me 533
around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that [854]
Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general 765
pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but [183]
with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all [854]
women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the [533]

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
372 quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
373 which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
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would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that 765
Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion 533
and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, al- 578
ways upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little 688
group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the 765
night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different 533
nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead 535
in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. 88
Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. 765
Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, 882
those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent 533
and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought 534
cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765. If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
598 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I felt that air of importance and

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals;
every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

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know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
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crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 534
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting 322

765 534 322 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [487] [137] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 534 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534
for old men to talk about these things. 123 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322]
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411]
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157]
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

115 But, most important, he[1] told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not
[533] looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[1] [i.e. Moke - analyst]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

5

The Crime of Cephu, the Bad Hunter

765 533 EVERY NIGHT the men gathered to sing the songs of the molimo, and every morning the youths awakened the camp with their shouts and yells. This went on week after week, yet the daily life of the hunting group continued as though nothing particularly unusual was [152] happening. The men were more sleepy in the mornings, and sometimes tempers were short, but never for long. The necessities of hunting and gathering for a living did not allow it.

512 As soon as the camp was light and there was no further danger of the molimo's making an appearance, the women emerged from their huts and went down to the river to bathe and to collect water

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 4% 286 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [482] 251 [372] The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 777 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, looking in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from another fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground.

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

224 The end of the net stopped a few feet short of the boulders, and Maipe deftly joined it to his net; then, slipping each coil off his shoulder in turn, he hung his own net, fastening it to low branches and saplings. It stretched for about three hundred feet, so that one end was completely out of sight from the other. It stood about four feet high, and Maipe walked the length of it, silently adjusting it so that it touched the ground all the way along and was securely fastened above. If he found the net drooping where there was no support, he cut a sapling, stuck it in the ground and hung the net on it, bending the top sharply back, twisting it around and through the mesh so that the net could not slip. When this was done he took up his spear and casually sharpened it with a stone picked off the ground.

It was about another five minutes before he suddenly stood up and beckoned me to do the same. He stood absolutely motionless, his head slightly on one side, listening; his spear was raised just a few inches from the ground. I listened too, but could hear nothing. The forest had become silent; even the crickets had stopped their almost incessant chirping. Maipe raised his spear higher, and then at some signal that I did not even notice there was a burst of shouting, yelling, hooting and clapping, as the women and children started the beat. They must have been about half a mile away, and as they came closer the noise was deafening. We saw one antelope, a large [136] red sondu, ears back, leaping toward the boulders as though it were heading straight for our net, but at the last moment it saw us and veered away to the left. Maipe could probably have killed it with his spear, but he said, "That is not for us. It will probably fall into Ekianga's net." Just then there was a lot of yelling from Moke's nephew. Maipe vaulted over the net and ran swiftly, leaping and bounding like the sondu to avoid obstacles. I followed as best I could, but was passed by several youngsters from farther down the [136] line before I reached the others. The sondu had gone into Ekianga's

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula*, had tried to fight its way through Moke's net. 224 [136]

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekianga with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back. [114] [825]

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and 825 [223] [231]

825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and
578 assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and
156 complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I
123 had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

224 This dance was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
57 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
152 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
[165] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

λ [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

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for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, *"Nyama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!"* (Animal there! Animal there! Come at once, *you*, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekianga and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masisi spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu did so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the [281] civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hat. He looked peaceful and contented.

224 765 578 156 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 765 578 156 593 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, [602] [621] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 156 152 224 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu 224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, 578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped 156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

6

The Giver of the Law

CEPHU HAD COMMITTED what is probably one of the most heinous crimes in Pygmy eyes, and one that rarely occurs. Yet the case was settled simply and effectively, without any evident legal system being brought into force. It cannot be said that Cephu went unpunished, because for those few hours when nobody would speak to him he must have suffered the equivalent of as many days solitary confinement for anyone else. To have been refused a chair by a mere youth, not even one of the great hunters; to have been laughed at by women and children; to have been ignored by men—none of these things would be quickly forgotten. Without any formal process of

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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224 156 626 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. [858] Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight. 627 681 [685]

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention. 684 835

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned [412] [152]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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684 835 [152] their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 835 627 [153] "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857]
by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593]
burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] [593]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602]
the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] [181] [522] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; they are always making jokes about one another, even about themselves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, 593
insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious 578
issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and 593
ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest 578
brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been 554
brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed 157
that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, [164]
which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside 578
his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him 607
the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly 276
from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a 576
visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

578 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and
607 knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only
276 wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take
576 offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to
[152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should
593 never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This
578 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier
276 than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tear-
152 lessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of 593
his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law 578
were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy 276
was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and 152
gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to 593
thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was posi- 578
tively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four 152
feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then [141]
pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by [536]
a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

593 578 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he 152 fell flat on his face.

[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 578 152 621 626 689 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 626 576 836 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an [152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

578
clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. 626
Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and 576 836
woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing [152]
Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo 578
had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole 626
camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the 554
hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively 578
immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the 689

578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

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607
593 the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself
595 and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time,
853 and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening
578 [852] meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu
595 continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange
411 eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end,
578 Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He
607 looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives
595 were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's
578 wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her
607 brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that.

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake.

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

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593 595 598 606 607 887 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 578 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

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The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway. 621 622 578

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass. 626 593 584

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility. 626 157 181

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator. 621 829 778

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7

The Play World of the BaMbuti

181 In the forest life appears to be free and easy, happy-go-lucky, with a certain amount of perpetual disorder as a result. But in fact, beneath all that there *is* order and reason; reaching everywhere is the firm, controlling hand of the forest itself.

186 If individual responsibility and authority are shunned and dis-
561 persed in other aspects of Pygmy life, as in the maintenance of law
601 and order, a similar pattern appears in the upbringing of children. It is no accident that a child calls everyone in the same age group as his parents "father" or "mother"; those still older are called "grandparents." Those of the same age as himself he refers to by a

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512

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512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away
[237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted
[412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either
[386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of
287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in
462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the
[516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and simplicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Netmaking is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or

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286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net
to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves
have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives
come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built.
Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp,
since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite
fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to
back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite
directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and
if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be
changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut.
Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the
husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken
all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife
was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for
her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and
very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the frame-
work of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time
since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The
poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to 342
pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished 462
their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. 593
It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled [201]
"*Ayiiiiii?*"—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the 512
camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before 224
the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught 202
what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

512 224 [202] go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 [157] Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 439 177 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands 538
upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the 439
seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked 177
in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and [224]
I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, [251]
and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw 538
a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up 439
with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. 177 776
I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They [186]
would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died [769]
many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

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538 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down
439 the trail.
177
776 "As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits.
[186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda,
177 Ekianga's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the
[776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole. 538 776 177

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies." 538 536 776 177 [789]

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside, and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon. [522]

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet 512 821 181

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512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
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224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
527 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
574 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

177 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
[151] Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number 177
thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the 525
Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple [151]
of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but 177
they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get 186
a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies 574
have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they
understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the [828]
criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have 648
some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more 177
Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two 123
servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and 177
a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and [262]
sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of [521]
her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She P 123 177 439 obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was P 123 177 well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each C 832 [576] other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 [513] [372] That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

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I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

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Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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blanket, no matter how annoyed with me he was. These villagers—they were just animals.

When I awoke in the morning I hardly dared open my eyes, but a tentative exploration proved that the other half of the bed was empty. I thought all was well after all. Amina had cut her losses and left at dawn. But when I had put my trousers on and stooped through the low entrance of the hut into the camp, there she was. She was sitting on a log beside the hut, quietly fanning the fire and cooking my breakfast, just as every other wife was doing for her husband. Kenge was making it very obvious to everyone that he was eating with the bachelors, who were making it obvious that they had not slept in my hut that night. Everyone else studiously ignored my appearance, except old Moke, who was walking past on his way to the stream to bathe. He looked at me sideways, shook his head and gave a little knowing old laugh. And as he walked on he shook his head all the more vigorously and laughed all the louder.

I was about to go after him, thinking that at least I could ask his advice, but Amina caught hold of my trouser leg and said, "There is no need for you to go to the stream to bathe. I have brought you water—behind the hut." So I went behind the hut and washed, and then sat down and had breakfast, while Amina went to join the other women and chat with them. While she was gone Kenge strolled by and elaborately asked me if the food was all right. He also asked me, rather loudly, if I had slept well. Amina answered from across the camp, "Yes, he told me to mend the leak in the roof!" This proof of domestic bliss brought howls of mirth from all around, the more infuriating because I could not see what was funny about it. Then Kenge told me that this was what men always said to their wives when they wanted to be allowed to sleep in peace.

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That night, Amina and I came to an agreement. She was to stay with me and cook my food—and mend leaks in the roof every night.

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This way she would preserve her reputation and I mine, and there would be no complications. And so it was. P 123

I grew very fond of Amina, and some time later, when I was in a village and became very ill, she walked ten miles every day to see me, and ten miles back. She brought me refreshing fruits and sweet-smelling plants and flowers, and sat beside my bed without saying a word. Only once, I woke up and found she was sitting on the edge of the bed and holding my hand in hers.

When the Pygmies moved camp, Amina took the opportunity to go back to her father's village. I was never sure whether I was glad, or more than just a little sorry, to see her go. But when I thought about it, I realized that apart from all the other reasons, Amina could never have stayed. No matter how well she was liked by the Pygmies, she was still a villager. She had not been brought up to do the hundred and one little things that a Pygmy woman has to know how to do. She did not even know how to beat on the hunt, let alone which vines to follow to find the delicacies hidden in the ground by their roots. She belonged to another world. P 17 186

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8

Molimo: the Dance of Death

512 THE LELO RIVER flowed on, rising and falling endlessly; the men went out to hunt and returned with meat; the women went out to gather and came back with mushrooms and nuts and fruits; the children laughed and played. Old men and women did a little foraging in the vicinity of the camp, then sat in the cool shade and told one another about all the things they had done when they were young and would do all over again if they had the chance. At Apa Lelo one day followed the last in this happy-go-lucky way as though this was all there was to life.

ooo But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food,

 But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food, P 765 [776] showing that it was a kumamolimo, the only outward indication that the God of the Forest had been invoked and was waiting silently nearby, in the trees or in the Lelo itself, ready to enter the camp at night and join his people in their songs of joy and praise. The casual observer might have thought the youngsters were playing a game when they went around from hut to hut with a fishing line and a basket, collecting food from everyone. There was certainly nothing about their demeanor to indicate that this was an essential part of a great act of communion. And if the same observer were told that this was so, he would probably form the opinion that the molimo, whatever it was, could not mean very much if it was treated so lightly and casually.

This, in fact, is the opinion of the villagers. For them the ritual C 765 act is the important thing. In their religious rites it is the correct performance of the ceremonial that counts most. If correctly performed it is bound to bring the desired results, regardless of the accompanying thought, if indeed there is any. All attention is focused on the act itself. And it must not only be performed correctly, but with a solemnity that betrays fear.

The difference between the two attitudes is perhaps one of those P C 765 fine shades of difference that divide magic from religion, though 771 there is so much overlapping that they can seldom be divided in 789 practice. Whereas the villagers believe that the act itself brings about P results in a way they cannot explain, which is what we call magic, 778 the BaMbuti do not believe this at all. They believe in a benevolent deity or supernatural power which they identify with the forest. To this they owe as much respect and affection and consideration as they owe to their own parents, and from it they can expect the same in return. So, for the Pygmies, it is not so much the act itself that P 765 counts, or the manner in which the act is performed, but the thought 771 that goes with it. The collecting of food from hut to hut is not a

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765 791 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which every single member of the group must participate.

765 562 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole concern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

881 765 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was married to Asu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Asu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima*, and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 574 888 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her husband. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives, but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 888 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese*, the Great Ones— 765
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabaer's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123]
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

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765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Kondabate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end. They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night. It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

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765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
147 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

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this direction and that; even her fingers each seemed to have a dance of its own. But her head was still, and her eyes were fixed on those of Kondabate. 765 562 535

At this point Kondabate handed the banja to another of the women standing nearby and led the young girls right into the center of the men's group, dancing in a close circle around the molimo fire. As they moved around, the men stood up and made room for them, and now the singing came almost entirely from the women. The men just stood and stamped and clapped and growled a bass accompaniment. The girls danced more and more wildly, but their heads and eyes were always turned toward the molimo fire, no matter how violent the body movement. After nearly half an hour the old woman, still crouching, ran into the center after the girls, and turning to face them from the far side of the fire she drove them slowly backward, back until they were lost among the others at the edge of the group. The singing was quieter, and in a few minutes it faded away altogether. Not a word was spoken. K5 562 535 533

After a short rest the singing started again, and this time there was no mistaking it—the women were leading. Manyalibo's wife picked up the banja and beat them, sharply and decisively, and the girls began the song. The men followed in obedient chorus. Once again, as the song grew faster, the old woman began to twitch until her whole body was alive with movement. Then she sprang up and came into the center of the kumamolimo alone. For an instant she stood there, and her head moved sharply from side to side. It was like the movement of a bird, keeping a wary eye open for possible foes. As she began to dance she seemed to sink slowly into the ground, her knees folding up like a concertina, her body bending at the waist; but always her head stuck out in front, jerking from side to side, eyes staring and expressionless.

She circled the fire three times, looking out and upward into the night, but unseeing; then as if satisfied that she was alone and un- [372]

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765 observed she flung her head and her whole body around and faced
562 the fire directly. She was about seven or eight feet away from it. She
535 advanced slowly and cautiously, two steps forward, one step back,
533 her attention riveted on the flames. The singing was louder and faster,
372 but she refused to be hurried. At her own pace she approached closer and closer until it seemed impossible that she could stand the heat. She hesitated at the brink of the fire, her frail body gleaming with sweat, her face glowing and trembling. She made as if she was going to pounce on the fire, but whirled around at the last moment and danced quickly back to where the women were singing, watching her, eagerly and anxiously. She sat down on her haunches and accepted a steaming bowl of liko.

The singing did not stop this time but went on quietly at a slower tempo. The men made no attempt to move back closer to the fire. After about ten minutes the old lady, apparently refreshed and as full of vigor as ever, danced back into the men's circle, with Kondabate at her side. Their movements were perfectly co-ordinated, even to the twitching of their heads; as they sank down close to the
765 ground they might have been one person. But as they neared the
562 fire, again having circled it several times, the old woman sprang to
535 her feet and ran swiftly around to the far side and crouched there,
372 staring at Kondabate through the flames. They started circling once more, each keeping her eyes on the other, moving from side to side so that they were always opposite each other. But now they were closer to the fire than they had ever been and on their hands and knees they passed through the hot ashes, as though trying to reach each other through the flames.

Finally Kondabate retreated and squatted down at the edge of the circle, her body twitching just as the old woman's had done, her eyes staring and empty as she gazed at the molimo fire. The men heaped more wood on the flames, which were beginning to die down.
[533] Now they were singing as loudly as the women, stamping on the

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames. 765 562 535 372 [533]

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and [831] 765 562

765 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making
562 any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned"
562 the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the
993 women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to
[462] play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had
372 asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy
182 it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again,
533 and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evidently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the 361
village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village.

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little 857
groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest 152
nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the 883
village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pyg- 177
mies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the 152
tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake.

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, 883
particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were 177
silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate 521
with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers 273
and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And [836]
not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine

883 would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and
170 buy themselves beer."
52
[273] "And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who
52 was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself
[152] up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo
[765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been.
533 The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it
[535] with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by 765
the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering 533
from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, [136]
and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them [152]
with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two 765
trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh 534
and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had 177
to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers. The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations 177
among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

P 177 to verify just how much meat there was, accusing them of having eaten it all themselves. But the Pygmies paid no attention. Some made for their own village and dumped their belongings there. I wandered on with the others who went straight to their patrons to whom they presented the meat they had brought with them. Before long they were sitting down in whatever shade they could find, fanning themselves to keep the flies and mosquitoes away, eating heartily from enamel dishes, drinking dirty village water from enamel mugs.

P 179 361 C 361 After spending some time, rather like the Pygmies, greeting the various villagers, I returned to the Pygmy village and sat in the shade of my veranda looking down the dismal, double row of tumbledown huts. About half a mile away, in the background, the forest raised its tall dark face against the edge of the plantations, dwarfing the leafy plantain trees that were only three times as tall as men, making them look like blades of grass. Ineffectual blades of grass that had, with the help of village-man, usurped the place of the great primeval forest, but which in a year or two would be choked to a final death as the forest claimed its own. Clouds of dust arose as a small, disconsolate group of children played football with a ball presented to them by some fond villager. The dust got into my nostrils and made me feel suddenly bad-tempered. Kenge, who was trying to cook me a meal, cursed the children and told them to go and play somewhere else. But they had no bopi—no cool, clean streams, no vine swings. So they went off to chase the dogs, goats and chickens of the nearest Negro household.

At the far end of the little village stood Ekianga's house, the only one that was not falling to pieces. It straddled the width of the village, bridging the space between the two not very straight rows of smaller huts. The elima girls made a couple of sorties from the single P [881] door, dashing around to the back of the house where they could not be seen. Otherwise all was quiet.

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing. They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped. They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.
765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.
[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by 765
a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it 534
back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village.

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered 765
the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty 761
to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good 765
life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged 372
the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and 778
power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god.

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end 765
the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 594
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The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

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P 765 574 179 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 179 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women P 881 took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful P [832] young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

the young bachelors. And together with the older women they began to sing, in deep contralto tones. The men protested loudly that they were tired and wanted to sleep. But the women just laughed and sang all the louder. The elima had started in earnest. 881 832 533

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The World of the Village

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I FOUND THE FIRST WEEK back in the village difficult and depressing. During the day the air was hot and dry, and filled with fine particles of dust. At night, when it was cooler, gnats and mosquitoes made me appreciate all the more their absence in the forest. My hut, ten times the size of my home in the hunting camp, seemed close and stuffy, and as I lay in bed I could hear the huge spiders, some several inches across, crawling about in the leaves of the roof. Occasionally one dropped onto the bed with a dull thud and lay there for a while before stalking away. At first I carried out an active campaign to get rid of them, but it was useless—and a mosquito net would have been unbearably hot.

THE WORLD OF THE VILLAGE

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unsmiling triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

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000 Chasse as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

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In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

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To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

36 this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the
[103] BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here
[101] there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the govern-
621 ment-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the
622 right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian
648 government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The
439 Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

622 Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically
554 ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the
[648] eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on
622 other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a
554 Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers
291 came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by
[648] ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

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They brought with them their ancestral beliefs, but the spirits of their ancestors resented being taken away from their rolling, open homelands and forced to live in the forest. In the plains the very ground was sacred to the ancestors who had lived there for generations, but here there could be no such bond. The graves themselves had to be abandoned to the forest sooner or later, as the clans shifted endlessly in the search of fresh soil.

While the only place the villager could call home was the temporary, sun-scorched clearing which he had cut for himself, and in which he would live a few years at the most, to the Pygmy the whole forest was home, and the village an isolated and foreign territory, hostile but ultimately impotent, to be regarded with indifference, amusement, and occasionally with annoyance. The village people were envious of the Pygmies, though they tried to look down on them. They were compelled to respect the Pygmies by the fact of their own belief in the mystical bond between a people and the land of its ancestors. They had no such bond. Just as they were afraid of the spirits of the forest, so they were secretly afraid of the Pygmies, and made them offerings of the first fruits of their plantations, and gave them an important part in the ceremonies for the village dead—the dead who had to be buried in foreign soil that might belong to the village world now, but which would soon belong once again to the forest.

The relationship between the two peoples was a strange one, full of ambivalence and uncertainty. By and large the village was their only common meeting place, for the Negroes disliked going into the forest except when absolutely necessary. The village was the world of the Negro, so he naturally assumed a position of authority and domination in that world. But it was a position without any foundations, for the Pygmy had only to take a few steps to be in his own world.

The Negroes were unable to exercise any physical force to main-

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tain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families.

It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while. The Pygmy was able to do for him all the necessary chores that necessitated going into the forest and could bring him game that supplemented an otherwise largely vegetarian diet. And in latter days, with the compulsory maintenance of larger plantations, the Negro found the Pygmy a useful source of additional labor. But for all of this he had to pay, and he was always uncertain how long any one Pygmy or group of Pygmies would stay with him. They were frequently miles away in the heart of the forest, and if the hunting was good no amount of coaxing would bring them back.

For the first week back at Camp Putnam, I found the villagers going out of their way to be generous to "their" Pygmies. The Pygmies wandered about idly, hanging around wherever they found food cooking, occasionally responding to a request to help with some kind of work. The village blacksmith, a man of many parts, adopted Masisi's family, though Masisi himself would have nothing to do with him. He said that Baziani was a trouble-maker, which he was, and that he was after Masisi's daughter, which was also true. But Baziani was wealthy, and Masisi's children spent most of their time in his baraza. They were well fed and looked after, and treated more as friends than anything else. Baziani, in return, made use of them to run errands, usually connected with his virtual monopoly of the local hemp market.

Baziani was genuinely fond of the Pygmies. In the evenings he used to bring out his drums and the Pygmies would gather around and dance. After a while Baziani would relinquish his part as a drummer, acknowledging the superiority of his friends. Then he sat back in his cane chair and watched with a contented smile. He was one of

the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored, well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his barazza, waiting to do him some small favor.

Maisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time been attached to a noble of the Balira tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them, or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village. Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent one of his daughters, or his adopted son Mafyadya, to help the chief and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself. Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

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basket with two legs of antelope as a gift for Kapamba's wife. The camp watched the chief leave with few regrets. They had only allowed him to stay because he had brought a quantity of food with him.

Manyalibo's wife returned two days later with her basket full to overflowing with delicacies from the village. She had told Kapamba that she did not want to stay longer without her husband, so he had no option but to allow her to return.

Manyalibo's son-in-law, Ausu, was even more of a renegade. His "hereditary master" was André, the chief of a powerful Islamic village just beyond Eboyo. André's father, old Effundi Somali, had been a child when Stanley brought his relief expedition through the forest to rescue Emin Pasha. He used to tell stories of the dreadful wars that were fought in those days, and of the trail of destruction that Stanley had left behind him. While the old man was alive André had worked as head cook at Camp Putnam, but now he was chief in his father's place.

Part Bira and part Ngwana, André inherited all the traits of the latter. In his dealings with Europeans he could be charming and helpful; he could also be cunning and crooked. With other villagers he was proud and avaricious, and he had a supreme contempt—which he could disguise whenever it suited him—for the Pygmies.

A few years earlier, when Ausu had been hunting forest pig, a boar had charged him and wounded him badly, ripping his stomach and one leg. André had taken Ausu into his own house and cared for him, nursing him for months until he was well again. This was done under the guise of friendship, and I have heard André tell the story many times to illustrate how enlightened he is. But I have also heard Ausu's comment that André had done no more for him than he would have done for a valuable hunting dog. A Pygmy is not unresponsive to genuine kindness, and Ausu would not have left André soon after recovering if there had been any such kindness in the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

000 the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

C 563 P 177 439 [136] A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and P [482] brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoulders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with P a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to C be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over [686] to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal, and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading, C [694] cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

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against him and have him put in jail. As the tribunals are all Negro, with no Pygmy members, even the most obviously distorted charge against a Pygmy is bound to succeed.

Ausu decided that if this was André's attitude he was not going to give him a single franc. On the day of the payment I went with him to the Station de Chasse, saw him get the five hundred francs, and joined the director in advising him to climb over the fence and return through the forest rather than to leave by the main gate. And sure enough, as I left, there was André with half a dozen of his men, waiting. When he saw he had been tricked he went to the paramount chief of the area and had a court order made out for Ausu's immediate arrest and confinement to prison. But Ausu was already back in the forest, and in time even court orders are forgotten. And so with all his show of authority and superiority André was unable to do anything; trying to pursue a Pygmy in the forest was a task no villager would undertake for any amount of pay.

There are those, like André, who really believe that the Pygmies are inferior and are meant to be treated like slaves, but for the most part the villagers are much more sensible and realistic. If they want to have control over their Pygmies, they know it must be based on something other than threats of physical force. But even the most benevolent of them regard the Pygmies much as the Pygmies regard them in turn—as a kind of convenience. I know of only one villager who was almost accepted by the pygmies as one of themselves. That was Kaweki, the fisherman.

Kaweki was a not-so-young bachelor of the BaBira tribe. He claimed to dislike women, saying they made far too much noise and cost far too much money. Most of the time he was in the forest, catching fish in dams and traps, drying them, and sending them down to market with his Pygmy friends. This struck the other villagers as an undignified, not to say an unsafe, procedure. But Kaweki was not one to care about what others thought.

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P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [392] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [976] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

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123 it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the
484 majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki
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[515] by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

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It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing
177 was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house,
36 built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with
342 walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut,
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calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into
[353] two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying
[251] rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double
[417] duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the
[354] screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl
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knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister.
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Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Fa-
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177 ther," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak,
758 but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

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P C 123 571 574 beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the P [832] meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to P C 571 574 177 758 Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above C [226] the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. P [533] On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

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molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children, even if he was a villager.

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Elima: the Dance of Life

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WITH THE PYGMIES and the villagers coming into contact, both as individuals and groups, it was inevitable that over the years each should adopt some of the other's customs. The contact between them was sometimes intimate and friendly, as with Kawéki, and sometimes it was formal and hostile, as between *André* and *Asou*. Most frequently its purpose was just a matter of barter, and at all times each regarded the territory of the other as a foreign place.

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When a custom was adopted by one people, they gave it their own particular character and meaning, and frequently changed it so that it was all but unrecognizable, except through the common

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use of the original name. Such was the case with the molimo, and such was also the case with the elima. Who borrowed from whom is a difficult question, and perhaps not a very important one. The difference that emerges in the process of borrowing is much easier to see and adds much more to our understanding.

To both peoples the elima is concerned with the arrival of a young girl at the age of maturity, her transition from girlhood to the full flowering of womanhood. This coming of age is marked more dramatically for girls than for boys by the physical changes that take place. Both Pygmies and villagers recognize the significance of the first appearance of menstrual blood, and both celebrate it with a festival which they call "elima." But there the similarity ends.

My friend Amina told me a great deal about the elima among the Balbira, and I learned more from older women in different villages that I lived in from time to time. Everywhere, right through to the very edge of the forest, I found the same story among the villagers. Blood of any kind is a terrible and powerful thing, associated with injury and sickness and death. Menstrual blood is even more terrible because of its mysterious and regular recurrence. Its first appearance is considered by the villagers as a calamity—an evil omen. The girl who is defiled by it for the first time is herself in danger, and even more important she has placed the whole family and clan in danger. She is promptly secluded, and only her mother (and, I suspect, one or two other close and senior female relatives) may see her and care for her. She has to be cleansed and purified, and the clan itself has to be protected by ritual propitiation, from the evil she has brought upon them. At the best, the unfortunate girl is considered a considerable nuisance and expense.

It is generally assumed that the girl was brought into this condition by some kind of illicit intercourse, and her mother demands of her who is responsible. This is the girl's chance to name the boy of her choice, whether or not she has even so much as spoken to

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C him. He is then accused and has to make suitable offerings which
881 are necessary not only to help in the protection of the girl and her
584 family, but also for his own protection, since he has been linked with her verbally, however untruthfully. He may then deny the charge, and if the girl's parents think he would make a suitable husband, there may be some litigation. Or they may consider him unsuitable, and let the matter drop. If he likes the girl and accepts the responsibility, this constitutes the first step toward official betrothal. If he disclaims all responsibility, then the girl has to try again; until she has a husband the danger is thought to remain.

C The period of seclusion varies from tribe to tribe, and even from
881 village to village. Sometimes it is just for a week or two; sometimes it lasts a month or more. And sometimes it lasts until the girl is betrothed and can be led from her room of shame to be taken away
C by her husband. At the final wedding ritual she is ceremonially cut
583 off from her family, and told that she is now her husband's respon-
585 sibility and must fend for herself and not come running home every time she gets beaten. The point, of course, is that if she does this her husband can claim back the wealth he will have already paid over in the expectancy of her fidelity and success as a wife and bearer of children. And by the time the disaster occurs her family will almost certainly have spent the money to obtain a bride for one of her brothers.

C The whole affair is a rather shameful one in the eyes of the vil-
881 lagers, as well as a dangerous one. It is something best concealed and not talked about in public. The girl is an object of suspicion, scorn, repulsion, and anger. It is not a happy coming of age.

P For the Pygmies, the people of the forest, it is a very different
881 thing. To them blood, in the usual context in which they see it, is
841 equally dreadful. But they recognize it as being the symbol not only
[882] of death, but also of life. And menstrual blood to them means life. Even between a husband and wife it is not a frightening thing,

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though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

The girl enters seclusion, but not the seclusion of the village girl. She takes with her all her young friends, those who have not yet reached maturity, and some older ones.

In the house of the elima the girls celebrate the happy event together. Together they are taught the arts and crafts of motherhood by an old and respected relative. They learn not only how to live like adults, but how to sing the songs of adult women. Day after day, night after night, the elima house resounds with the throaty contralto of the older women and the high, piping voices of the youngest. It is a time of gladness and happiness, not for the women alone but for the whole people. Pygmies from all around come to pay their respects, the young men standing or sitting about outside the elima house in the hopes of a glimpse of the young beauties inside. And there are special elima songs which they sing to one another, the girls singing a light, cascading melody in intricate harmony, the men replying with a rich, vital chorus. For the Pygmies the elima is one of the happiest, most joyful occasions in their lives.

And so it was with happiness that we all heard that not one but two girls in our camp had been blessed by the moon.

At first it was just Akidinimba, daughter of Manyalibo's sister. Akidinimba was a notorious flirt who considered herself the most beautiful girl in the world. She was just sufficiently plump to be envied by less well-endowed girls, but not so plump that her maidenly

881 figure was lost. She was particularly proud of her breasts, which
232 were certainly the largest in that part of the forest, and she showed them off to advantage, when dancing, by adopting an unusually springy gait. As her breasts bounced up and down the eyes of all the bachelors followed their movement with pleasure. Everyone agreed that Akidiniimba's elima would be a lively one.

881 But Matyalibo's niece was in no hurry, so for the first few days she remained in the hut of her cousin, Kondabate, and there were no particular signs of activity visible from the outside.

Then we heard that Kidaya had also been blessed with the blood,
[157] and she went to join Akidiniimba. Kidaya was a niece of Ekianga, and she was more modest than the really shameless Akidiniimba. Kidaya was handsome rather than pretty, and she had a reputation for being able to beat up even the strongest youths if their advances were not welcome to her. So the elima promised to be exciting as well as lively.

The two girls each chose their personal assistants and called in all their young friends to join them in the hut of Kondabate and her husband, Ausu. Kondabate built on a special extension to accommodate them. This was in Apa Kadiketu, and not long afterward the elima was moved to the village, where it took over Ekianga's house. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, went with them to be "father of the elima," to make sure that they were protected and properly cared for. Asofalinda, Kidaya's aunt, went as "mother of the elima," to look after the personal needs of the girls, to see that they got the right food, and generally to act as chaperone. Mambunia was a bachelor, and Asofalinda a widow.

When we arrived at the village for the close of the molimo festival, the elima was well under way. The girls had already learned most of their songs, and they were now at the stage where they were taking a more active, even an aggressive interest in the eligible bachelors of the neighborhood. In the evenings, when they assembled

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outside their hut to sing, they were carefully guarded by their 881
mothers and older sisters. But the girls and their attendants cast sly
glances at the young men who always drew close to watch and listen.
They whispered and laughed among themselves, and when they 881
stood up to dance they often made it very clear by their gestures 882
which boy had taken their fancy. Sometimes they chose at random
simply to annoy a special lover, and boys often stalked away in a
huff. That was a mistake.

At any time of the day the girls were likely to emerge from the [411]
elima house armed with long fito whips. If you were close enough
you could hear them plotting their strategy behind the door, but
there was no escape once they burst out into the open. Any males,
young or old, and particularly those who had shown annoyance at
being teased, were liable to be chased and whipped by the eager
young furies.

I myself was chased once, for a good half-mile down a forest trail, [123]
running as fast as I could. It was considered cowardly to run, but I
ran with good reason, for to be whipped establishes an obligation to
visit your assailant in the elima house. Once inside there is no need
to do anything further, but you are subject to considerable attention
if you refuse. And to get into the house, in the first place, requires
no small amount of courage and strength. So I ran. Most other
bachelors had less reason and no desire to escape, so they contented
themselves with giving as good as they got, throwing sticks and
stones at the girls, running around the village, dodging behind houses
and through fields of sugar cane. The battles never lasted long, but
sometimes they came to an abrupt end.

The girls often whipped old men or young boys, and in either
case it was generally considered a compliment and did not carry the
same obligations that it would have done had they been eligible
bachelors. But sometimes they hit too hard, and the old men resented
this and shouted, while the boys simply screamed their heads off.

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881 In the one case Mambunia would come out of his hut in a temper
832 and send all the girls back to their house, and in the other case Asofalinda would run amok among the girls, boxing their ears until they, in turn, cried like the children they had beaten.

881 But the elima beauties did not confine themselves to their own
914 village. After all, most of the men there were relatives and so could not decently be invited into the elima house. Many strangers came to visit from other groups, but sometimes the attendance was disappointing. Then the girls would set out to visit one of their hunting
[123] camps. I followed them on one such escapade, having secured a promise first that I would be given complete immunity. It was a strange procession, the girls all oiled and painted to look their best, wearing grass skirts in imitation of the boys' initiation (an innovation that infuriated the villagers, who felt that their customs were being desecrated, and that caused open hostilities in the end), and carrying stout whips, twice as tall as they were. There were about eight of them in all, led of course by the irrepressible Akidinimba, bouncing her breasts up and down in a determined manner as she marched along the road, past the Station de Chasse, and over the bridge to the far side of the Epulu River. The villagers came out to look as we passed, but from a respectful distance. On other occasions I have seen a party such as this dive into the midst of a group of village men and women, lashing out with all their might—not entirely in the friendly way in which they would whip, say, old Tungana, as a compliment to his virility.

On the far side of the Epulu we climbed up the hill toward Eboyo, the sun beating down on us so that the chatter and laughter of the girls was almost stilled. But just before reaching Eboyo we turned off, following a trail through an old plantation and into the
881 forest. As the trees closed in around and above us, the girls began to
914 sing. They sang loudly and proudly, marching with even more de-
883 termination than before, their heads back, looking at the familiar

leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest. 881 574 533

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her. 881 574 [487]

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba 881 832

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881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the climb back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
5.4 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

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others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown.

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted.

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry.

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere.

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881 everywhere. The men retreated to the outskirts of the clearing and
832 stood uncertainly, peering around trees or over the tops of huts, their
514 bows and banana skins at the ready.

But the girls felt they had achieved their end. Each one had marked her victim, who was bound by the strongest bonds of self-respect to respond to the challenge and brave the elima house itself. Pumba, who had followed at a safe distance, sat disconsolately on a log that Akidinimba had thrown at him in a friendly way, and he did not even look up as we left.

881 The girls sang all the way home; even when they left the forest and made their way back across the Epulu, gleaming orange and gold in the late afternoon light, they sang. They sang so that everyone should know that they were the *Bamelima*, the people of the elima, girls who had been blessed with the blood and were now women.

821 There were occasions when the mood was different. One evening
824 in particular, after a relatively quiet day, nearly all the women of the group gathered together outside the elima house. It was toward the end of the time that had been set, in an arbitrary fashion, for the duration of the festival. The Pygmies felt they had been in the village long enough, and the elima was interfering with their hunting. As much as the young men enjoyed hunting, the attraction of the elima house offered strong competition. If the boys were away too long, due to pressure from their parents, the girls complained that they were not being treated properly. Everyone agreed that this was an insoluble conflict, unless the elima was either brought to an end or moved out to the forest. It was not only the boys that were away from the hunt, but also the women and girls, who would otherwise have been gainfully employed gathering and helping to drive more animals into the men's nets. And the women said they were having far too good a time in the village. So it was decided to bring the elima to an end.

During this time the older women paid more and more attention to what was going on and gathered almost nightly outside the house to join in the singing. But one evening was different in that almost every woman in the group was there. There were even some women from Cephu's group, which had temporarily detached itself and was now some miles away. They gathered early, before it was fully dark. The bright blue sky was deepening without any of the wild tinges of color that so often come at dusk, and the tiny puffs of cloud that drifted across remained a shining, fluffy white, even when the sky was almost black.

The women brought sticks of fire with them, and some of them cooked and ate their evening meal right there outside the elima house; others just sat around and gossiped, huddling close to the fires from habit, though in the village it was still warm. Inside the house the girls were singing, but the women outside did not join in. The men sat before their huts, watching and waiting. Finally the door opened and the girls trooped out. The younger ones came first, their bodies decorated with modest blobs of white paste made from clay; then came Akidinimba and Kidaya and their attendants, resplendent and magnificent, yet strangely shy. They must have spent hours working on themselves and one another, for they were covered with elaborate patterns skillfully drawn with fingers and thin sticks, also using the white clay. Akidinimba had taken particular trouble to paint her breasts with intricate circles of lines punctuated with blobs, something like a grapevine gone to seed, whereas the more demure Kidaya had concentrated on her buttocks, and these were covered with a hundred carefully painted little stars. Each girl had her favorite style, and each was different. They looked around coyly, to make sure they were being admired, and sat down at the edge of the group of women.

They began singing then, together with the women, much more seriously than they had ever done before. They sang as though they

881 533 were women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires. 881 885 533 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 885 157 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 533 415 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya. 881 152 302 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing

herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes. 881 152 302

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it. 881 881 895 182

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov- 881 895 224

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881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
191 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
765 festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
523 dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
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during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

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the first light of dawn flecked the sky with gold. They went down to the banks of a forest stream, where it widened out into a silent pool, and bathed themselves in half-hearted imitation of an elaborate village ritual. Then they oiled their bodies and donned oily new bark cloths and returned to dance in the village. They danced in a tight little circle while the women cooked the food. The villagers came to watch approvingly and to see that the food was properly distributed, for only certain people may eat it. They also made sure that all the leaves which had been used as a sleeping mattress in the elima house were thrown away and the house cleaned thoroughly. In this way they satisfied themselves that no harm would come to "their" Pygmies. The ancestors would be appeased by the feast, and the evil spirit that hovered around the unclean girls would be driven away.

The girls found it all rather tedious and boring, and as soon as they were able they broke off from their dancing and went wandering around the village. Akidiniimba was in search of Pumba, who had failed her badly in the final ceremony. The others visited from house to house, in the hopes of gifts and compliments. The older women sat around and enjoyed the food for as long as it lasted; then they broke up and went about their business as though nothing had happened.

The men, for some time, had been talking about where they would build the next hunting camp.

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The Marriage of Kenge

THE END OF THE ELIMA precipitated a crisis in the village. One of the many ways in which the villagers try to exert control over the Pygmies is by seeing that they are married according to Negro custom. The villager believes this achieves two ends—it subjects the married couple to the same supernatural authority that controls married villagers (the authority of village ancestors), and by careful manipulation and matchmaking it can increase and improve his own stock of Pygmies.

The Pygmies accept this, but in point of fact they consider a village wedding as no more than a formal betrothal at the most, and a

P 177 585 C 563 585 good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C 881 [584] The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584 The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584 Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Kasala, several miles

beyond Eboyo. So she refused to have anything to do with Pumba. 584

Since the prime objective was to get Akidinimba married, once it was plain that Kidaya would not take Pumba, everyone lost interest in her and returned to the problem of her fellow initiate. Circumstance forced the issue, for while all this was going on a close relative of Akidinimba's, a boy named Mulanga, decided to get married to Atete's sister. Nobody saw any harm in this, and so arrangements were pursued and they were duly married. Mulanga was quite non- 585
plused by the ritual, for he had spent most of his life in the forest 177
and knew little of village customs. He was particularly perturbed when at the end of the ceremony his bride was seized by a village woman and led away. He was not quite sure what to do and trotted behind them at a safe distance until he was able to follow his wife into the house that had been set aside for him.

Mulanga's marriage meant that he was obliged to provide a sister 523
for his bride's brother, Atete, to marry. Villagers will compensate 524
families for the loss of a daughter by the payment of money or goods, but the Pygmies find it necessary to arrange for an exchange, so that no group is ever depleted of its womenfolk. Akidinimba, who had still not forgotten how she had been jilted and insulted, saw in this situation an opportunity for revenging herself on Kidaya, the unwilling receiver of Pumba's attentions. So she volunteered to marry Atete. Everyone, except Kidaya, was delighted, and Atete and his family agreed. By the time the date for the wedding was set, Akidinimba began to have doubts and thinking of the freedom she was about to lose she wept day and night. But there was no escape. The villagers of Katala had arranged a great feast and this made everyone all the more anxious for the wedding.

Atete, however, heard of some honey far off in the forest, several 585
days' march away, and at the last moment he set off. The villagers protested loudly, but Atete merely said that the wedding could take place any time, but the honey could not wait. As it was only a

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585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidiniimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Aatte, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Aatte might be back. Akidiniimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed
574 house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Aatte, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidiniimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Molango arrived to
593 try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have
593 no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage,
586 for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home,
585 the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Molango, alarmed at the
602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi-
575 niimba why Aatte did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

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marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidiniimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Aatte. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned.

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Aatte was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Aatte arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidiniimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was telling her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Aatte was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidiniimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper.

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Aatte arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sonda antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often.

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used

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Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Mesimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Tajabu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

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573 152 [521] bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that [236] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

573 521 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, 573 584 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

573 584 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Buderinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Buderinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

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own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to 573
have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what 584
did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Bodoinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Bodoinji ended 573
with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth 584
her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry 626
Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless 583
a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and 554
no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was 584
not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Bokama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badoiniji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badoiniji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Tapbu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Tapbu, because they did not trust
594 Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had
[177] already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to
[536] wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good ex-
[571] change-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return
[599] for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games
[86] of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry
584 Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an ele-
[593] phant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her breth-

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er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however, sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi, who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

585 179 He did not seem particularly interested, because after listening to the argument for half a minute he yawned and went back into his hut without saying a word to anyone.

We all trekked back to the village, and there, under the watchful eye of the villagers, the wedding began. Masisi had refused to come, saying the Babama villagers were the worst savages of all, so Mambunia came in his place. He supervised as all the wedding gifts were placed on the ground, and he watched as various villagers, each in the hopes of improving his chances of getting some meat from the young couple, came forward and added either money, ax-blades, or small pieces of cloth. There were already several pots, quite a number of arrows, and a few trinkets given to the party at Katala village. The villagers who claimed Maliamo felt that this treasure belonged to them, but Mambunia denied this strongly. He pointed out that in any case, according to their own village custom, the gifts should sleep with the couple that night. Reluctantly the villagers agreed, and Mambunia promptly scooped the gifts up and brought them into the wedding house.

Taphu was supposed to put in an appearance at this point, but he could not be found. It was two hours before he was discovered, asleep, and dragged to the spot where we were all sitting around, eating and drinking and singing. He arrived in his tattered village clothes 585 292 but was promptly taken inside and made to change into a new cloth, put on a woven straw hat decorated with feathers, and arm himself with a new bow and a sheaf of arrows. Arrayed like this he appeared at the doorway in the late afternoon. Yambabo looked up and actually smiled. Taphu looked very handsome and imposing, if somewhat uninterested, and having made his duty appearance he went back inside and fell asleep again.

585 That night the wedding party stayed at Babama, all sleeping in 179 the wedding house, feasted royally by the villagers. The next day the [574] rites were completed in a ceremony which consisted largely of the

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formal appearance of Yambabo, standing between two of her sisters, preceded by a still uninterested-looking groom. As villager after villager lectured the bride, Taphu shifted his weight listlessly from one foot to the other, scratched his back with his new arrows, and gazed longingly at some monkeys in the trees nearby. The villagers warned Yambabo that she belonged to them now; she could not call on Kenge whenever she wanted help but would have to come to them. They pointed out which villagers she was expected to help when she and her husband came from the forest, and she was told of all the things they would expect her to do for them. She was finally reminded of the villagers that had contributed gifts for the wedding.

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Yambabo and Taphu were led back into the house, and the others resumed their singing and dancing and drinking. Munyunga, the burly villager who had done most of the talking and who claimed to "own" Taphu and Maliamo, said that he wanted to wait a while, according to custom, and then bring Maliamo with a large wedding party to Kenge's village. But to this the Pygmies as one man absolutely refused to agree. There was a great deal of argument, and it was plain that Munyunga was determined to have at least a return feast arranged for him. Normally he would have arranged this with Kenge's "owner," but this was wily old Kapapela, the paramount chief's brother, who had already made it known that he was in complete agreement with Kenge's refusal to have a village wedding, thus saving himself the expense. So Munyunga knew his chances were slim, particularly as Kenge was no longer even at Kapapela's village and refused to go there. He finally agreed to arrange matters with Kapapela later; in the meantime he would bring Maliamo to Kenge with a small party, but he would expect food, drink, and some kind of gift. He suggested a new hat. He agreed to come the next day, so we returned to Camp Putnam well pleased.

Munyunga arrived early the following morning, with Maliamo and an escort of three villagers. He was clearly annoyed by the fact

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that only Moke and Masisi were there to greet him. Everyone else had disappeared, many of them to hunt and others simply because they did not like Munyungu. He was even more upset when Masisi, instead of greeting him first, and then the villagers, went straight to Maliamo and led her away to his hut so that she could put down her bundle and refresh herself. Kenge was nowhere to be found. Moke invited the villagers to sit on my baraza, and they made loud remarks among themselves to the effect that as I was Kenge's new "owner" I should offer them beer. But I wanted to see what Kenge would do on his own, so I did nothing, although I had several containers of palm wine waiting inside the hut.

Kenge was finally found, engrossed in a gambling game behind Ekianga's house. He had hoped that the villagers would become discouraged and leave. But after two hours of patient waiting he emerged and slowly wandered across the clearing toward us. He stopped to look inside several huts on the way, chatting to anyone he could find as though he was completely unaware that the wedding party was waiting for him. He was as slow and as surly as he could be, and when he finally reached the villagers, who by then were not even trying to disguise their anger, he just took each of their hands in turn and then turned his back on them and asked me what I would like to have for lunch.

This was too much for Munyungu, who stood up and shouted that he was going to take Maliamo back with him, that Kenge was a child who did not know how to behave like an adult. This touched Kenge on a very sore spot, for he prided himself on being extremely adult. He motioned Munyungu to sit down again, and said, "You are only villagers—Ebamunyama is a white man. Isn't it right that I should ask him first?" I hastily said that I could wait, and without another word Kenge went away. About half an hour later he returned with two bottles of beer, some dried fish, and a bottle of palm oil. He put these on the ground beside Munyungu, and then wan-

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dered out into the middle of the village, where he played with the children. The next thing I knew he had disappeared again, and I was told he had stolen one of the villager's bicycles and gone off down the road to Kazala.

The Pygmies were obviously going to have nothing further to do with the villagers, and I felt sorry for Maliamo who had come and sat down beside them in the baraza. Feeling that I was in some way responsible, I asked if it was proper for me to offer them some palm wine. This eased the situation slightly. Munyungu and his friends stayed and drank their beer and palm wine, while Masisi and Moke did their best to pacify them by offering to have a meal cooked. But they said no, all they wanted was to drink. Only two Pygmies came to join them, and then only to see if they would be offered any leftovers. But Munyungu was not parting with a drop, even for Maliamo, who continued to sit uncomplainingly by his side. When the beer and palm wine were all finished, Munyungu still stayed —angry, surly, and very drunk indeed. Occasionally he called for more to drink, or asked where his new hat was, but nobody answered him. The few people that were in the village just went their way as though there were no visitors at all. Moke was fast asleep outside his hut, and Masisi was fashioning a new bow, never so much as glancing at the baraza.

It was beginning to darken when the villagers left, saying that the Pygmies were a lot of animals who didn't know how to behave, and that if Maliamo did not bear Kenge any children it would not be *their* fault.

As soon as the unwelcomed guests had left, the whole atmosphere changed. Pygmies appeared unexpectedly from all directions, crowding around Maliamo to greet her. She went to the little hut that had been given to her and Kenge and began cooking. Kenge appeared, as if by magic, laughing and telling how he had met Mu-

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585 nyungu on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Bakuma.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambulo's marriage to Tapho, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had
[583] given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had
179 treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Ma-
186 sisi said that even if Monyungu was a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Molango, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*bale*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

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Village Initiations and Magic

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OF ALL THE WAYS in which the villagers attempt to assert some kind of control over the BaMbuti, the one which is the most significant, and which they consider to be the most effective and binding, is that of subjecting Pygmy boys to the village initiation, known as the nkumbi. This is one custom which, at first glance, does not seem to have any counterpart in the forest life of the Pygmies. Most outside observers have assumed that the very fact of the Pygmies' participation in the nkumbi—with the absence of any such rites of their own—is a sign of their dependence on the village. Some go so far as to say that this participation shows that the Pygmies are devoid of

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any culture of their own. If the facts were what they seem to be these observations might hold water, but the real facts are very different.

During my visit to Epulu in 1954, I had the good fortune to stumble quite accidentally upon fresh information, which almost completely reverses the picture. At that time I was present at an nkumbi, which I have already mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, but which merits more detailed description.

There years had then elapsed since the previous nkumbi, in 1951, and it was time for another. The purpose of the ceremony is not only to fit village boys for adult life, making them full members of the tribe, but also to ensure the continuity between the past, present and future life of the tribe; between the living and the dead. To the villagers the dead, the ancestors, are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so; and only those who are initiated will join the ancestors when they die. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. The dead are, in fact, living—but in another world. Regular initiations are essential to ensure the continued growth of that far-off tribe of ancestors. I have even seen a young boy who had been due to enter the nkumbi but who died just before it took place, circumcised and accorded full initiation rites before burial, just as though he were alive. In this way he was able to go to join his fathers.

In 1954 there was a unique situation. There was only one village boy of the right age for initiation (usually between the ages of eight and twelve in this area), and his father was a Christian who refused to allow the boy to participate. Every pressure was brought on the family, but to no avail. There were eight Pygmy boys of suitable age, and normally there would have been at least as many villagers. They would all have been initiated together but in such a way as to make clear the inferior status of the Pygmies. One of the initial acts is the circumcision of the boys, and a Pygmy boy is sent first "to clean the knife."

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the knife." Then follows a village boy, and these two are bound together by an indissoluble bond, the bond of *kave* blood-brotherhood. They are mutually obligated to help and care for each other for the rest of their lives. This of course helps to reinforce practical and economic links between the two people, as a Pygmy theoretically would be unable to refuse meat to his kave and the kave could not refuse any demand for plantains, manioc or rice.

But this year the villagers were faced with the alternative of having no initiation at all, or having one for Pygmy boys alone. As the initiation of a Pygmy gives him only partial rights, since he is not a full member of the tribe, a Pygmy initiate can never take a leading part in the nkumbi; all the cutting and all the formal teaching, and certainly all the ritual acts, can be performed only by a qualified villager. So it meant that the villagers would have to go through all the work and expense purely for the Pygmies. There could be no question of not holding the nkumbi, as this would offend the ancestors. And in any case the villagers decided it was worth while as it helped to assert their authority over the Pygmies. I heard speculative talk more than once about how an initiated Pygmy, when he dies, goes to serve the tribal ancestors just as he served the villagers during his life.

The *makete* sticks were cut and brought out. These are a series of sticks used only at the time of the nkumbi; each one is cut to a different length and tuned to a definite pitch. Some eight or nine men, each with a stick under his left arm, tapping it with a shorter stick held in the right hand, dance around the village playing a complicated but tuneful rhythm, the different notes overlapping and combining. Villagers from the surrounding area congregated at Epulu, some of them from as far as fifty miles away, and dancing and feasting went on for over a week. During that time the boys were collected together, and last-minute appeals were made for young Yusefu, the Christian boy, to be allowed to join. His father settled

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the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mambasa.

The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masini, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sanziwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sanziwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *boloko* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

Sanziwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sanziwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sanziwake was left outside.

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sanziwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sanziwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sanziwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy were down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sanziwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers resented that Sanziwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

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made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoya than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

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not allowed to sleep in the camp at night. Only the "fathers," that being understood to mean the real fathers and the older brothers of the boys, were allowed to sleep in the "place of the nkumbi." That meant, in this case, only Pygmies. The BaMbuti had different notions. Recognizing that I was anxious to be with them right through the whole period of seclusion, they invited me to join them. After all, they said, I was really the father of all the eight boys. In this way I became one of the *baganza*, the people of the initiation.

The invitation was not intended as a deliberate slight to the villagers; the Pygmies merely thought it would be fun, particularly as they were sure that I would keep them supplied with tobacco and palm wine and other luxuries. From their point of view no harm was being done. From the villagers' point of view, however, this breach of custom was likely to bring disaster not only on me but also on the rest of the baganza. Beyond issuing the gravest warnings, they made no attempt to discourage me and soon came to accept my presence.

So from the first day to the last I was with the nkumbi, day and night; and at night, when all the villagers had left, I learned what the nkumbi really means to the people of the forest. The moment their instructors were gone, and only Pygmies were left, the boys leaped from the bed where they were supposed to be sleeping and joined their fathers around the fire, eating forbidden foods in forbidden company and in a forbidden manner, using their fingers. One boy jumped onto a log and swung his arms around in imitation of someone swinging a bull-roarer, which of course he should never have seen. Others played their favorite game of punch ball with the sacred banana. A shower of rain was an invitation to run outside and wash off all the dirt that had accumulated during the day. The villagers not only forbade the candidates to get wet, even by washing, but they smeared them constantly with white clay, from head to foot, as a sign of their death as children. To the naturally clean Pygmies this was intolerable, and the boys were encouraged by their fathers to

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take the first opportunity to wash it off. When the villagers questioned them in the morning, the boys invariably replied that they had been so cold during the night that they had huddled close together, and the clay had been rubbed off in this way. In fact, the men provided blankets for the boys, keeping themselves warm by lying close to the fires. Kenge and I slept at one end of the shelter, half underneath the log bed; most of the other adults slept outside.

Both the boys and their fathers enjoyed the chance to make fun, in a friendly way, of the villagers, but that was not their sole reason for deliberately breaking all the taboos. They behaved as they did because to them the restrictions were not only meaningless but belonged to a hostile world. The villagers hoped that the nkumbi would place the Pygmies directly under the supernatural authority of the village tribal ancestors; the Pygmies naturally took good care that nothing of the sort should happen, proving it to themselves by this conscious flaunting of custom.

The villagers believed that the initiate, Pygmy or otherwise, is everlastingly bound thereafter by all the laws of the tribe, sacred and secular. He is put into direct relationship with the supernatural, whose representatives on earth are the villagers themselves. If any Pygmy initiate offends a villager, therefore, he is also offending the supernatural—the ancestors—and will be duly punished by them. The villagers live in such fear of the supernatural, with its power to bring down on an offender the curses of leprosy, yaws, dysentery and other diseases or to cause him to be injured by a falling tree, that they cannot conceive of any initiate's daring to offend the ancestors. That is why they believe that the nkumbi gives them ultimate control over their ever-troublesome servants who refuse to behave as servants should.

It is not quite so obvious why the Pygmies subject themselves to what they plainly consider an unnecessarily brutal ritual. The trials of the nkumbi candidate only begin with the actual circumcision. Dur-

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During the succeeding months—usually two or three now instead of the former six or even twelve—the boys are subjected to one form of mild torture after another. The torture is sometimes mental rather than physical. For instance, one boy, whose father refused point blank to have anything to do with what he called "an empty, savage custom" but allowed his son to enter, was made to ridicule his father almost every daylight hour. The gentle little Sanziwake, who insisted on getting up from the hard wooden bed to rejoin his companions long before he was completely well, was made to pretend that he was big and strong, carrying heavy loads and imitating the performance of acts degrading to any Pygmy, but particularly so to this sensitive child. Each boy was put through some torture of this nature.

The physical ordeals sometimes start out as games but develop into cruel tests of physical endurance. A crouching dance that might be fun for a few minutes becomes agony after half an hour. A mild switching on the underside of the arm with light sticks is of no concern until, after several days, the skin becomes raw. And then the villagers notch the sticks so that they fold over and pinch the skin sharply, often drawing blood. When the boys have become used to being beaten with leafy branches, thorny bushes are substituted.

To the Pygmies this all seems harsh and unnecessary, and as far as their own children are concerned they keep a strict watch over them to see that the villagers do not go to the length that they sometimes do with village children, even if this brings them into some contempt. But to the villager this toughening-up process is essential and does not come naturally in the course of village life. The child has to be fitted for adult life, and this is what the nkumbi sets out to achieve. In a few months a boy becomes a man, tough and strong, physically and mentally. The process is not a pleasant one, but it is the only way in which, under tribal conditions, the goal can be achieved.

The Pygmy can understand and appreciate this, but the very nature of his own nomadic hunting and gathering existence provides

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all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles develop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games. Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

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The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sanaiwake had the right to enter any adult houses and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

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There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence toward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

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and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children.

For from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples.

The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his first real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima.

During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sanaiwake—Aberi the ugly. Aberi who was so often the laughing-stock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sanaiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor.

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could

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But long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and moaning in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

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The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabou the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

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It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was

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nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

P 177 159 754 763 C 563 754 the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."

Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

P 177 754 C 563 754 If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said nothing.

P 177 764 C 563 761 764 [754] Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiating. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother. *We* do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

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Forest Horizons

TOWARD THE END of my stay at Epulu I felt that it was time to 114
get away to other parts of the forest. I had been with the one hunting group for a year, moving about the forest with them, coming in on their trips to the village, returning with them to their hunting camps. It had been a full year, and the privilege of sharing the life of this group had begun to tell. Living so closely it was impossible not to begin to see the world as they saw it; sharing their pleasures and sorrows made it impossible not to feel as they did; and just being with a people so filled with the love of the forest made it impossible not to love as they did. The more I wanted to stay with them, and them alone, the more I knew it was time to move.

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P 114 I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and set-
P [122] ting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the
P [186] occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakoa. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakoa, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

C Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of
622 Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had
563 met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in
P his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend,
115 and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair
123 to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and
P [439] still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

What shall I say when the administrator comes and finds the cotton is not ready?"

I suggested that he could send one of his sons into the forest after the Pygmies, guessing what the answer would be, if Pygmies here were like Pygmies at Epulu. And sure enough Kachui shook his head and said he had sent three sons after his Pygmies, but each time when they reached the hunting camp it was deserted, and nobody seemed to know where they had gone. Kenge shook his head and I was afraid he was going to laugh. But he merely said what a terrible way that was to behave, and that everyone knew that Pygmies should always do what their master told them. This surprised Kachui, and he warmed to his theme, telling of all the ways in which he was constantly being tricked and cheated and robbed by the Ba-Mbuti. Kenge continued to look disapproving, clucking his tongue and nodding in agreement whenever Kachui said he would be justified in putting every last Pygmy in jail—when he could find them.

But Kenge proved to be more than diplomatic. In turn he began questioning Kachui and showed that over the past year he had come to know just the kinds of topics I liked to hear discussed. The fact that he raised the subjects dispelled all suspicions that Kachui might have had, and he even told us the exact whereabouts of such Pygmies as he knew he could find for us, most of whom were tending his illegal plantations. He offered to call them in if we wanted to question them, but we said no, we would rather go and visit them. After some hesitation Kachui agreed, and made arrangements for us to leave the next morning. He installed us in his official guest house and sent over one of his sons with gifts of food. He also sent over two of his daughters, and I was tempted to find out whether they were both intended for me, or whether one was for Kenge. But I merely gave them a small gift apiece and said we were tired and were going to sleep. Kenge was thoroughly disgusted and assured me that they did not have leprosy. I had a hard time trying to convince him that

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C 574 P 115 123 this was not the point, and he finally just rolled over in his blanket, muttering that sometimes he thought Europeans were as crazy as villagers.

For the next few days we visited Kachui's plantations and talked with such Pygmies as we found there. But it was impossible to shake off the chief's sons, who stuck to us like leeches. As a result I could get no response at all; everything that the Pygmies said was said to impress the villagers. The only useful information was obtained by Kenge, who got into the habit of slipping away while I was "holding court," as he called it, and talking to his fellow Pygmies well out of earshot.

C 563 P 177 184 One thing was plain, however, and that was that no matter how powerful Kachui was—and it was certainly within his power to have any Pygmies put in jail and flogged—he was no match for the people of the forest. Kenge learned that the main group had been away for over six months and had no intention of returning yet. They were a long way off and came close to the village only when they wanted to raid the plantations. Even while we were there Kachui's sons tried to find out where the rest of the Pygmies were, but everyone protested complete ignorance.

C 648 186 622 563 123 P 123 A few days at Bafwakoa were more than enough. With Kachui lying in wait the Pygmies were not likely to tell us where their companions were, and even if they did Kachui was not likely to let us out of sight. He became un-co-operative when I asked to look at the tribunal records, for which I had official permission. He was forced into admitting that he did not consider the Pygmies real people, and therefore they had no right to have cases tried in the tribunal. He said that any complaints by the villagers against Pygmies C [592] were heard by him; he judged them himself and no records were kept. He made it quite plain that the judgment always went in favor of the villager. Kenge then disgraced himself by asking what happened if a Pygmy brought a complaint against a villager. Kachui

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answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of the Ituri River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukamba, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

"How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

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C 563 P 177 184 We did meet some Pygmies, however, and they laughed and told us that no Pygmy would ever come near Isiaka; there were plenty of other villagers who gave them much more in return for their meat, while Isiaka always expected them to work on his plantations for nothing. This, in fact, was the picture we got wherever we C [186] stopped. The villagers throughout the forest complained bitterly about the Pygmies, saying, "They eat us up until we are ready to die"—meaning that the Pygmies take from them but give little in return.

P C 177 439 C 829 It was not until we reached the western limits of the forest and turned north that we really had any luck. Some miles east of Wamba we left the car and followed a track through the forest. At the end of a full day we arrived at a series of old established villages of the Mabudo tribe. These people had a much more realistic attitude toward the Pygmies and consequently got along much better with them. They talked freely and willingly. They said that, after all, the Pygmies had been in the forest long before the Mabudo arrived, so they had the right to live as they wished. If they preferred to stay in the forest and live like animals, that was their concern, but if they wanted to come to the villages and work for the Mabudo, that was fine. At the time of harvest the villagers all gave gifts of the first fruits to the local Pygmies, because, as they said, it was their land. And any time the Pygmies were near a Mabudo village they invariably brought in gifts of meat or honey.

P 123 There were a few Pygmies in one of the villages when we arrived, and after a couple of days they agreed to take us out to one of the hunting camps. Kenge had done some talking to them on the side, assuring them that I was not really like a villager, but just like them, a "*miki nde ndura*"—son of the forest. When he introduced me to them he proudly pointed to the marks on my forehead that proclaimed me an adult. "The villagers call him Mulefu, because he is

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

P Kenge asked in amazement THE FOREST PEOPLE
C if the Mabudo actually came so far
224 into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often.
[186] They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any
P Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an ele-
[522] phant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

P This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide
484 suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge
P was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while
484 he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been per-
609 fectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

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For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back. 114 484

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been extremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status. 609 484 609 123 186 826 [825]

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, moviemakers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and 609 123 [114]

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P 609 177 P [822] it had a railway, which aroused his deepest curiosity. He could not think why the trains were limited in their movement by the iron rails, and could not turn wherever they wanted to. There was something about this restriction of freedom that bothered him. I took him to see a football match between the workers of a local brewery and those of a large combine store. Just before the match we had been drinking palm wine in a small African bar, and found it much stronger than the wine made in the forest. So Kenge rooted happily for what he called "Men of the Beer," but why people should spend the afternoon kicking a ball back and forth was as puzzling to him as were the captive trains.

C 609 648 574 [754] P 177 648 We spent only a few days in Paulis, branching out from there along the northern limits of the forest. Then we turned eastward and made our way across and down into Lese country. The BaLese are considered to be arch-sorcerers and witches, and it was with great reluctance that Kenge agreed to stay in the village of Chief Lupao, near Nduye. It was several miles off the road, and by accident or design it was empty when we got there. Fires were still smoldering and smoking, but there was no other sign of life. The chief's baraza, a huge edifice with a thatched roof, stood open in front of his house; the fire had been recently made up, but nobody came out to greet us.

Kenge was getting more and more nervous, and I was on the point of giving in to his repeated requests to leave and find a more hospitable place to stay, when a young man appeared and wandered idly toward us. He stopped some way off and stood there looking at C [184] us. This was a completely new situation to me, as in every other village, even where we had been total strangers, we had been almost embarrassed by the hospitality of the people. I waited to see if the man's curiosity would get the better of him, but after a while I gave up and went over to talk to him. Kenge refused to move from the safety of the car, and stood there with his hand on the door, ready to lock himself inside at a moment's notice. For him this was a

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For him this was a foreign world indeed, for these were not only villagers, but villagers who had a name for devouring corpses.

I made little headway with the young man, who continued to chew on a stick while he avoided giving any direct answers to my queries as to where Chief Lupao was. He questioned me in turn, and when I had assured him that I was not a missionary, or a government agent, or a plantation owner looking for forced labor, he wandered away—still chewing. He called back over his shoulder that he would try and find his father, the chief. Kenge was speechless with indignation because we had not been invited into the baraza or offered water to wash with. He said that even villagers did that much for strangers, however unwelcome. He was more unhappy than ever.

Eventually Lupao's son returned and said that his father would be back soon from his plantation, and we could sit down in the baraza if we wanted to. With that he walked away and once more we were alone. By now it was too late to think of going anywhere else, so we entered the baraza and sat down on a couple of logs near the fire. After an hour a small crowd of old men and children had gathered around and were staring at us silently and speculatively. Any time either of us tried to talk with them they just shook their heads. Kenge was beginning to be more impatient than afraid, and he demanded that someone go and fetch water for us to wash with, asking the bystanders what kind of savages they were to let their guests stay unwashed and unfed. The chief's son looked at Kenge coldly and asked him what tribe he belonged to. Kenge replied without hesitation that he was not of the village, but of the forest—he was a Pygmy. The young man nodded and said, "So I see!" And still no move was made to fetch us any water.

Just then Chief Lupao came out of his house. An extremely surly and untidy old man, he did not try to disguise the fact that he had been sleeping, and not in his plantation. He greeted us in an offhand way and asked what we wanted. I explained that we wanted

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to go into the forest to visit some of his Pygmies and had come to pay our respects first. He said brusquely that he did not know where any Pygmies were to be found. Then he looked at Kenge and asked him if it was usual for a Pygmy to sit beside a white man.

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Kenge countered by asking if it was usual for a big chief to keep a white man waiting while he slept, and to leave him sitting on a log without so much as a glass of water to drink or to wash with. At that the other villagers began joining in, and feeling more than uncomfortable at being made the center of a fight between them and Kenge, I told Lupao that we were very tired, and asked if it would be all right for us to stay the night in his village. Lupao, who by then was engrossed with a steaming bowl of chicken soup, said he supposed so, and indicated with a nod of his head for his son to go and find us a place to sleep.

I made a few more attempts at polite conversation but did not get so much as a look in response. Everyone was silent, staring either at us or up at the smoky roof above us. It had been quite dark for some time, and after waiting to see if the son was going to do anything about sleeping quarters, I got up and said loudly to Kenge that I was going to sleep in the car and asked if he was going to do the same. He replied that he would sleep outside to guard me from the thieves and murderers that made up the entire population of the village. This was putting it a little more strongly than I had intended, and we had now given real cause for offense. As we left there was a stony silence. Lupao refused to look up and allow me to take my leave of him. I can hardly blame him, but the tradition of hospitality among most African villagers is so strong that one comes to accept it and to expect it, and the behavior of the BaLese was very unusual.

When Lupao saw that we were really leaving in such an unceremonious huff, he called his son, who had remained in the baraza all the time, and sent him running after us to tell us that a house would

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be ready soon. Kenge replied that the car was clean, which was a little too subtle for the young man. He returned half an hour later with some food, and this time Kenge was more direct. He lowered the window of the car enough to say, "We people of the forest don't eat excrement!" and then hurriedly wound it up. We passed an uneasy night, and in the first glimmer of morning, without as much as looking for a stream to wash in, we left. Nobody even came to watch us go.

C 622 574 186 P 177 186 829

We were so exhausted that we decided to call on the Catholic mission at Nduye and at least get cleaned up. We drove through the little village, and on the outskirts turned onto a steep stone track that wound up the hillside. It climbed erratically past a temporary church, near which rough-hewn stones were being assembled for the building of a more permanent structure, and onto a ledge just wide enough to hold the long, low mission house and a neat terrace in front, where the ground dropped away sharply.

C 797 177 P 177

The welcome we got there was very different. A huge, bearded figure in white robes came striding up the hill after us, shouting instructions in KiNgwana to cook another half dozen eggs. To us he said, "You are late for breakfast." And after a second look, "You need hot baths."

Father Longo would not hear of our going anywhere else and insisted that we stay for at least a week, a month if we liked. There was plenty of work we could do and we looked as though we needed to go to church. Then he asked me if we were Catholics. When I replied that I was a not very good Protestant and that Kenge was a practicing heathen, he roared with laughter and said that at least Kenge didn't know what a mistake he had made. His good humor put Kenge immediately at ease, and there was only a momentary flicker of doubt when Father Longo called for his Lese catechist to show Kenge where he could wash, eat and sleep. Shortly afterward I heard him in the distance, telling his new companions in his loudest

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and most boastful voice of what a terrible experience we had been through the night before. Meanwhile, I found myself in the company of the kindest, wisest, and most sincere person I had met in this part of Africa.

After he had seen that I did justice to an enormous breakfast he took me down to look at the new church he was building. Moslems and pagans worked side by side with Christians, breaking rocks on the mountainside, carrying them to the site, squaring them and heaving them into place. All this help was voluntary; Father Longo paid the workers whenever he was able, which was all that was expected. It was done willingly because over the years the people of the surrounding villages had come to know Father Longo for the man he was. He was not concerned simply with adding a lot of names to his roll of converts but primarily with living a life that would be an example that others would want to follow. He made everyone equally welcome at his mission, regardless of religion. Some months later, when the new church was finished, it was consecrated at a service made all the more beautiful by dozens of his Pygmy friends, who came in from the forest carrying gifts of forest fruits and flowers and danced their pagan way up the aisle. They were filled with as much joy and devotion as Father Longo himself.

P 114 C 184 609

We came to know the Pygmies in the neighborhood of Nduye well, but in spite of our initial setback with Chief Lupao we still wanted to make some contact with the BaLese. Father Longo suggested that we try the other powerful Lese chief, Nakubai, whose village was a number of miles to the north. We followed his advice, and Nakubai did everything he could to reverse our opinion of his people. He was not only hospitable, but he understood when I said that we wanted to visit his Pygmies without the restraint of having a villager along with us. Whereas Kachui and others had insisted on keeping us under constant surveillance, Nakubai even said that we would probably see far more if we went on our own. As a result we

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

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491 middle to get a better view of the way the supporting lianas were fastened, he urged me on, saying that it was not natural to be standing there in the middle of the air over a dangerous river.

114 On the far side we came to a camp, and there we found some relatives of the Epulu Pygmies, including one girl who was well known to us both—Makubasi's first wife.

797 We stayed there for the night and then moved on up a trail that
177 led to the Protestant mission of Biasiku. This was headed by an American missionary, the Reverend Charles Bell, and his wife. They had been in the Ituri for about as long as Father Longo and Pat Putnam had. As soon as they heard that we were staying in the camp down by the river they made arrangements for us to stay at the mission, and without knowing that we were on our way Mr. Bell set out on foot to issue the invitation in person. I had a special reason for accepting it; I wanted Kenge to have a fair notion of the way different missions operated. I certainly had no desire to see him converted, but having given him a taste of missions it seemed fair that he should have an all-round picture, and earlier during our trip we had had an unfortunate experience with a different Protestant mission.

At that mission prayers were said in public about five times a day, mention always being made of any converts who might be ill, however slightly. Prayers were also made requesting the Almighty to provide a road into the forest so that the mission could have easier access to the Pygmies, and thanks were offered for a new automobile that had been acquired. All this was perfectly understandable to the villagers, with their own tradition of witchcraft. They merely thought this a particularly powerful form of magic. Kenge was skeptical. "How is their god going to put a road into the forest when the white man can't do it?" he asked.

But one day, while we were there, a wounded Pygmy was brought in. He had been gored while hunting and was groaning with pain.

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The missionary and I were sitting outside at the time, going through his morning ritual of drinking tea. I went over to see what had happened, and to ask if they wanted any medicine. They said no, but they would like something to make the pain go away until they could prepare their own medicine. All I had was aspirin, but in any case I had more faith in their powers of healing than in mine. Kenge asked in a whisper why the missionary had not come over, but was continuing to sip his tea, keeping his back to us. I did not know, and I said nothing until after the next prayer meeting. As usual, prayers were offered for all those converts who had minor ailments, and for the new road, but not a word was said about the injured Pygmy, lying in a hut not more than ten yards away. Then I did ask, and I was told, "Why should I pray for him? He is not a Christian." The Pygmies were all standing around, and heard, as they were meant to hear. They had little idea of what Christianity was, but from that moment I doubt if any of them thought that it had much to offer them.

At the end of our stay there, the missionary asked Kenge what he thought of the Christian God now that he had been privileged to live in a Christian community. Kenge said with his usual frankness, "It is the biggest falsehood I know." And so I was glad for Kenge to meet other Christians who had a better idea of what their religion stood for, and the Bells were certainly such.

It was while we were with them that Kenge first began to realize that there really was another world, beyond the forest. He had often heard people talk about it, and up at Paulis the forest was thinned almost to mere savannah; but nowhere had he really seen beyond the forest. The mission was built on a high hill, cleared of vegetation so that crops could be planted to supply the mission school and hospital with food. Usually the distant horizons were hazy, and everywhere we looked down only on a sea of trees. Several times I tried to tell Kenge that beyond this lay another world, a world of lakes and mountains and open plains, but he just nodded disbelievingly. He

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823 had never seen even a hill, as such. He had climbed up them, inside the forest, and had seen small hills such as the one on the far side of the Epulu, and the one on which the Nduye mission stood, but that was all. One evening, however, we were both sitting on a boulder at the highest point of the Biasiku mission, looking over the forest. To the east the sky was becoming less and less hazy, and gradually out of the haze a great black mass began to form. Kenge saw it before I did, and asked if it was a bad storm cloud. It was the vast bulk of the Ruwenzori, the Mountains of the Moon.

We never saw the peaks, but even the lower ranges towered so far above the forest that Kenge was almost frightened. He asked me about them, and I did my best, but it was next to impossible to describe things of which he had no experience, and for which there were not even any appropriate words in his language. His curiosity was thoroughly aroused, and feeling a slight hankering myself to see that lovely part of Africa again, I asked him if he would like to have a holiday and go over there, to see the outside world for himself. He hesitated a long time, and then asked how far the mountains were beyond the forest. I said that they were not more than a day's drive from the last of the trees, to which he responded with disbelief, "*No* trees? *No* trees at all?" He was very dubious about this, and asked me if it was a good country, and what the villagers were like there. I told him that it was very much like my own country in some ways, that it was very good, and that there were few villages.

This decided him and he agreed to go, providing that we brought enough food to last us all the time we were to be out of the forest. [186] He was going to have nothing to do with savages who lived in a land without trees.

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The World Beyond

WE STOCKED UP WITH FOOD—stalks of plantains, a basket of rice, a large bundle of manioc roots, some dried fish and a large quantity of peanuts, and forest tomatoes, onions and peppers, with which I knew Kenge would make a delicious sauce. In case I could not persuade him to use local water for coffee, all I could think of in the way of acceptable liquid was beer. 122

We drove down to Beni, where the forest ends, passing through it in a violent storm that cut the visibility down to a few yards. It was almost impossible to see the edges of the road, and Kenge was not even aware that we had left the forest. But he noticed that we were 000

000 climbing, and that it was getting colder and colder. He shivered and pulled my blanket around him, keeping his eyes ahead, not looking to one side or the other. After a while there was a patch in the swirling mist, and to our left I could see the side of one of the foothills, rising sheer and black, soon lost again in the clouds. Kenge shook his head and asked if that was the hill we had seen from the mission station. He immediately began talking about the mission, and how pleasant it had been there, and how nice it would be to go back. . . .

The rain closed in again, and it was only when we were almost at the entrance to the Ishango National Park that the weather cleared. At the check point we paid the small fee which entitled us to stay overnight in one of the guest houses and to have the services of the guides who compulsorily attend every traveler through the park, for the protection of both travelers and game.

Between us and the guest houses were some twenty-four miles of park, traversed by narrow roads made thick with mud by the recent storm. Kenge moved over and sat beside me, making room on the outside for the burly guide, an Azande named Henri. Before us the road rose up a slight incline, and all around were nothing but rolling, grassy plains. The mountains were directly behind us. Kenge kept muttering, "Not a tree . . . not a single tree . . . this is a very bad country." But I reassured him that it was a very good country, and that he was going to see lots of game. At this he perked up, and Henri saved the situation by asking Kenge if he was a Pygmy, and then telling him that he would see more game than he had ever seen in the forest, but he was not to try and hunt any. Kenge could not understand this, because to his mind game is meant to be hunted, and he started a long argument with the good-natured guide, who soon had him laughing happily.

As we got to the top of the first incline, there was a flat stretch and then a steep rise. Halfway up this the car sank down into the

mud and would not move. Henri and Kenge got out and started pushing, and after half an hour of hard work we reached the top. Once the wheels began gripping I did not stop but kept going until I was at the very crest. There I stopped the engine and waited for the other two, who came running up the hill after me, joking and shouting, covered from head to foot with smelly black slime.

When Kenge topped the rise, he stopped dead. Every smallest sign of mirth suddenly left his face. He opened his mouth but could say nothing. He moved his head and eyes slowly and unbelievingly. Down below us, on the far side of the hill, stretched mile after mile of rolling grasslands, a lush, fresh green, with an occasional shrub or tree standing out like a sentinel into a sky that had suddenly become brilliantly clear. And beyond the grasslands was Lake Edward—a huge expanse of water disappearing into the distance, a river without banks, without end. It was like nothing Kenge had ever seen before. The largest stretch of water in his experience was what he had seen when we had stood, like Stanley, at the confluence of the Lenda and the Ituri. On the plains, animals were grazing everywhere—a small herd of elephant to the left, about twenty antelopes staring curiously at us from straight ahead, and down to the right a gigantic herd of about a hundred and fifty buffalo. But Kenge did not seem to see them.

As he turned around to look behind, I turned with him, and even I was overcome with the beauty of what we saw. It was one of those rarest of moments, which come perhaps once or twice a year and may last only a few seconds, when a violent storm has cleared the air completely and the whole mighty range of the Ruwenzori mountains is exposed in a wild and glorious harmony of rock and snow. The lower slopes shone green with the dense forest, the upper slopes rose in steep, jagged cliffs, and above them the great snow-capped peaks rose proudly into the clearest possible sky. There was not a cloud to match the pure whiteness of the snow.

000 Kenge could not believe they were the same mountains that we had seen from the forest; there they had seemed just like large hills to him. I tried to explain what the snow was—he thought it was some kind of white rock. Henri said that it was water that turned color when it was high up, but Kenge wanted to know why it didn't run down the mountainside like any other water. When Henri told him it also turned solid at that height, Kenge gave him a long steady look and said, *"Bongo yako!"* ("You liar!")

With typical Pygmy philosophy, he accepted what he could not understand and turned his back on the mountains to look more closely at what lay all around him. He picked up a handful of grass, tasted it and smelled it. He said that it was bad grass and that the mud was bad mud. He sniffed at the air and said it was bad air. In fact, as he had stated at the outset, it was altogether a very bad country. The guide pointed out the elephants, hoping to make him feel more at home. But Kenge was not impressed. He asked what good they were if we were not allowed to go and hunt them. Henri pointed out the antelopes, which had moved closer and were staring at us as curiously as ever. Kenge clapped his hands together and said that they would provide food for a whole camp for months and months. Then he saw the buffalo, still grazing lazily several miles away, far down below. He turned to me and said, "What insects are those?"

At first I hardly understood; then I realized that in the forest the range of vision is so limited that there is no great need to make an automatic allowance for distance when judging size. Out here in the plains, however, Kenge was looking for the first time over apparently unending miles of unfamiliar grasslands, with not a tree worth the name to give him any basis for comparison. The same thing happened later on when I pointed out a boat in the middle of the lake. It was a large fishing boat with a number of people in it but Kenge at first refused to believe this. He thought it was a floating piece of wood.

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When I told Kenge that the insects were buffalo, he roared with laughter and told me not to tell such stupid lies. When Henri, who was thoroughly puzzled, told him the same thing and explained that visitors to the park had to have a guide with them at all times because there were so many dangerous animals, Kenge still did not believe, but he strained his eyes to see more clearly and asked what kind of buffalo were so small. I told him they were sometimes nearly twice the size of a forest buffalo, and he shrugged his shoulders and said we would not be standing out there in the open if they were. I tried telling him they were possibly as far away as from Epulu to the village of Kopu, beyond Eboyo. He began scraping the mud off his arms and legs, no longer interested in such fantasies.

The road led on down to within about half a mile of where the herd was grazing, and as we got closer, the "insects" must have seemed to get bigger and bigger. Kenge, who was now sitting on the outside, kept his face glued to the window, which nothing would make him lower. I even had to raise mine to keep him happy. I was never able to discover just what he thought was happening—whether he thought that the insects were changing into buffalo, or that they were miniature buffalo growing rapidly as we approached. His only comment was that they were not real buffalo, and he was not going to get out of the car again until we left the park.

We continued down toward Lake Edward, blue and clear and smooth. The shoreline stretched across the wide plain to the east, where the distant hills of Uganda rose and shimmered uncertainly until they were lost in the south. The lake itself disappeared into the southern haze, and all along the west it hid itself in the low-lying plains and swamps beneath the hills of the Congo. The Semliki River, which joins Lake Edward with Lake Albert, to the north of the Ruwenzori, cuts through the plains in a wide gully, flanked by cliffs some two hundred feet high. At the top of the cliffs, just above where the river begins to drain from the lake, are the park guest

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houses, two neat brick sleeping quarters, each divided into two sets of rooms, with a building containing a dining room and kitchen in between. About a mile to the east is a small village which houses the African staff and guides, and where the servants of visitors can stay. The guest houses face the edge of the cliff, which is not much more than a hundred feet away. Each has a built-in garage. Instructions are posted telling the visitor to leave his car inside at all times when not in use, in case of visitations by elephant, buffalo or hippopotamus.

Both the guide and the guest-house staff were surprised when I said that Kenge would stay with me in the guest house, instead of going to the village, but Kenge had made it quite plain that he was not going to let me out of his sight for a minute. Besides, I wanted to see his reactions. He was considerably cheered at the sight of comfortable living quarters, and after having what was probably the first shower of his life and changing into clean clothes, he promptly set off for the kitchen to cook a meal. The official cook was put out by this, so I said that I would pay him anyway, but that I would rather have Kenge cook our food. This was all right; the cook had nothing to do but sit and watch. But when Kenge brought two plates into the dining room, the cook protested violently, saying that *indigènes* were not allowed to eat in the dining room. I said that Kenge was my friend, and the cook replied that this might well be, but that he would lose his job if the Belgian park superintendent came around and saw an indigène eating in the dining room. I asked if it was all right for Kenge to eat in the kitchen. He said yes, that was quite in order, so long as he did not use the guest-house crockery. So we got our own cooking utensils and enamel bowls and sat down on the floor of the kitchen. The cook protested even more loudly at that and called the village headman over. Kenge started talking to me in KiBira so that they could not understand, and the headman

realized he was getting nowhere. He simply posted guards to warn him if the superintendent showed up.

Before it grew dark we had time for a quick drive around part of the park, but except for a family of elephants crossing the road right in front of us, we saw no game. The guide said the elephants were on their way down to the Semliki, and that if we went straight back to watch we would see them and all the other animals as they came down to drink and bathe. I had visited Ishango a few years earlier and remembered sitting on the edge of the cliff and watching the animals on the far side of the river come slowly across the plain and down the narrow, steep cliff path to the water. Henri led us to a different spot, sheltered and hidden by clumps of gigantic cactus plants, and told us we would see more from there.

But first Kenge wanted to wander along the top of the cliff, to see if it was really true that during each night the hippopotami clambered up to the top and "danced" in front of the houses, as Henri had said when he warned us not to set foot outside after dark. I had slept outside once before and would never do it again; and sure enough as Kenge walked along, carefully scanning the ground, he found tracks of almost every kind of animal, including hippopotamus. We returned to our clump of cactus and sat down.

For the first time, Kenge spoke approvingly. Perhaps he was reassured because to the far south the great Kivu range of volcanoes had appeared out of the haze, putting an end to the lake. Behind us the Ruwenzori were swathed in a ringlet of clouds halfway up, but the peaks above shone white in the darkening sky. The air was still, and the only sounds were those of the lake birds crying as they swooped low over the water. I felt, all of a sudden, as though I was back in the forest, and when Kenge spoke I knew why.

I only wish I could somehow convey the sound of his voice—soft and musical, so quiet that I could hardly hear it. I have seen many of the forest people talk like this when they are feeling deeply. Even

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000 the movement of his mouth and his eyes and gestures of his hands
[823] conveyed what he was saying. As if singing to himself, he said, "I
[825] was wrong. This *is* a good place, though I don't like it; it must be good, because there are so many animals. There is no noise of fighting. It is good because the sky is clear and the ground is clean. It is good because I feel good; I feel as though I and the whole world were sleeping and dreaming. Why do people always make so much noise?" And then he added, with infinite wistfulness, "If only there were more trees . . ."

As the sun sank lower we watched the hippopotami playing in the Semliki, directly beneath us. They heaved their great bodies out of the water and opened their gaping mouths wide, snorting and grunting before they sank back beneath the surface with a tremendous splash that sent waves rolling to the shore. Farther down the river two bulls were fighting, but only half in earnest. Soon they all subsided and only the tips of their noses were left poking just above the surface of the water.

Then came a procession of almost every type of animal in the park, one after the other, each picking its way with unhurried grace to the water's edge. On our side of the river they came right past where Kenge and I were sitting, down a narrow path that disappeared from sight beneath us. We next saw them as they emerged at the bottom and carefully waded into the water, looking all around to make sure that there were no rivals near by. As one group of animals moved away, another came and took their place. The elephants that we had passed on the road were the last we saw, and as it was getting dark, we retreated to the safety of the guest houses. We cooked and ate our evening meal in the kitchen, leaving the dining room unused, for there were no other guests in the park.

When we had finished, Henri tried once more to persuade Kenge to go with him to the village, but Kenge refused. Warning us to go straight back to the guest house Henri disappeared, spear in hand,

running lightly. We made our way to our house and sat out on the veranda for an hour or two, watching and listening. The elephants returned from the valley and walked right past us, between the house and the cliff, so close that we could smell them and hear their snuffly breathing. Not long afterward a single buffalo snorted directly to our left, and we could see its huge bulk at the edge of the garage, sniffing the mud-spattered car. Other sounds came and went, but the night was dark and all we could see were vague shapes moving uncomfortably close at hand.

Then the cloud must have lifted, for the two beacons I had been waiting for gradually came into sight, dull patches of red glowing unevenly far beyond the cliffs in front of us. They were the two active volcanoes just to the south of Lake Edward, high up between Lakes Edward and Kivu. I pointed them out to Kenge, who had heard tales of them and was surprised that they should glow so plainly at such a distance, since during the day he had only caught a glimpse of the far coastline of the lake. But just then the ground all about us seemed to shake, and there was the unmistakable grunting of several hippopotami. They must have been all around the house, and as they heaved their heavy bodies about in search of fresh grass, they made the earth tremble. It was no wonder the local guides referred to this cliff top as "the dancing ground of the hippopotamus," because as they grunted and thudded clumsily around there seemed to be a curious rhythm to their movements.

When we looked the next morning the ground, still soft from the recent rain, was churned up by hundreds of different footprints, including the spoor of a lion, rare in this area, which led directly past the veranda steps where we had been sitting.

The morning was spent going all over the park with the now thoroughly friendly Henri, who took us to places where he knew we would find different kinds of animals. I left him to deal with Kenge, and it soon became a game between them to see who could

000 spot a telltale movement first. Kenge's eyes were sharper, but he was seldom able to identify anything that was more than a few hundred yards away, whereas Henri could tell at several miles.

Everywhere the view was different, and Kenge was as fascinated by this constant change as he was by the abundance of game. The sun shone warmly in a clear sky, but the Ruwenzori had hidden themselves once more in a bank of cloud. Looking at them from the north side of the park we could see only the forest-covered lower slopes.

[187] All at once Kenge said, "I dreamed of my mother last night, and of my wife Maliamo. My mother was crying for me."

I asked him if he wanted to stay another day or so in the park, or go back, and he said he wanted to go back just as soon as he could. When we got back to the guest houses we heard that the superintendent was on his way, so we decided to leave at once rather than have any arguments as to whether it was better for a white man to eat in the kitchen with a Pygmy, or a Pygmy to eat in the dining room with white men. Henri returned with us to the entrance to the park, where he and Kenge said a fond farewell, Kenge giving him some of our stock of rice as a present.

Where the road leaves the heights above the plains and crosses over to the forest plateau, we stopped the car and got out to have a last look. The scene was at its most beautiful, and I waited for several minutes while Kenge took it all in, shaking his head and clucking his tongue in amazement. When he spoke all he said was, "The [196] *Père* Longo was right, this God must be the same as our God in the forest. It must be one God."

Our homeward trip was a triumphant one. Kenge sang loudly as we got farther and farther into the forest. He was so happy to be back that he forgot temporarily about his mother and Maliamo, and himself suggested stopping in several places, which we did.

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Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clearings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers? 648 179 361

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans were being cooked for lunch.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill outside the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 648 179 361 147 164

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impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire
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code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed
[829]
up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

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The Dream World

OUR RETURN TO EPULU found most of the Pygmies, except for 361
Cephu and his group, down in the village. Hunting had been excep- [439]
tionally good and over the past weeks they had dried a quantity of
meat which they were now busy trading for village produce. Their
roadside village camp had long been abandoned, and only my house
there was still standing. They all seemed to have agreed that they [342]
did not want any more mud houses, and they had made a temporary
camp just inside the forest. It was not far from one of the plantations,
and close to a stream of crystal water.

Kenge had a hero's welcome; even the villagers came to visit the

361 camp to hear his stories. But none of his stories fascinated the Pyg-
361 mies as much as those of the model Pygmy villages we had passed
177 on our way home. He was made to repeat these accounts over and over again, giving every detail. While the younger men and women laughed until they could laugh no more at Kenge's description of the distribution of beans for planting, and how most of them ended up in the cooking pot, the older people were less amused. "But are they actually living in those villages?" they asked. And when Kenge answered that some of them were, the next question was "What if there is no game nearby?" Kenge could only tell them what the administrator had said: "You are welcome to hunt so long as you continue to look after the plantations." Everyone knew that to be impossible. Hunting is a full-time occupation, and it could lead a group away for months on end. It called for the co-operation of men, women and children. Who was to stay to look after the fields?

Other questions brought equally unsatisfactory answers, even so far as the younger people were concerned. There were no trees in the "model" villages—every last one had been cut down, exposing the huts to the full heat of the sun. The Pygmies were to be supplied with free seeds to plant, but they would be expected to produce a definite yield, and they knew that villagers who failed to come up to the mark were fined, and if they were unable to pay their fines they
[312] went to jail. Every village had been placed near a supply of fresh water, tested by the administrator himself (by looking at it—he was horrified when I drank some). But the Pygmies knew that however clean it might be to start with, it would soon be polluted; and in any case there was no guarantee that it would continue throughout the year.

361 Far from being "liberated" from the villagers, the Pygmies felt
829 that in these model plantations they would be in greater danger than
177 ever. In the forest they knew that they were safe, because the forest was theirs, but once out in the open they were subject to all the evil

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

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222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy
262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.
222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller
621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it
222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the
177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.
222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley
621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest.
[439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan.
621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said,
578 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco
177 and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 621
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 578
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted 177
by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister, Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734]
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing
Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda,
shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

621 be very glad if I came to their camp; I would find it less noisy than Ekianga's.

I asked Kenge what he wanted to do, and without hesitation he said he was going to follow Masisi. Maipe was his half-brother, and a very good friend of his, but his main reason, he said, was that he was tired of noise. He knew that Masisi's camp would be a quiet one, with lots and lots of singing and dancing. To the Pygmy, noise is synonymous with trouble, with dispute and discontent; music is never referred to as noise, but rather as "rejoicing." I felt that Kenge [114] was right, and we decided to follow the next day.

114 It was, I knew, to be my last trek into the forest with the people I had come to think of as such close friends, and even though I still had another two months to spend with them I was sad. It was partly because of this, and partly because, like Kenge, I was so profoundly content to be back in our own part of the forest, that I found the forest more beautiful than it had ever been. Kenge said it was just because it was the honey season, but as we passed the plantation and entered once more into the shade of the great friendly old trees, he added, "This is the *real* world . . . this is a good world, our forest."

We walked slowly, enjoying every minute. We passed through the plantation that Njobo and Masisi had begun to cultivate more than a year and a half earlier, and found it a ruin, happily abandoned for more worthwhile things. We skirted Apa Muhoko because Kenge said Cephu had camped there recently and it would be full of jiggers. In the deserted remains of Apa Kadiketu we stopped for a rest, sitting on a log that had once resounded to the hammering of ivory bark-cloth beaters. I thought of the great molimo songs that had been sung there, and wondered if I would hear them again before I left. Beyond Apa Kadiketu we followed the path to Apa Lelo, almost to the spot where I had once seen a leopard crouching up in the trees above me. There we turned west, following an animal trail that was narrow and tangled. It led through hilly country completely new to

me and finally brought us down to a swampy region, dark and dank. 114
A stream flowed through the middle, fed by innumerable tiny rivulets from the hills all around. We picked our way across, balancing on fallen tree trunks and jumping from log to log. As we began to climb a steep hill on the far side I heard the telltale sound of bark cloth being pounded into shape, the cheerful shouting of women as they called to each other while they finished the building of their huts, and an occasional outburst of song, sung for no other reason than that this was the honey season, the season to be happy, the season to rejoice. Kenge gave a loud whoop of pleasure and darted [152] among the trees like a young antelope, leaping and bounding out of sight. When I reached the clearing he was already sitting down, his face buried in a sticky mongongo leaf dripping with rich brown honey. He looked up and laughed.

The camp was called Apa Toangbe, the *toangbe* being a special 361 kind of honey tree. It was built halfway up a fairly high hill, on a [192] patch of ground that was not quite level. Masisi's house was at the highest point of the tiny clearing, with Asofalinda to one side and Maipe's mother to the other. Masamba had built a house that virtually joined onto that of Masisi. Mine was halfway up the slope on the other side, facing across to Maipe. It was all ready when we arrived, the only one completely finished. Masisi proudly led me to it and inspected it with me. He had built the bed himself, carefully [352] refraining from turning the ends of the branches up sharply as Pygmies seem to think should be done, so that the bed becomes the shape of a hammock without any of its back-saving resilience.

It was not thirty feet from one side of the camp to the other, and OOO the forest closed in a protective wall all around us. Kenge and I set off to see what the surrounding country was like, and soon we were far beyond the sounds of any voices other than our own. Everywhere we went we saw mushrooms and nuts and berries, and we collected

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all we could carry to bring back for dinner. The hill was ringed with streams, each one fresh and clear until it reached the swamp.

On the way back, having made a complete circuit, we were just nearing the camp when I noticed a huge old tree, one of those with great buttress roots joining the trunk some fifteen feet above the ground. It was completely dead, standing up white and naked among all the greenery, its lifelessness seeming all the more pitiable in the midst of such luxuriance. Most of its branches had already come crashing down, and only one or two jagged stumps were still jutting out from the main body. Kenge gave it a critical look; then peered in the direction of the camp a few yards below. "It should just miss our house!" he said quite seriously.

As a matter of fact it did. One night we were awakened by a sharp cracking sound, followed by a loud groan. This was repeated, and after a while a number of Pygmies, each with a flaming brand in his hands, stood out in the clearing, listening. "It's not going to fall yet," they said, and went back to sleep. Kenge had not even bothered to get up, but I could not sleep. I must have laid there for a couple of hours, listening to cracks as sharp as a rifle going off, and the intermittent groaning. Then the groaning got louder and more continuous, and in a flash Kenge was up and outside, yelling at me to follow. Just as I cleared the doorway the old tree came down, slowly and reluctantly, clutching at all the lesser trees that stood in its way. They were living, and it was dead, but it smashed its way on downward to the ground. The tremendous din of its collapse was followed by a light pattering of broken branches and twigs, and then silence. Kenge said, "You see, it did miss our house." So it had, by no more than six feet.

824 For the first day or two I noticed the children playing in a vine
524 swing that they had rigged up for themselves, and I watched the
734 crippled Lizabeti as she eyed them longingly. Several times, when the other children had gone scampering off into the forest I saw her

pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself 824 524 almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what 734 strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why 734 Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better 481 with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. 123 "What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most [152] truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

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sense, and she must not refuse. Did she want her child to die like other cripples who had been unable to fend for themselves?

Reluctantly she agreed, but Lizabeti, as soon as I reached for her, burst into tears and dragged herself back into the farthest corner of her mother's hut. Masisi started to go in after her again, but Kenge called to him to leave her alone, and handed his crutches and those we had made for Lizabeti to the eagerly waiting children. Soon it was the most popular game in the camp. Even Masisi and Maipe tried "walking on one leg." I saw Lizabeti's tear-stained face peering from the door of her hut to watch.

The next morning Asofalinda came over to me and said that Lizabeti wanted to try this new game, but if she fell once she would never be allowed to try again. Not a soul left the camp that morning; they all wanted to see what would happen. Between us Kenge and I lifted the girl, who was bravely trying not to cry, and put the crutches under her arms. We showed her how to hold them with her hands at the sides, and how to take the weight off her good leg and swing it backward and forward. The greatest difficulty was getting her to trust that leg enough to move her crutches on in front of her. But little by little, moving one crutch at a time, she got more confidence. I went in front to catch her if she fell, and Kenge held her lightly around the waist from behind. Lizabeti began to walk. Kenge let go, and then, as she realized that Kenge was not even holding her, that she was actually walking upright, like the other children she had watched from the ground all her life, her face became contorted with fear and she stumbled. Kenge caught her just in time. He swung her high into the air with a triumphant shout to drown her wails of terror, and all the children joined in, laughing and chanting their congratulations.

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We had almost completed a circle of the camp, and I looked over to see if Asofalinda had noticed Lizabeti start to fall. I was just in time to see her bury her face in her hands, her whole body shaking as she

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life. 734 481 123 [152]

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day. 222

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects. 222 262

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny [273] 222 527 517 [533]

222 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ring-
527 ing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
517 [533] cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
602 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had
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sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey. 621 578 602 224

One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

621 joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as every-
578 one would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet
224 later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?
[602]

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and
[574] industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters
628 to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.

621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

221 And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season
621 they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

114 But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Masisi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to
221 the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the
524 dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from
526 the highest branches, and on these the youths practiced their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line
221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all
535 was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372]
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534]
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their ap- 621
pearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

114 or chirp of a cricket tells you that the forest is alive with some presence.

As I splashed my way through the last stream and climbed to the top of the rise above Apa Lelo, the sounds of the forest grew louder. This was a friendly sign, but somehow it made me feel even more lonely. Then I came down into the old camp. The huts were rotted and collapsed, the clearing overgrown. As I roamed about, tracing where huts had been and remembering who had lived there, kicking idly with my feet in the hopes of finding some familiar object, it all began to live again. I wandered down to the Lelo, as calm and placid and beautiful as ever, and I thought of the molimo. As I looked into the waters where the trumpet had once been hidden, it was as if I heard its voice in the distance, gentle but insistent.

181 When I had bade my farewell to that very special river and returned to the camp, I saw it as it really was in the timelessness of the forest world—the huts strong and green, the fires burning brightly, and the air heavy with the scent of cooking. Lizabeti was running about with the other children, swinging happily on her crutches. The men helped one another to examine and repair their nets, while the women cooked and gossiped. Masisi was shouting at someone, and Manyalibo was trying to pacify him in his usual gruff, good-natured way. Old Moke sat back in his chair and puffed at his pipe, gazing up at the tree tops so very high above. I heard him murmur once more, "You will see things you have never seen before. . . . You [M8] will understand why we are called People of the Forest. . . . When the Forest dies, we shall die." And for the last time I heard the chorus of that great song of praise: "If Darkness *is*, Darkness is Good."

000 The camp and the people disappeared, leaving only a shimmering haze over Apa Lelo, but the song remained, for the song is the soul of the people and the soul of the forest. The molimo trumpet, now

infinitely wistful and far away, took up the song, and the forest echoed it on with its myriad magic sounds.

It echoes on and on, and it will still be there when our short lives are silenced . . . until, perhaps like us, it comes to rest in the deepest distance of some other world beyond . . . the dream world that is so real to the People of the Forest.

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A Note on Pronunciation

No matter what language they speak, the BaMbuti all speak with 194
the same singsong intonation. There is a fluctuating, musical warble as they talk, with a particular emphasis on the penultimate syllable which is always pitched very definitely higher or lower than all others, and held longer for emphasis. In single words also, the emphasis is on the penultimate, in this case generally pitched higher, lower for interrogative use.

Each vowel is pronounced clearly and has its full value, even in the case of double vowels (such as *Au*sa). Vowel equivalents are

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194 approximately as below. Consonants are much as in English, but with the "g" always hard. "C" is rare, indicating something approaching a very soft "s." "L" and "r" are often interchangeable, always similar, both being made by flapping the tongue forward from the back of the palate. "Ph" is a soft "f."

VOWELS

"a"	as in f*a*ther	example, M*a*sali'to
"e"	as in m*a*ke	K*e*'nge
"i"	as in f*ee*t	Mas*i*'si
"o"	as in *oboe*	Nz*o*'bo
"u"	as in m*oo*n	A*u*'sa

(' follows the accented syllable, e.g., Nzo'bo)

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Glossary

BaBira The Negro village tribe with which the Epulu Pygmies have most contact. As is characteristic of Bantu peoples, *Ba* is a plural prefix, the tribal name being *Bira*. The singular prefix is *Mu*, and the prefix indicating the language of the people is *Ki*. Thus a *Mu*Bira speaks the *Ki*Bira language, as do all the *Ba*Bira villagers. 104

Bakpara The term by which the Negroes refer to the relationship to the Pygmies; best translated "Masters."

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BaLese The major village tribe to the east and northeast of the Epulu district.

BaMbuti General term for all Pygmies of the Ituri Forest.

BaNgwana An Islamic tribe scattered throughout the area. Their unsavory reputation, acquired in the days when they aided and abetted the slave-traders, has continued right up to the present day. KiNgwana has become the lingua franca of the entire area.

Banja A pair of short sticks, split into many strands at one end and clapped together on a log as rhythmic accompaniment to certain songs of the Pygmies, particularly the *molimo* songs.

Bantu General term for all tribes speaking a certain type of language, characterized by the use of prefixes, as indicated under BaBira, above, etc. The Bantu peoples extend throughout eastern, southern, and central Africa.

Baraza The meeting place of a family or village. Sometimes a large veranda built onto a house; more often a separate building consisting of a roof supported by poles, but with no walls.

Dawa "Medicine"; may refer to effective herbs or equally to magical incantations or spells.

[551] [123] **Ebamunyama** Literally, "His Father Killed an Animal"; the name which the Pygmies gave to me, being their condensation of the story that I told to explain my name, "Turnbull." (A borderland Scot saved the king's life by leaping on the back of a bull and turning it away from the king by twisting its

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[551]

neck. The family was rewarded with the title "Turner of the Bull," and with a crest of a bull with a broken neck.)

Elima The festival celebrating the puberty of girls.

Fito A young straight sapling, up to twelve feet in length, used in the construction of house frames, also as whips during certain ceremonies.

Itaba A sweet root found only in the forest, considered a delicacy by the Pygmies.

Kangay The gardenia fruit, used by Pygmies to extract a black juice used for staining the body or for drawing patterns on bark cloth.

Kenge An antelope, sometimes an okapi; such names are occasionally, but not often, given to children, as in the case of my helper and friend.

Kumamolimo "The heart of the *molimo*"—the central meeting place of the men's religious organization.

Lendu A forest antelope, the size of a large dog, with sharp-pointed horns.

Liko A brew made by the Pygmies of forest berries, herbs, and cola nut.

Machetti A large-bladed knife used for cutting fito, etc.

Mangese The Pygmy term, also used by some BaBira, for the elders. As used by Pygmies it can also refer to a youngster, if he has shown himself to be a "Great One" by some spectacular hunting achievement, say killing a buffalo or an elephant single-handed.

104 MBOLOKO — The smallest forest antelope, barely the size of a rabbit.

MOLIMO — The name given by the BaMbuti to the ritual performed at times of great crisis, and consisting primarily of songs sung nightly by the men. It is also the name given to the musical instrument, a long trumpet, usually of wood, that plays an important part in the ritual.

MONGONGO — A large heart-shaped leaf, sometimes nearly two feet across, used for thatching the roofs of huts by both the Pygmies and the villagers. They are laid like tiles, the upper row overlapping the lower.

NDURA — As used by the BaBira, this means the forest; as used by the Pygmies, it means the entire world. When Kenge saw the plain beyond the forest, with barely a tree in view, he referred to it as "ndura."

NGBENGBE — Two short sticks, stripped of bark and clapped together to give a hollow ringing tone. Used for rhythmic accompaniment to the honey songs of the Pygmies. Possibly in imitation of the sound of a honey ax chopping to get at the hive.

NKULA — Both the nut and the red wood of the nkula tree. The wood is scraped to give a red powder which makes a stain when mixed with water. Used for both body and bark-cloth decoration.

NKUSA — The vine from which the Pygmies make twine for their hunting nets.

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NYAMA — Any animal; also used as a term of abuse.

OKAPI — A forest animal, related to the giraffe, found only in this area.

PANDA — A gambling game played with beans which are thrown on the ground by two players. The skill consists in estimating at a glance how many beans have to be added to those on the ground to make up a multiple of four.

SINDULA — The water chevrotain, an aquatic antelope which is particularly vicious when trapped. It is considered the best eating in the forest.

SONDU — A large forest antelope.

TIPPU TIP — (also Tibbu Tib, etc.) Notorious slave-trader of the nineteenth century. From his headquarters on Zanzibar he sent out caravans through eastern and central Africa, using tribes such as the Ba-Ngwana to round up slaves and ivory.

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He has made three field trips to Africa, the last of which was

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114 *spent mainly in the then Belgian Congo, from 1957 to 1958.*

Mr. Turnbull is now on the staff of the Department of Anthropology of the American Museum of Natural History, in charge of African Ethnology. He is also a Fellow of the British Royal Anthropological Institute and a Corresponding Member of Le Musée Royale d'Afrique Centrale.

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[For numerous scattered references throughout this source on the author's participation in various Mbuti life cycle events, see whole text, category 116, passim.]

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[Information on begging and stealing of food from villages, since the practice is not regarded as a crime or symptom of Pygmy indigence but something the villagers simply tolerate, will be found under 177]

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A Reader in General Anthropology

CARLETON S. COON
Professor of Anthropology
Harvard University

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[Title Page]

11

The Pygmies of the Ituri Forest

000 ANOTHER example of local specialization and intergroup relations is that of the African pygmies with their Negro hosts, as narrated by Patrick Putnam.* ¾

¾ [Footnote indicated by asterisk (*) appears on P. 322-D.-Author]

[P 322-A]

The Forest Environment.

133
137 The Ituri forest is rolling country, so densely covered with trees that the relief of the landscape is invisible ex-
132 cept from the air. It is a primary rain forest; that is, in most of the region it rains every day or every other day, averaging about one half of the days, from four to six in the afternoon—some 180 days a year. The annual rainfall is correspondingly great, about one and a half meters. The temperature is about 70° F. at night, and varies during the day from 75° to 80° F., depending upon whether it is sunny or cloudy. During January and February, the "dry" season, there are many overcast days; during the rest of the year it is either actually raining or else sunny, with quick changes. When the rain comes, it comes suddenly. It may be bright during the earlier part of the day, and then in the afternoon cloud up all at once in thunderheads. For a few minutes high winds rage through the trees, which tremble like grass in a breeze. Rotten branches and even huge trees crack and fall, crash-

[P. 322-B]

132 ing to the ground. The lightning flashes from the somber sky, and thunder rolls and re-echoes, followed by a pelting downpour. Then in an hour or two it will suddenly stop, sometimes for a brief period of sunshine before the dark of night.

137 The forest varies greatly in regard to underbrush. In some spots there is no undergrowth at all, and nothing but leaf mold between the boles of the trees; in others there is a wild tangle of bushes, reeds, and lianas. The densest thickets are found in small patches of secondary growth, where the Negroes have made clearings and then abandoned them. Most of the forest, however, is virgin growth, and unimpeded except for fallen tree trunks.

136 137 The forest provides game enough for the pygmies, and some to spare for their hosts. Many kinds of wild plants, huge trees, small shrubs, small plants, growing low on the forest floor, bear either edible fruits or medicinal leaves or bark. Many edible fungi are abundant.

133 The forest is also well watered; the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

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114 * Putnam has been living with the people of whom he spoke for nearly two decades. He dictated to me a somewhat longer story of pygmy life, which I have condensed to its present
[128] compass. He went over the copy carefully and made corrections. He is not satisfied with it, and has gone back to learn more. Meanwhile he is willing to let you read what follows. This material has never before been published.

[P. 322-D]

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles
[312] apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

Negro-pygmy Relations

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439
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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

608
571
177

This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P 323-A]

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 574 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

[P. 323-B]

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[206] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[207] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home
[535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

P 177 439 571 [426]

wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

Z 186

Negro attitude toward their pygmies.—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581

The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy woman it is a great rise in the scale of living to marry a Negro as his second or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

Z [595] [522]

[P.324-B]

Z 186 563 581 P 581 P Z 186 266 291 173

ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

. . . .

Z 563 881 P 177 881

In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

Z P 561

The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

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which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

P 481

The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest, and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

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The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing; the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

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[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-79.

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481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

Pygmy Technology

412 197 439 **Basic tools.**—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
[284] all. He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles
[462] are added. The women use these for many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.
412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

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415 Also obtained from the Negroes are
177 the cooking pots that all pygmy wom-
439 en own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have
462 chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman
[824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 This technique is not easy; it is
462 much easier if two women work to-
476 gether, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

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342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

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Although between themselves the pygmies have little division of labor, in another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

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This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy spends all of his time hunting, the Negro only a portion of his. The pygmy depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

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Throughout the pygmy country, the pygmies can be classified either as net hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

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Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

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224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

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224 When they have arrived at the right location, the men set up the nets in a line and stand by to tend them; the women spread out in a circle to beat. Often the pygmies will have dogs which they have borrowed from the Negroes, barkless dogs with wooden bells tied to their collars. Each woman cuts a lot of twigs and makes a little broom with them. She beats the bushes with it, and cries out, "Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo!" over and over again. The young children, except for the babies which are being carried, are made to keep out of this.

[198] [825] When the women sight an animal and it heads for the nets, they change the tone of their baying; either they identify the kind of animal by this means or indicate that an animal in general is coming. When the animal rushes up to the net and entangles itself, the man who is tending that part of the net grabs the animal and kills it with his knife or spear. He will then beat his hand on his arm pit, and the others will come up to see what he has killed. Sometimes, however, the animal sees the net, or a man moves, and the animal leaps back into the line of women. Such an animal can well escape, for the women are not prepared to stop it. However, when a woman engaged in beating sights a slow animal, such as a turtle, pangolin, porcupine, or even a rat, she will dive for it and pop it into her basket which she carries on her back, and go on beating. [462] This is merely incidental gathering; slow animals are women's game.

During the course of a single day a pygmy band may set up their nets, conduct a drive, take the nets down, and repeat the process as many as seven times, each time in a different place. If the clouds collect early, they will go home. If there are no clouds and they have a good bag of game, they will still go home, but if it is dry and they

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224 have little game they will keep on until nearly dark.

There is a difference in value between net positions in a net hunt. The central position is best because it catches the most animals, and the flanks are the worst. The pygmies have a whole vocabulary to express the details of net hunting, including a whole group of verbs for net setting in various positions. There seems to be some rule about who sets his nets in which spot, but this has not been recorded.

[192] [193]

If a big animal, like a buffalo, comes toward the nets, the men will try to get them down and let him rush through, for they do not want to foul and tear the nets or to encounter the dangerous animal. If the large animal does strike the net, however, it may delay him long enough for the nearest man to rush up and spear him.

Most of the animals they catch are no larger than a dog or goat; for example, a kuchinda is about that size. The hunter cuts its throat and carries it around his neck, with hind and front legs on opposite sides. The average day's bag is about half of an animal of this size per man. If they have caught an okapi, however, the hunter cuts it up on the spot, and they cut small lianas to tie up the pieces with. The women also will carry some of it in their baskets. Almost always the meat goes directly to the camp after a hunt, where it is divided. Only after this will the share of the Negroes be carried to their village.

[481] **Bow and arrow hunting.**—In bow and arrow hunting, the pygmy relies not on his endurance but on his ability to move through the forest silently; that is his greatest skill and greatest asset. He can track an antelope to a thicket where it has lain down to sleep, and shoot it from five yards' distance before it wakes up. He shoots machine-gun style; he will pump five ar-

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224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 411 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries two kinds of arrows, the first with iron tips, which he generally uses on the larger, antelope-size, animals, and wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned, and which he uses for monkeys. He rarely shoots a monkey with an iron-tipped arrow, through fear of losing it. Each man makes his own poison as well as his own darts. The [824] plants from which the poison is made are well known, and there is neither ritual nor mystery attached to the proc- [137] ess. The vital plant is a strophanthus; they will mix other plants with it, but they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart stimulant. Its action is not immediate. The monkey runs along a bit, grows weaker, and urinates. The pygmies watch for this, for the moment of 224 urinating is the fatal one. If the monkey is out on a limb where there are no other branches, he will fall off; if he is within reach of a lateral branch or one rising upward, he will clutch it, and the hunter will be obliged to climb the tree if he wants the monkey. To do this he uses the technique described under pygmy locomotion. Since the monkeys are usually high in the trees and the pygmies are such poor marksmen, they undoubtedly miss more of them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant hunting involves a technique that is wholly different from either of the above two. The pygmy elephant hunter is a specialist; not every pygmy has the courage to face an elephant and kill it, and not every man the skill. Wheth- [177] er or not pygmies ever killed elephants in the early days, the present form of

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P 224 [178] elephant hunting is a recent development, the historical growth of which can be easily traced. It is also an important reason for Negro-pygmy relations.

Z 224 The chief reason why the Negro hunts is to kill elephants. The elephants barge about in great herds, destroying the plantations which represent a great deal of labor in clearing the forest and planting the bananas, and which form the Negroes' whole capital, his whole means of livelihood. The elephants burst in, pushing down fences, eating some of the bananas by the bunch and trampling the rest. This dread calamity usually happens on moonless nights when it would be almost certain death to go out and attack the elephants. All the Negro can do is to let the elephants do their worst, and try to kill them later to prevent recurrence.

Z 237 439 435 177 In the old days, when the Negroes had killed an elephant they did not know what to do with the tusks, other than make bark-cloth beaters from a few, and a number of other minor uses. The majority of the tusks were therefore stuck up around the Negroes' clearings as fences. Now when the Arab traders began coming in from Zanzibar, they were interested in commodities which were nonperishable and of concentrated value, and ivory filled these specifications best of all local goods. At first the Arabs bought the ivory from the Negroes for very low prices, since the Negroes were ignorant of its worth. Then when the Negroes began raising the prices to equally ridiculous heights, the Arabs raided them and seized it, and the Negroes began hiding it. Ivory is heavy, and the Arabs had to find bearers to carry it out to the coast. Hence they seized Z [567] men and women and made them carry it, and when they arrived at the coast they sold their bearers as slaves, mak-

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Z
237 ing a double profit. Slavery, therefore,
439 was a by-product of these raids, and
435 not the primary objective, which was
177 to obtain ivory. When the white men
[567] came in, they said to the Negroes,
"Why deal with these Arab slavers?
Sell your ivory to us, and we will leave
you alone." Thus, ivory became an
important item to the Negroes, and
the more they could get of it the better.

P
224 The pygmy could never, by himself,
177 kill enough elephants to stop them from
437 trampling his host's gardens. He
Z could, however, kill enough to swell
439 his host's supply of ivory and increase
563 his host's capital. So a pygmy who
was an elephant hunter became a special
favorite of his Negro host and would
get special gifts and favors in return
for the ivory.

P
411 The pygmy elephant hunter uses a
special spear. Its handle is three to
four feet long; its blade is leaf-shaped,
Z of thin iron, about eight inches long
[325] and four wide. It is Negro-forged, of
soft iron; the pygmy hunter sharpens
it on a stone, until it is razor sharp.

P
224 His technique of hunting is daring
and simple, and takes as much skill as
that of a Spanish matador. He tracks
the elephant, which is not difficult, until he knows from the spoor that he is
close to it. When he hears the elephant's bowels rumble, he goes along
even more quietly, until he sees the
elephant through the underbrush. He
then approaches the elephant silently,
up wind; he jabs his spear as far as he
can into the elephant, gashing the belly
just behind the ribs; then he pulls it
right out again. The elephant at this
point usually turns, and the pygmies
say that if you as much as wink at this
moment you are a dead pygmy.

The man stands stock still, so the
elephant can't see him. Then he goes
through a sequence of stab and jump
and stand still, as many times as he
can. Every time the elephant looks

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224 away he stabs him, and every time the elephant turns he stands still. The elephant can run faster than a man, and the pygmy's only hope is to wound the animal so badly that it will be unable to catch him before he gets away.

Finally the elephant goes charging off with one or more wounds in his intestines. The hunter, with his spear in his hand, returns to the camp. Perhaps the other men will be there, but they may be out net hunting. In the latter case he waits until they have all assembled, and as soon as they are together he tells them his story. There is much excitement; men, women, and children crowd around him and inspect the spear. They may say, "Hmmm, only that much of the tip is bloody, probably he won't die. Let it go." But if the spear is bloody way down to such and such a point, then the elephant has a serious wound and they will follow him.

[484] In the latter case the whole camp goes together. The women load on their babies and cooking pots, and their bunches of plantains. The men take their weapons, and they leave only an old man or two to watch the camp while they are away. They will follow the elephant two or three days, until he finally lies down and dies of peritonitis. Sometimes he has been dead for some time when they reach him, and he may be blown up like a balloon and rotten. Still they will eat him, for rotten meat, if thoroughly boiled, is edible.

224 796 When a group of pygmies reaches a blown-up elephant, a special ceremony takes place. A man other than the elephant hunter cuts a square of skin off the elephant's side. He cuts this up and puts pieces into the mouths of everyone. Then he cuts another layer, and passes this around, and another layer, until he comes down to a point where the body wall is very thin, and

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224 796 everyone has had a taste of the raw skin.

Then a small male child, squalling and screaming, is thrust on the elephant's side; he is told to bite, which he does, and the balloon bursts.

This ceremony is repugnant to the pygmies, as they do not like raw meat; it is especially repugnant to the child, who does not enjoy having the whole rotten insides of the elephant burst in his face.

[611] The child is the youngest son of the man who killed the elephant. If the man has no suitable son, it may be his nephew; or, if he has several young sons and the youngest is too small, either to understand the order or to bite, it will be the next older son.

224 Now that the elephant has burst, the ceremony is over, and a free-for-all takes place; the men cut the sides open, pull out the entrails, and climb inside to hack away at the meat. Other men rush to the head and chop away the tusks. The women take the pieces of meat which their men hand to them, and boil them. As soon as they have cooked one chunk, they will start to [251] boil another. Everyone eats as much of the boiled meat as he is able, and they spread out the rest on drying racks; when it has dried they will take it into the village to the Negroes, who keep it and eat it gradually, for the combination of boiling and drying serves as a means of preserving it, the only food preservation the pygmies practice, and then not for themselves. The tusks go to the special patron of the elephant hunter, and the patron sells them to the Greek or Hindu trader; the patron gives the pygmy a small share of what he receives.

Division of meat.—The need of giving some of the meat to their Negro hosts, and the knowledge that no one will starve as long as they can get bananas, makes the problem of meat di-

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224 vision among the pygmies different than among food-gatherers who have a more direct and immediate dependence [594] on hunting. The principles which the pygmies follow are: (1) The biological family is the least common denominator, the basic unit in sharing. No man would think of eating his meat without giving some to his wife and children. [596] (2) The next unit in sharing is the family group. Any man who has acquired meat will share some of it with other biological families within his family group, but all the shares may not be equal or equivalent. (3) Each man who participates in a hunt is given a share commensurate with his degree of participation. Thus if men from several family groups combine in a hunt, the meat goes to them, and they share their portions within their family groups by single unit families.

For practical purposes, the chief distinction is between meat acquired by stalking and that acquired by net hunting. In the case of stalking, only one man, or more often two or three, will be involved, and these men may well belong to the same family group. With net hunting, however, the whole camp joins the hunt and the whole camp shares the bag.

When an animal is caught net hunting, a number of people have special rights. The man who owns a hunting dog which chased the animal gets the neck. Other special pieces go to the man in whose net it was caught. However, someone else may have borrowed the net and been tending it at the time, and the net tender thus gets a special piece. Then there are pieces for the men whose women bayed it in, and every degree of participation in the killing is recognized and suitably rewarded.

If they bring in five or six antelope there is enough meat for everyone to eat well that night. One family may

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224 get one cut of one animal, another cut of another, depending on what part they played in the capture of each. In any case, even if there is only one animal, everyone will get something to eat. This does not mean that all families eat equally well, however; some have more than others, some better cuts. There is both a reward for special luck and prowess, and a charitable mechanism for those who have shown neither. Sometimes the net hunters catch an okapi; in this case there is enough meat to feed the camp for a week, and everyone eats and eats well.

The meat is cut up by the man who killed the animal, or anyone who knows the rules. In any case there are always arguments. The man who makes a [626] mistake is cried down; they all know [591] the rules, or think that they know them. Government, as far as distribution of spoils is concerned, is by argument and common consent without specific leadership in any individual—the typical pygmy way of making decisions and ordering events.

In the case of the hunter who catches his animal all alone, without help of any kind, the carcass belongs to him alone. Theoretically, he and his family could [626] eat it all up if he wished, but there is little chance that this would happen; he would not dare face public opinion. He would be labeled a mean man and [439] would suffer for it in the end. It may happen however that he is behind in his gifts to his Negro host. In this case he will take the carcass uncut into the village, to avoid trouble from that quarter, and the other pygmies will not hold this against him, provided that there is other food to eat.

[171] The division of spoils after an elephant hunt follows the same principle as it does among the Indians of Tierra del Fuego or Lower California when a whale washes ashore—regardless of who may be responsible there is a

[P 333-A]

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pyg-
571 mies seem to be a little less talkative
[P.333-B]

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are about on a level with white men. There
517 is little chance for extensive conversa-
521 tions during the daytime while out
571 hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some people are quiet, others are noisier.
[157] Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]

62 **Government.**—There are no chiefs,
571 councils, or any other formal govern-
561 ing bodies in a pygmy camp. In mak-
ing any decisions concerning the whole
camp, two factors are involved. The
[888] first of these is respect for older people.

561 A pygmy will always, in addressing
571 a man of an older age group in any
576 formal situation, call him "senior"; he
888 will listen respectfully to an older man
and will always obey any reasonable
orders he may give. If a younger man
[626] shows disrespect, the other members
of the camp will gang up on him and
berate him. This respect for age, and
for the opinions of wise old men, is the
basis of pygmy government.

623 Secondly, while the opinions of most
571 of the old men are respected, every
561 man in the camp is entitled to state his
[888] own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 In general it is the older and more
571 experienced men who make the deci-
561 sion, but as some of the old men are
888 considered eccentrics and freaks, little
[828] attention is paid to them. Rather, it is
an oligarchy of the more respected
among the old men, a body with no
formal membership or specific compo-
[562] sition. In their decisions the pungent
remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological
[P. 334-B]

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and [592] twenty-five the average. Each hut contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

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621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [487] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

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361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
621 There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts
361 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is
621 dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

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628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

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583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of 583 trouble. However, if the family group 591 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 584 he may, in desperation, appeal to his 602 mother's family group to provide one. If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

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825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation. 262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain

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262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 The animals of the forest, which symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting; flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

Both pygmies and Negroes believe in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

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776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 172 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *sitana*." [192] The word *sitana* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

789 821 **Weather magic.**—One class of weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta[8] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[113] [8] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933, p. 243.

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789 especially those taken from a wild pep-
821 per plant, to stop storms; and the light-
ing of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[3] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude
[811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is
789 usually a simple business. During the division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[4] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—
There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women
862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they
000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 157.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

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855 There is a
597 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister
[768] will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta[8] describes one of the lat-
628 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

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585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

757 For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

755 179 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The greatest single cause of mortality in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

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165 After this come the various diseases
164 which kill the pygmies. Pneumonia and dysentery are the greatest killers; infection is rare. Far less important
136 than disease even is the action of hostile
165 animals—elephants, buffalo, or leopards. Once in a while an old leopard, too old to catch antelope, will dare run the risk of sneaking into a pygmy camp at night. The pygmy houses have no doors, and the leopard may slink into a house and grab a pygmy. At the noise so created, other pygmies will wake up and attack the leopard with spears or firebrands. Sometimes the leopard wins completely and carries off his victim's body, to munch at leisure. Sometimes he drops the mangled corpse, and at other times the pygmy may survive. I have seen one pygmy woman who had most of her face bitten away by a leopard and who
165 still lived. The pygmy resistance to
164 wound infections is incredibly great, although they will die like flies from pneumonia.

165 Another occasional cause of death is
372 burning. Pygmies are unusually restless during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire.
[276] Here he will often light up his pipe and take a deep puff of tobacco, apparently to get the maximum effect of the nico-

[P. 341-A]

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire. Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.

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105 The foregoing selection is largely self-explanatory. The common notion that the pygmy of the forest leads a simple life is true only in a special sense. He has his band, his kinfolk elsewhere, his relationship with his hosts, his membership in an initiation grade. He has separate relationships with the members of his band, his clanmates outside, his hosts, and his classmates in the initiation school. Every pygmy is a specialist—at hunting—and some, the elephant hunters, are super-specialists. The key to all this is *trade* and an ethnic division of labor between pygmies and hosts.

000 One thing that struck me forcibly while I edited this material was the paucity of "religious" phenomena in pygmy culture. If you remember that ritual is al-

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000 ways associated with *crises* and *change*, you will see that the reason is to be found in the lack of annual variation in the climate, and the paucity of critical situations. A thunderstorm, accidents in the water, and the excitement of an elephant hunt all have their rituals. Physically the African pygmies described by Putnam are [142] much like the Andamanese, and many culture historians have speculated about their cultural similarities. What can you see that the two peoples had in common which might not be explained away by the similarity of environment alone?

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INTRODUCTION

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114 THE PRESENT SURVEY was originally written as
.12 a thesis for the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford University and submitted in 1956 for the degree of Bachelor of Letters (B. Litt.). It is difficult, having just completed for publication a monograph based on my own field work, to undertake the publication of a thesis written in student days, dealing with the same area but based on the work of others. It inevitably leads to self-conflict, for the new self does not always agree with the old. Further, the survey does not claim to be comprehensive. It is presented, however, as a first step in the gathering together of the earlier literature that can be best relied upon for information concerning the social structure of the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo. It has two major objectives.

121 One, and the most important, is to set down
127 in English a straightforward description of such ethnographic facts as are known about the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, based on the published and unpublished material available up to 1956, with the addition of a few references up to 1960. For the Putnam material I am most indebted to Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who made available all the notes left by her late husband, Patrick Tracy Lowell Putnam.

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121 The other objective is an evaluation of the selected material, a consideration of the problems it raises, and an attempt to resolve some of the more evident contradictions.

114 12 Further reasons for publication of this survey, despite subsequent intensive field research, are, first, that my later field work (1957–1958) was concentrated primarily on making a detailed study of a single hunting band, so there is still no general structural study of the Ituri Pygmies. Also, the results of my more recent study will be better understood in the light of this survey, from which it drew its inspiration.

114 Second, despite the extreme importance of the Mbuti, one of the few remaining hunting and gathering peoples in the world, virtually all the published scientific material is in German, Dutch, or French, with the exception of Schebesta's three early travel books: "Among Congo Pygmies" (1933), "My Pygmy and Negro Hosts" (1936a), and "Revisiting my Pygmy Hosts" (1937). The only original work in English dealing with the Mbuti, up to 1961 in fact,

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114 must confess to leaving out such references
128 wherever it seemed plain that the whole passage referred to that one authority. The impression of inadequacy is heightened by the fact that almost the entire bulk of the material available is general and descriptive rather than specific and analytical. In trying to sift that which falls properly into the latter category, then, we necessarily must abandon the continuity and sense that existed in the orignal works. It is therefore not to be expected that the present survey will in any way offer a coherent ethnography of the Mbuti.

121 Fifth, in the course of the survey (pp. 194–
114 241) I make similar use of the unpublished notes
127 of Patrick and Anne Putnam and expand their account of the net hunters with a limited amount of material from my own field notes dating from 1951 and 1954-1955. My own interest during those two first visits to the Ituri were other than strictly anthropological but concerned certain aspects of social organization. As I was working in the same area as the Putnams, the material isvalid and useful for the rounding out of their observations. In

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this way the survey points up the major differences and similarities between the two Mbuti groups (the archers and the net hunters) and opens the way both for more intensive limited studies and for comparative work.

Sixth and last, a survey such as this seems necessary in order to clear the ground of the confusion of contradictions and uncertainties in our present sources. The diversity of opinion, in itself important, proved to be of the utmost significance for my own later field work. Although it is somewhat begging the question, it might be said that only by accepting the contradictions as fact, then seeking a structural means of resolving those contradictions, can we begin to approach the truth of the situation. The survey, in this way, may be taken to point the direction in which further field work is needed. This is as true now, since my own field trip of 1957–1958, as it was then. That trip, concerned mainly with a localized band of net hunters, confirmed much of the general thesis of the present survey concerning the differences between archers and net hunters. However, detailed studies of other bands, both archer and net hunter, are vitally needed if we are to arrive at an understanding of the nature of Mbuti society as a whole and of its relationship with villager society.

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The latter problem, that of the relationship 121.
between the two neighboring peoples, is of the greatest importance and has been subject to the greatest misunderstanding. It should be emphasized that the opinions cited here, including my own, are opinions and are to be accepted only as such. It should also be realized that the situation is by no means static. Not only has the 121
relationship between the Mbuti and the vil- 178
lagers been changing even during the years since I have known them, but so, in all probability, has the internal structure of Mbuti society. It is quite possible that such change has long been a characteristic of the area, and it is almost certain that the Mbuti-villager relationship has never been static, which may account for some of the diversity of opinion, and a general historical perspective undoubtedly helps us to evaluate the rather sketchy material at our disposal.

We have, for instance, a steady regression in 114
factual knowledge of the area from the time of our earliest Egyptian sources right up to the beginning of the present century, at the turn of which our ignorance of the African Pygmies was just about complete, even to disbelief in their

[P.147-A]
114 derstandable, more valuable, and more usable.

.121 An examination of all the available source material indicates very clearly the necessity for immediately establishing a limited study of well-defined groups, uninfluenced by any theoretical preoccupations with questions of sociological unity, anteriority, or origin. The term "Pygmy" leads far too easily to meaningless generalization. It may well prove that even the [101] term "Mbuti," by which is understood the Pygmy population of the Ituri Forest, is too broad. The breakdown in this survey between the different economic groups of Mbuti is only a tentative investigation to discover significant similarities and differences.

114 In view of the existence of Schebesta's (1938, 122 1941, 1948, 1950) major work, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," with its special reference to archers, and my own field work and recent and forthcoming publications on the net hunters, the survey here has been kept to reasonable dimensions and does not pretend to give a complete picture. The accounts of Schebesta and Putnam are presented with as little speculation as possible. It will be readily seen that there is insufficient information, almost throughout, for any effective analysis to be made. But certain problems arise, and in the conclusions some attempt is made to outline these further, particularly the nature of the Pygmy-villager relationship.

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.121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among them much longer. For some thousands of years 177 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside 175 influence. In historic times various village tribes [174] invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering 177 economy. What emerges from a study of this 182 [p.147 B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tic or racial differential. It might be well to define how certain other terms are used.

CAMP: This term distinguishes the settlement of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There may be hunting camps, those situated in the forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

BAND: This refers to the total Mbuti hunting population, regardless of kinship, that recognizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. The band may occupy a single camp or split into several camps within the same territory.

VILLAGE: The settlement of the Bantu and Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the forest. Such a village is likely to have a much more clear-cut kinship composition and political identity than an Mbuti band.

VILLAGER: This term, unless otherwise stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cultivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that

[P. 147-D]

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the basis of the relationship is the fact that these tribes are village cultivators and not forest hunters.

LINEAGE: We adhere to the definition and usage suggested in "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" (1954, 88–89). The definition is given as follows: "A lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person through a determinate number of generations."

CLAN: Similarly, we use this term as suggested in "Notes and Queries" (1954, 89–90) whereby clan members may trace their unilineal relationship through one line or the other, i.e., we do not use it in the sense of a matriclan as opposed to a gens. Further, we here regard the lineage as a subdivision of the clan, lineage members being able to trace their membership to a known ancestor. A number of such lineages hold themselves to be related by the common descent of the lineage ancestors from a remote, possibly fictional or totemic ancestor.

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original sur-

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GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P Z 101 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P Z 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P 148-B]

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[P. 159-A]

ORIENTATION

LOCATION

101 114 THE PYGMY POPULATION of the world is divided into two main groups, Asiatic and African, commonly known as Negritos and Negrillos, respectively. These terms originated in what is probably the first serious attempt to study the Pygmies as a whole (Quatrefages, 1887), and the relationship between these two groups has been an issue ever since. It does not concern us here, as our study is confined to the African Pygmies, but reference to this wider issue may be found in Quatrefages (1887), Le Roy (1897), Schmidt (1910), Eickstedt (1934), and Gusinde (1942).

TRIBAL GROUPINGS

•121 101 We are concerned essentially with an ethnographic study of known Pygmy groups in Africa, but here again the field is generally considered in terms far too broad to be practical.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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221 CP. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

182
• 121 It is also significant in considering the relative systems of values of the Mbuti and the villagers, in so far as it develops certain qualities in the Mbuti that further accentuate their physical difference from their village neighbors. Just as the forest itself stands out in sharp contrast to the plains, so the forest people stand out in contrast to the plains people—even those who have made a notable adaptation to a forest environment such as the Ituri village tribes. The value in emphasizing the importance of environmental considerations lies not in any causal explanation of material culture or social structure offered by such considerations, but in creating an awareness of this very fundamental opposition.

[P.166-8]

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[P. 242-C]

Putnam, and nearly one decade in the case of 114
Anne Putnam.

The vital gaps in this combined material, 128
together with its general nature, render any at- 121
tempt at systematization fruitless. As it is presented, however, it stands as a body of facts, more or less reliable, related to two specific types of Mbuti society—archers and net hunters. We can use it initially, then, to test the validity of this classification. Second, the survey suggests a new approach to the relationship between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors. Incidentally it throws a clearer light on Schebesta's notions as to the cultural unity of the Ituri Mbuti and on the irrelevance of his division of the Mbuti into linguistic groups which correspond only to villager groupings, and not directly to any significant structural differences among the Mbuti themselves. Here we concern ourselves with a brief comparison of our two major sources, section by section, with reference mainly to the classification of the Mbuti according to hunting technique.

A fourth factor might be added: While the net hunt quickly scares animals away from the area around the hunting camp, necessitating frequent changes of site, the archery technique neither depletes the game so quickly nor frightens it away. An archer band can therefore remain confined to a smaller area, near the village, while the net hunters sometimes must wander several days' march away from their patrons. The more nomadic group also has constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is apparently felt by the more settled archers, for plantation products. 184 182 224 361 [262]

Thus at once we can see the possible economic, social, and political implications of the difference in hunting technique and how these implications follow in fact. 184 182 12 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of social and economic importance in each type of community. It is regarded primarily as the work of women, though, wherever it calls for tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among 222 184 462

[P 244-D]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold equally well among the archers. It is simply one [121] of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [575] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *toré* society is an in- [192] tegral part of the religious system of the archers [176] and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.
[p 248-3]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 248-C]

and that Toré is applicable as a term for God. 000

As there is confusion, even among the Mbuti, 771 on questions of religious terminology we can do 121 little by pointing to this or that context. We 181 must go a great deal further and try to discover something of the underlying system of values. In the light of such an inquiry we shall be able to assess better the significance behind the outward differences between the two groups; for instance, differences over the performance of ritual, differences in magical practice, and others. Here we cannot be content with a comparison of outward behavior, for we are dealing with a world of symbolism, and in that symbolic world we can fruitfully compare only the values that underlie the symbols. To do so leads us into the very much wider field of study that is broached in the succeeding and final two sections (pp. 249–272). By attempting to understand something of the Mbuti system of values we may not only hope to understand the significant differences between one type of hunting band and another, but also we may hope to get some idea of the real relationship between both kinds of band and their villager neighbors.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Schebesta (1950, 13) insists that there is a 184
cultural unity among the Ituri Mbuti, which 114
he believes is clearly visible in their magico-religious system. He may well be right. Probably he is, but his method of comparing terminological usage among a number of different Mbuti bands as though he were dealing with self-evident facts, while relying frequently on casual information, does little to support his theories. When dealing with cult practices, he is more concerned with the origin of a particular practice than with its sociological significance. He accepts statements and even legends at their face value and builds his elaborate theories on this flimsy foundation.

In trying to draw any useful comparison be- 184
tween the material on the archers and that for 12
the net hunters, we are constantly confronted with the question of origin. Is this or that custom or ritual of villager origin? If so, how far [17]
has it been adapted and what significance has it? The latter question is more important for the social anthropologist than the former and is precisely the question we must ask. We are concerned not with the origin of any particular ritual but rather with its significance and its relationship to other practices in a system of related institutions. Thus when we deal with religious 000
[P 248-D]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121
177

Thus when we deal with religious (or any other) institution common to both villager and Pygmy, we necessarily deal with the relationship between these two people. Unless we understand this relationship we cannot possibly understand the institution. We can understand the relationship only by observing something more fundamental than the origin of a particular practice in a specific group, let alone the more obvious facts concerning the trade relationship. As indicated in the present survey, even the *nkumbi* initiation cannot be taken at its face value as far as the Mbuti are concerned.

No aspect of Mbuti life brings the people into more effective contact with their villager neighbors than the field of magic and religion. It seems that this is the field therefore in which we should attempt to understand the systems of values underlying the relationship between these two people.

[P 249-A]

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Mbuti

THE MBUTI-VILLAGER RELATIONSHIP

•121 177 439 [128] In the preceding sections we dealt with the survey briefly, mainly in order to test the validity of our classification of the Mbuti into net hunters and archers. We deliberately avoided, as far as possible, reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship, although in the final section on religious life it became particularly obvious that this relationship could not be ignored. In Mbuti society a number of institutions in one way or another are associated with or appear to be identical with villager institutions, and we must understand this connection. The only alternative is to assume that the relationship between the two peoples is one of straightforward symbiosis based on an exchange of meat for plantation products and that, in the course of this symbiosis, certain customs have been adopted and are practiced either separately or jointly. This often-drawn picture represents only the outward appearance of the facts. When one tries to understand it as part of a coherent system, however, it can be done only by creating a hypothetical Mbuti social system that is in fact a hodgepodge culled from all over the Ituri area, from which any offending portions are plucked with the excuse that they are of villager origin.

121 177 We must determine, then, the underlying facts, as opposed to the mere outward appearance: the extent to which various institutions have been adopted by the Mbuti; how far their underlying values have also been adopted, or

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[p. 249-c]

how far only the outward form of the custom has been taken over and the values rejected. The most we can do is to clear the ground for such a study. We do so with reference only to the Epulu net hunters (unless otherwise stated), as our information is fullest here. 121 177

In the first place, what are the major points of contact between these two poeple? They may be listed as follows:

Material culture
Trade
Magical practice
Dance and festivity
Intermarriage
Ceremonial attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death

Material Culture

The adoption by the Mbuti of various villager items of material culture or technological skill has only one significance for us, which is the extent to which it places the Mbuti in a dependent position. This is difficult to estimate. It is difficult to visualize the Mbuti without metal and hard, though quite possible, to visualize them without plantains. But, even among the net hunters, luxuries tend to become necessities, and we must admit of the trend, if not the accomplished fact, toward economic dependency on the villagers. 177 439 [178]

[P. 256-A]

177 as yet assumed village values in name only, and
18 only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

177 This interpretation of the function of the
18 *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an
12 outward symbol of the association of two neigh-
881 boring peoples that, for one reason or another, come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

[71] In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

177 We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not
88 be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti
18 who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

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Mbuti

[P. 259-C]

lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go. 177 18 533 [152]

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers. 177 18 121

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 260-C]

of villager legends. The legends of tradition are 539
somewhat more original and are told in a 128
slightly less summary way but still without any
great show of interest or enthusiasm.

Most of the tales concern the Mbuti and 539
their relationship with the three planes of exis- [82]
tence that they acknowledge: the human, ani- [772]
mal, and supernatural worlds. By various no-
table omissions and commissions they add to our
understanding of their social and religious life.
Whether the tales are villager in origin or not
is for the present purpose not particularly signif-
icant. In practice they are never told the same
way twice. They are often spontaneous crea-
tions arising from a certain set of circumstances,
or they may be adaptations of dimly remem-
bered tales, or of traditonal villager tales,
again made to fit certain sets of circumstances.
One of the weaknesses of the present collection
is the absence of such surrounding details.

A full analysis of legends and the circum- 539
stances under which they are told, together 121
with a similar analysis of other Mbuti arts, such
as music and drama (al vitally important
means of expression to the Pygmy), would give

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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us a body of facts on which we could draw in a study of the Mbuti system of values, joining such an analysis to a more formal anthropological study. It is not intended to attempt such an analysis here; there is insufficient detail and further field work is needed. However, a study of the legends we have at our disposal, if it cannot provide the detailed systematization we would like, does at least give us a clearer picture of Mbuti values than could be had by merely observing their behavior. 539 121

1. Creation Myths: Legends of Origin and Tradition 539

As mentioned, for the Pygmy these subjects seem barely worth mention in legend. I give all three legends that deal with creation and with the sun and moon. None concerned the stars.

The Water and the Earth

Many, many moons ago the Water was down below, and the Earth was way up in the sky. When it rained it rained dirt, and the dirt ruined all the water vegetables and spoiled all the water food, so that it had to be thrown away. The Water said to the Earth: "You are spoiling my water gardens by raining dirt. You come down here and I'll go up there." 539 821

The Earth agreed, and so the Water moved up and the Earth came down. When they had changed

[P. 260 - D]

[p. 272-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
701 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

538 121 538 186 121

The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

538 778 771 171

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CONCLUSIONS

[P.273-A]

121 128 We set out to make an ethnographic survey of material on the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, to evaluate that material, and to see what problems it raised and which direction further field work should take. Rather than attempt to record the material from all sources, we used only the material that added to our knowledge of two specific groups of Mbuti—the archers of the southeastern Ituri Forest and the net hunters of the Epulu District. The rest of the material consists largely of isolated descriptive remarks which cannot always be accurately associated with any one particular region, let alone any particular group or band of hunters. Its inclusion would have added nothing to the sociological value of this work.

114 The material on the two groups to which we limited ourselves is by no means adequate either. Schebesta's information for the archers is to be regarded with caution because of his admittedly preconceived notions and his faulty methodology and field-work technique. The

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

values. To the Pygmy, however, these same practices are meaningless, as they do not conform with his own notions of the forest world. There is, consequently, a hiatus in the relationship between the two people or rather a hiatus between their relative systems of values and their structural relationship. For a proper understanding of the situation we need a great deal more data, the gathering of which should be one of the foremost tasks of any field-work project.

With reference to such a project, there appear to be two main needs. First, there is a need for detailed studies of representative hunting bands, both archer and net hunter, and of their relationships with their villager neighbors. Second, we need as large a number of such studies as possible for purposes of comparison, not only according to economic technique, but according to other possible systems of classification by structural principles or by degrees of affiliation to different villager tribes. The second need will be fulfilled simply by an extension of the first project. This initial project must necessarily cover not only a single band but other hunting bands with which it is associated through bonds of marriage or for any other reason that may become apparent. At the moment, the single hunting band appears to be the major effective political unit. Such single hunting bands are loosely associated only through

[P 275-B]

[P. 295-C]

marriage or very rarely through cooperation in the hunt, this latter sometimes accompanying a process of fission or fusion. In the course of such a study it should appear how far all these bands unite in terms of values in opposition to the villagers. This question will be further extended when we come to study another such loose association of hunting bands, that which utilizes one or other of the alternative hunting techniques. (21)

Thus we shall be studying the social structure of individual hunting bands and the structural relationship between different bands (presumably but not necessarily utilizing the same hunting technique). The structural differences and relationships between one type of hunting band and another should then appear and the identity or difference in their systems of values. In the course of the study we shall probably accumulate material for a comparison of the relationships of these different groups to their villager neighbors and will learn what generalizations, if any, can be made about this relationship.

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Mbuti

It would seem advisable to begin by working in the communities already covered in the survey, checking and verifying the known information and filling in the numerous gaps. It should be possible by an eastward extension of the study of the Epulu net hunters to reach the point where they come in contact with a westward extension of the archers in the southeast of the area. The Pygmies ("Aka") in the north, of whom little is known at present, should certainly be included in the study, in so far as they can be fruitfully compared with the net hunters and archers. We should then at least know whether or not we are justified in using the term "Mbuti" to include all the Ituri Pygmies as a single cultural entity. It may prove that we are no more justified in studying them together on account of their outward physical similarity than we would be in regarding the Dinka and the Nuer as a single people simply because they both have long legs. [121] [101]

It seems unnecessary even to consider the question of origin or of "purity." We are interested in the situation as it is. We can consider the past only in so far as we know it with certainty (which is not very far), or in so far as it plays a part in the beliefs, attitudes, or values of the people we are studying, in which case it is

[P 275-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-A]

121 part of the present situation. Nor need we be concerned whether any one group is more "acculturated" than another. In any case, the adoption, or otherwise, of villager institutions or language seems to be a poor index to the degree of assimilation involved. Nor can we assume that the simpler society is necessarily the purer, as parasitic organisms are usually simpler in structure than their hosts, who take over the function of certain parts of the parasite. The parasite community, while maintaining an outward separateness from the host, loses much of its own vitality and originality. On the other hand, the community that is taken over

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-B]

quickly and fully integrated, say, on a definite basis of division of labor, may well retain much of its original structure because it is still a fully live organism living a complementary rather than a dependent, or even partial, existence. 121 •

Eventually, then, the study should include such well-integrated groups of Pygmies, or Pygmoids, as the Kango, on the western edge of the Ituri; the Twa and the Tswa; and other Pygmy groups toward the west coast. We should then have some opportunity for seeing how far the term "Pygmy" has any anthropological meaning, but first we have to discover the same truth about the Ituri Mbuti.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

[P. 3]

CHAPTER 1

Objectives

The general purpose here is to add as much as possible to our knowledge of the Mbuti pygmies and of their much misunderstood relationship with the neighboring tribes of forest cultivators. The account is drawn from first-hand field experience, and is primarily intended to be of use to anthropologists. [2]

In the belief, however, that anthropologists are human beings, and that other human beings might equally well find much of interest in works of this kind, the currently fashionable academic jargon has been discarded. Such jargon in most cases only obscures what are often essentially simple basic truths, and so another objective is to present an academic study in plain language. I cannot claim to have been thoroughly consistent, for to have striven too hard would have led only to an equally artificial form.

Even so there may be those who will object, for the mystery, formerly obscured by an abuse of the English language, in this way becomes unveiled and accessible to all. I hope that what I say is plain, so that others may more easily and more usefully take issue with it. Before embarking on the account itself, however, a certain amount of ground-clearing for purely academic purposes is necessary.

LIMITATIONS

It is important at the outset to define very clearly the objectives of the present study, so that its limitations may be plainly understood. Both the objectives and the limitations were a carefully preconsidered part of the field project, and form an integral part of the subsequent analysis. The reasons for accepting such limitations were, I believe, insuperable in the given circumstances.

The title perhaps indicates a wider scope than is covered by the work, but it is believed that there are good grounds for using this

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

12 [101] study as a comparative base from which the study of the Mbuti as a whole may be more speedily and accurately advanced. It is also believed that although the bulk of the study involves a single hunting band, much of the basic structure uncovered applies to other Mbuti bands. The major limitation, however, is that we are here concerned primarily with one band rather than with the Mbuti as a whole, yet this was an inevitable necessity.

Other limitations arise from the lack of monographs on comparable groups of forest nomads, from my consequent reluctance to generalize too far from so narrow a base, and from the difficulty of presenting the principles of organization of a society that does not possess the formal institutions found in larger and more sedentary societies. Nonetheless, such principles plainly must exist, and while our general objective is to outline the form and structure of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers of the Ituri Forest in the northeast Congo (Leopoldville), we also have the more particular objective of searching for the elusive principles that integrate each apparently autonomous Mbuti band, giving it an identity of its own by which it recognizes itself and its integral but diffuse relationship with other bands. For it is in light of these principles that we must try to understand the effective but problematical relationship that pertains between any Mbuti band and the village cultivators who are its neighbors.

12 114 Another limitation derives from the lack of reference material on the Mbuti, which necessitated the gathering of ethnographic minutiae in the field and their presentation here, adding considerably to the bulk despite vigorous sifting. However, without a firm ethnographic base no analysis would be possible, so the provision of such a base is considered a prime prerequisite.

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular analysis, though this is not to deny their possible value in other fields. My own subsequent account of the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1961) was in no way intended as an academic study, nor is it suited for use as such, though it served a useful purpose in helping the field worker detach himself from the subject of his study, enabling him to examine it more critically.

[197] In my examination of other sources (1956) it was suggested that subsequent field work might discover a more meaningful division of the Ituri Mbuti than the linguistic division made by Schebesta, as

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the languages referred to, although spoken by the Mbuti, were evidently of non-Mbuti origin. Consequently another objective of the present study, based on further field work, is to begin to look for valid structural differences that do exist, following up the contention (*ibid.*) that one would expect to find such differences between the Mbuti who hunt by net and those who hunt with bow and arrow. The boundaries of the net-hunters and archers incidentally correspond, very roughly, to the linguistic boundaries drawn by Schebesta between the Sua- and Efe-speaking Mbuti: the Aka, to the north, although somewhat divided amongst themselves, offer a third category, some of them using the spear as their prime weapon.

To all these ends it was decided to make a further field trip in which one hunting band would be studied intensively throughout a calendar year, and in which as much comparative material as time and field conditions permitted would be gathered from other hunting bands. It was decided in advance, in the light of previous personal experience, that the sacrifice of a whole year to the study of one small band was essential, even though it would mean that any final conclusions about the general nature of Mbuti society would have to be delayed until a number of other such studies had been made. A band of either archers or net-hunters is a highly mobile, volatile entity, demanding of the field worker the utmost persistence in both physical and intellectual pursuit. It was quite obvious, also from previous experience, that the band not only constantly changes location, but it also constantly changes in composition. The significance of these fluctuations would only be discovered, it was felt, by following them right through their course in one given hunting territory before attempting any comparative studies among other bands. Above all it was essential in one band to find out what the significant social groupings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How was the band divided, along exactly what lines did the characteristic splits occur, what forces operated to hold the band together and to divide it? The scope of the one-band study was aimed at answering such questions and others that concern band relationships with local villages of cultivators. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding of the true nature of the over-all Mbuti/Villager relationship in this area, following up on the suggestion made earlier (Turnbull, 1956, 363–64) that this relationship was not one of master/servant, still less of slavery, and probably not even of symbiosis.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 In paying special attention to this relationship it was felt that the otherwise intangible value-system of the Mbuti would be more clearly revealed, leading to an understanding of the ritual relationship that appeared to exist between the Mbuti and the forest, as implied in the accounts of other observers and in my own prior experience, but nowhere made explicit.

EXECUTION

114 101 131 Field work was undertaken between the summer of 1957 and the late winter of 1958, entering the then Belgian Congo by driving through from the West Coast, collecting as many local accounts of pygmy or pygmoid hunters and gatherers along the way as possible, for future reference. Such accounts were gathered in Dahomey, Nigeria (particularly towards the east), the Cameroons, Gabon, and throughout the Congo, but few hunting bands were encountered until well towards the Ubangi River (see Map 1). It was decided not to spend time trying to make contact, except on the far side of the Ubangi, where contact was relatively easy, and where there were also some Binga pygmies from the west bank of the river.

114 131 [144] From the Ubangi over to the Ituri it was quite obvious that, as elsewhere, true hunting bands only existed where there was substantial primary forest, and that elsewhere not only was the hunting and gathering economy defunct, but there had been so much intermarriage that one could not truly speak of a pygmy physical type any more than one could speak of a pygmy culture.

Leaving aside the forested area south of the Congo River, which I did not cover but for which pygmoid groups are reported, I found relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) as well as in the forested regions around the Ubangi River. But by far the heaviest concentration is [101] in the Ituri Forest, where all the pygmies recognize their unity in the name Mbuti, and where both the physical and the cultural integrity of the hunters and gatherers seems to have been best preserved.

121 There was no question that this was the right area for the major bulk of the field work, but there was some question as to which band to select for the intensive study. I eventually decided on the Epulu

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one.

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism:

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps.

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized.

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations.

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans.

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

hour before dawn, then be up at dawn in preparation for the hunt. 123
This much I could manage, but whereas during the day individual men could stretch out and snatch an hour or two of sleep whenever they felt like it, I never had the chance to feel the same freedom. Acts associated with the *molimo*, such as the ritual gathering of food from every hut, continued throughout the day and I did not wish to miss anything new that might happen.

However, with all its drawbacks (and perhaps the physical and mental strain are not the least) the technique seems in this instance to have been justified by the results.

RESULTS

Both the general and the particular objectives were answered to 121
some extent during the course of the field work. The general form and structure of the Mbuti hunting band became evident, as did certain differentiations between the structure of the archers and that of the net-hunters. Further, certain principles were found that accounted for the cohesion of the band within itself, while at the same time enabling the band to present to the villagers a structure so fluid that any formal relationship of the kind envisaged by the villagers was impossible. Perhaps it is as well to point out here that the kinship system (or lack of it) that characterizes the Mbuti band today is not necessarily representative of what it was yesterday; indeed it may well be that the current ambivalence is in itself a response to the attempts of the patrilineal village society to enforce control through the myth of hereditary unilineal relationships. The origin does not concern us here, only the system as it exists in the present context.

The structural differences between archers and net-hunters are not 121
perhaps as wide as might have been supposed, but before any final 124
conclusions can be drawn there is great need for a detailed study to be made among the archers. Certain differences in behavior are shown, however, to achieve the same structural ends—for instance the process of fission and fusion, where the net-hunters and the archers behave in diametrically opposed cyclic patterns but to the same structural end.

The detailed study of the Epulu net-hunters was backed by suf- 121
ficient field work among other net-hunting bands to enable us to gen- 128
eralize with reasonable safety. Where generalization is not possible,
2 I cite the specific, and where it is possible but not with absolute cer-

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[122] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[124] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
165 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is
[181] one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
177 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of 121
contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity 177
and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some 18
benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems.

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility 121
is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the 177
two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination.

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightfor- 128
ward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

197 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be
101 used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Ne-
144 gro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, neces-
128 sary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to rule if the ceremony is to be effective, whatever its purpose. By "festival" I mean something rather different. It in no way necessarily implies an annual or regularly recurrent event; its objectives may be precisely the same as those of a ceremony, but the means employed are different. There is no precisely regulated pattern of behavior. On the contrary, there is an important element of spontaneity that gives the occasion a vital immediacy, keeping it in the current context rather than connecting it with the past. I confess that the term "festival" has, for me, other less easily definable connotations that make it more suitable for use in the Mbuti situation, the most important of these being that it implies wider, freer participation, less pomposity and more enjoyment, an abandonment that is almost subversive with respect to the commonly accepted norms of behavior.

Most important, I have to revoke my earlier usage of the term "Essumba" or "Lusumba" (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1], 1957[2]). The context in earlier writing, I hope, makes it plain when I am referring to a magico-religious festival of the Mbuti as distinct from a ceremony practiced under the same name by the villagers. The misleading terminology employed before my last field trip was due in part to the difficulties of the linguistic situation and the fact that I was then using the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as my major means of communication. The importance and significance of the confusion will appear later in the text, but as I now wish to use a terminology that will clarify the situation as much as the actual linguistic confusion permits, I have to state that wherever in the past I have referred to the magico-religious festival of the net-hunting Mbuti, in which the men play a predominant part, and where I have used either "Essumba" or "Lusumba," it would have been more correct to have used the term *molimo*. Even this term, however, has its counterpart in the Bira *molimo* ceremony, but at least we can now distinguish more easily between both of these and the other local ceremonies known variously as *essumba*, *lusumba* and *ishumba*, which ceremonies are connected primarily with the Ngwana villagers and their earlier slave-trading and ivory-collecting practices.

One last small correction of past usage; whereas before I once or twice (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) used the spelling *Alima* for the festival associated with the puberty of Mbuti girls, I now use the form and spelling *elima*.

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty 114 121 elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups 22 that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

521 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 195 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621
the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771
pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 296
evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try 265
to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the [177]*
picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar
names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to
the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their
own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121 •
a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177*
the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621
any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate
the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study
them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the
village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and
discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the
same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting
bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at
the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be
able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting
camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief
spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or
by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we
shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti,
and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the
process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover
the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently law-
less, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 33]

CHAPTER 3

The Mbuti/Villager Relationship

THE QUESTION OF DEPENDENCE

Although we are primarily concerned with the structure of Mbuti 121 •
society, there are a number of valid reasons why we should first con- 648
cern ourselves with the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

For one, this has been the area of greatest misunderstanding and this misunderstanding has consequently affected attitudes toward an understanding of the forest hunting and gathering life of the Mbuti even when apart from the villagers. It is widely believed that the Mbuti are subject to village authority, that they are a subordinate people. This belief rests on the assumption that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, and the theory of dependence has been extended to political and ritual fields as well as economic. The exact degree of dependence is something that we have to examine carefully throughout our study, though we can only take it up specifically after we have considered the Mbuti in both the village and the forest worlds.

The notion of dependence has led to the theory that Mbuti cul- 121
ture, such as it is, is in itself derived from the superordinate village 177 *
culture, and we shall see that this is far from the truth. Even when we look at the Mbuti in the village world it is not hard to see the superficiality of his alleged acculturation, for the very willingness with which he adopts village institutions and falls in with village ways leads him inevitably into one contradiction after another, which contradictions are possible only because the institutions do not have the same structural significance for the Mbuti as for the villager.

The cause of the misunderstanding is largely that previous ac- 121
counts and investigations have been derived from experience of the 14
Mbuti in the village context, in almost complete ignorance of even

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the *molimo*, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the huts and the shafts for spears; the ax is used for enlarging the 412
boles in which bees make their hives, so that the honey can be extracted more easily. Younger Mbuti do not know what they would do without the machete for cutting saplings. Both they and the older men realize that the ax is not absolutely essential, and I have seen ax-shaped clubs used for breaking away the wood from around a hive, where the wood is rotten, as it frequently is. The older men say that [324]
if they did not have machetes for cutting saplings they would use stone tools, but they have no knowledge at all of how to make such tools, and are probably prompted to make this remark by the presence in the forest of early stone axheads.

Accepting, for the moment, that the Mbuti in their forest world are 121
not in any position of necessary dependence upon the villagers for food 177*
or material, or technological skill, and admitting that in the village context they are dependent, the question arises as to why they choose to place themselves in that position of dependence. It is certainly not out of economic necessity. The truth of the matter is simply that the village offers, for a brief while, an agreeable change of pace, an opportunity for a relaxation that is not always possible in the forest, and, one might say, better hunting, on occasion. An Mbuti band or an Mbuti family or an Mbuti individual may descend upon a village either because of sheer whim, or because of laziness if the forest hunting gets too strenuous, or because of dissension, or indeed for almost any reason except necessity. Whatever the reason, and most commonly it at least involves an expressed desire for relaxation and freedom from care, the reason is on the side of the Mbuti, the choice is theirs, and the dependence that follows is as voluntary as it is temporary.

ECONOMIC RECIPROCITY

We then have to ask what the Mbuti offer in return for the food and metal products that they receive, and to determine at least the economic structure of the relationship. In so doing we are inevitably led to consider the domestic, political and religious aspects and their interrelationship with the economic system, and it is in these interrelationships that inconsistency and conflict emerge.

Even in terms of sheer economic reciprocity the relationship is in- 121
herently unstable. Continuing to grant, for the moment, the fact that 177*
no economic necessity is involved on the part of the Mbuti, and that 439
their dependence is voluntary and temporary, the forest world remain-

ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 4

The Notion of Hereditary Ownership

P C 121 648 C [186]

A superficial glimpse of the Mbuti/Villager relationship in any village might well tend to confirm the belief that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for the very principles of their social organization. This is the claim of the villagers, the more sophisticated of which use a popular description of the Mbuti as "*les gens sans culture*." The Mbuti themselves will readily admit it, and investigation will, up to a point, confirm it. But we have already witnessed one contradiction; namely, that if the situation is one of superordination, and one of total cultural dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, then the villagers would have and be able to exercise some form of political control, and they do not. Indeed there are only the most tenuous political mechanisms for relating the two groups, such as the supposition that each hunting band has a headman or chief (entitled *capita* or *sultani*) who is answerable to the village headman. The villagers accord the Mbuti headman due respect, not far different from the respect they would accord a junior headman of another village, and hold him responsible for the behavior of his band. But even supposing that the Mbuti headman had any actual authority over his band, we have seen that the villagers are incapable of enforcing their will by taking either retributive or restitutive action against the band or the *capita* for fear of reprisal, and because of their very real need for the continued, if minimal, service of the Mbuti and their fear of losing even that.

C 648 P 648 622

P 179 622 554

The Mbuti *capita*, in any case, is merely a village creation and carries no authority whatsoever and little influence among members of the hunting band. The other Mbuti accord him his title when in the village, or even when in the forest, if discussing a village problem. They use him as a convenient link who can also serve as a scapegoat. Through their "chief" the other Mbuti are freed of many of the cares and considerations involved in their relationship with the village, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective *kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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control of the specifically village supernatural. Indeed the villagers are obliged to do this, in consonance with the rest of their system, for to admit someone to the kinship system without admitting them to the ancestral cult would be a contradiction in terms. But not so for the Mbuti. The most sacred of the village institutions is completely divorced, in the Mbuti system, from any other adopted village institution. It is, like the other institutions, adopted for what it offers in itself, and if it is related to anything, it is related only to the economic aspect of the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 5

The Notion of Supernatural Control

THE VILLAGE SUPERNATURAL

We have already seen something of villager participation in Mbuti marriage arrangements, but only from the aspect of kinship. From this point of view the villagers hope to be able to control, to some extent, the movement and residence patterns of the Mbuti, and to support the myth of hereditary ownership. From another point of view, however, villager participation in the marriage of their Mbuti necessarily introduces the Mbuti to the village magico-religious system, through the ritual that consecrates the marriage as well as through the absorption of the Mbuti, in this way, into the village kinship structure. It might also be pointed out in passing that as far as the villagers are concerned, marriages between their Mbuti are of as much political importance as their own marriages, in regulating relationships between one village and another, one segment of the tribe and another. Insofar as our primary concern is with the Mbuti, however, this political aspect does not directly concern us here.

C 648 563 571 582 626 121 [608] P 177* 571 648 121 C [628]

Marriage is only one village ritual adopted by the Mbuti, and in considering any such adoption we have to keep in mind the structural aspects of ritual in the village social system and, in particular, the relationship between ritual and kinship. It is in light of structure that the villager side of the Mbuti/Villager relationship is comprehensible, the attempt to include the Mbuti within the village framework being an attempt to secure some measure of control over them. That is not to say that the motive of control is necessarily responsible for the inclusion, but it is certainly openly acknowledged by villagers and has some bearing on their attitudes.

C 563 571 648 121 602 P 121 571 648 177*

At the same time we must be aware that on the Mbuti side there is the knowledge that the villagers are seeking to gain control. There is a considered element of risk involved in accepting certain institu-

P 648 177* 121 571

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tions, even in the strictest village context, but it is outweighed by what at first seems little more than a lively desire to have all the advantages of village life with none of the disadvantages. Again, it is only through an examination of the interrelationship of the institutions adopted by the Mbuti, and their relationship with the indigenous Mbuti social system, that we can arrive at any true understanding of the apparent process of acculturation.

The attempt by the villagers to assert supernatural control is structurally the most significant, for it involves elements with which the Mbuti have no institutionalized means of dealing. Political pressure the Mbuti can counter by changing allegiance; economic pressure can also be countered, by reverting to the always available pure hunting and gathering economy; as we shall see in the next section, pressure through absorption into the village kinship system is repelled quite simply by the maintenance of an opposed kinship system. However, the Mbuti have no magic with which to counter magic, no witchcraft or sorcery with which to counter witchcraft and sorcery. They do have belief with which to counter belief, but it is part of the belief of both Mbuti and villagers that in a war between the gods, no man can safely predict the outcome. It is in this situation that the villagers do manage to effect some extent of control, but it is also in this context that they come up against the ultimate bedrock of opposition.

Let us look at the various ways in which the magico-religious life of the villagers impinges upon that of the Mbuti, and the extent to which it exerts some measure of control over the hunters and gatherers. Fully recognizing that a clear division of the subject matter is difficult, if not impossible, to make, we nonetheless have to attempt such a division for the purposes of discussion. There is a great deal of overlapping, but nonetheless at the extremes, in this case, the division used here between magic and religion is legitimate.

By *magic* I refer to activities involving, on the part of the African, villager or Mbuti, a conviction in the pragmatic relationship between a cause and an effect which, in terms of Western science, is not demonstrable. The term in its usual sense has meaning only as far as we are concerned, for as far as the Africans here are concerned, magical activities are as scientifically valid as any other. They may not always be able to explain the exact way in which the effect is related to the cause, any more than everyone who drives a motorcar can explain the mechanism. Indeed, the corresponding term "medicine"

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative,* and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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ence and natural life. There is no practical cause—the cause itself is supernatural. I include various *rites de passage* under religion because such rites involve a thoroughgoing belief in the supernatural. The nature of the supernatural, however, varies greatly as seen by Mbuti and as seen by villagers. Both peoples, however, do have a belief in the supernatural; that is, scientifically nonexplicable powers that are invested in another class of beings, without form or substance, which we call *spiritual*. It is belief in these spiritual beings that is the essence of what we here call religion.

CURATIVE MAGIC

As indicated above, we are not here in the least concerned with acts, of either the Mbuti or the villagers, simply because they involve an assumed but scientifically false connection between cause and effect. We use the term "magic" as a translation of the native term, which groups together divers curative activities in the belief that all are equally scientific. Thus the penicillin that cures a sore is magic just as much as the antelope horn that cures a spell of bad hunting.

In trying to assess how far the village world impinges on the forest world in this respect, then, we have to see what situations there are for which the Mbuti have no cure and which they wish to cure, and for which the villagers do have a cure. Or, indeed, we must look to see if the reverse situation exists.

When I say there is little magic in the forest world of the Mbuti, I mean that there are few curative activities, and for the very simple reason that there are relatively few situations that require curing. For most Mbuti who have reached adolescence the life expectancy is good, as is the expectancy of good health. For most minor physiological disorders the Mbuti seem to have effective remedies, some of which are cited in Appendix II together with details of the botanical identification of the plants, wherever I was able to be sure, or reasonably sure, that these were the only plants used. Such remedies cover not only the mild fevers, aches and pains, and sicknesses that may come the way of the Mbuti, but they also cover accidental injury such as may be incurred by falling on a spear, by being attacked by a wild animal, bitten by a snake, stung by bees, or by falling from a tree, breaking or twisting an arm or leg. Such injuries, however, occur remarkably seldom.

For these particular curative activities the Mbuti are acknowledged

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ble situation, retaining at all times the village position of superiority over the Mbuti. But it is a myth which at the same time satisfies the needs of the Mbuti, affording them precisely the freedom of which the villagers seek to deprive them, enabling them to rationalize the situation in their own favor and to their own advantage. We shall shortly see how this takes place.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers
P 685 648 571 121 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

C 648 571 P [361] [621]

P 829 648 571 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

P [224]

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

P [825]

C 439 648 121 Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

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we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

P C 121 648 There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist between two peoples in a context such as this. Apart from one of symbiosis, implying interdependence, there could be political subjugation, such as existed, say, between the Tussi and the Hutu. But that is plainly not the case here. The villagers themselves admit their inability to exert physical force to bend the Mbuti to their will, for the Mbuti always have the ultimate escape of flight to the sanctuary of the forest. The villagers are completely unequipped to pursue the Mbuti into the forest, and never attempt it. They are incapable of even finding the Mbuti if the hunters wish not to be found. And, as we have seen, there is no effective political mechanism for maintaining any kind of political relationship, let alone one of superordination/subordination.

C 563 121 P *177 121 Another possible relationship would be one of assimilation, such as occurred among the Ganda of East Africa, where two different peoples merged, as did their two different economies. At the present there is no question of actual assimilation, but the existence of linguistic and institutional similarities certainly indicates an interchange of ideas, at least. But it is, at the moment, an interchange of outward forms only, and not of the accompanying systems and structure. And while a great deal of intimacy is expressed, in action as in word, between the two groups, there is also a great deal of expressed opposition, and sometimes hostility.

C 563 121 P *177 582 121 The intermarriage between Mbuti girls and village men and the attempted absorption of the Mbuti into the village kinship system may be considered as steps toward assimilation, but if so they are very tentative and preliminary steps, and as such need not concern us here. Indeed we shall find that there are other indications of the reverse process, of separation. There is no question of physical separation in the sense of the expulsion of one group by the other, but a perfectly valid alternative relationship left to us for consideration is one of ideological separation accompanied by a mutually accepted territorial separation—a form of indigenous apartheid.

P 166 *177 182 This in fact seems to be the case, for in common conversation, as in action, both groups distinguish the village and the village people from the forest and the forest people. The Mbuti effectively are the only group to cross the territorial boundaries, and the ideological boundaries remain inviolate on both sides. When the Mbuti cross into the village world they leave the forest behind them, and with it they leave their forest social system. Forest values cannot be so easily left

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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mand that they come to some kind of terms and establish some kind of mechanism for dealing with the threat that each feels.

We have seen how the villagers attempt to deal with the situation by asserting control over the Mbuti through the adoption of the Mbuti into the village social system, thus placing them under the supernatural sanctions of village society. We have also seen that the Mbuti evade such control, though we have not exactly seen how, for at the moment the success of their evasion seems to lie in the rejection of system, in a flux and instability that alone would lead to chaos. In examining the forest society of the Mbuti now, however, we shall see how this flux and apparent instability is in fact a structural factor, and that while the villagers are constantly attempting to absorb the Mbuti into their village social system, the Mbuti have evolved a social system of their own which, while still permitting their traditional hunting and gathering existence, takes this new village factor into consideration and, so to speak, by opposing, ends it. For the Mbuti forest system seems almost expressly designed to run counter to the village system, and, by opposing it at every point of possible structural contact, it makes any structural relationship except one of opposition quite impossible.

Thus in examining the forest system of the Mbuti we have to remember that the same institution may well have a double function; the one of maintaining cohesion with the forest world, the other of maintaining opposition with the world outside. And insofar as the invasion of the village tribes is relatively recent, this is a system that is still evolving. All the more so because the successive waves of the invasion, followed by the advent of the Arab slave traders and finally by the arrival of the Belgians, have all wrought sudden and drastic changes in the nature of village life and on the village settlement pattern. There may indeed be some institutions that are newly evolved and the purpose of which is directed primarily at maintaining the relationship of opposition between forest and village. Others are in the process of adaptation, notably the Mbuti *molimo*, where the forest system of values has its deepest roots and where, consequently, their opposition to village values must be most forcefully expressed. And some institutions appear to be in a state of atrophy.

We are, then, very clearly going to be studying a society in the process of change. The structure that will emerge, involving a disconcerting lack of emphasis on kinship, is not necessarily or even probably characteristic of hunting and gathering societies, and should cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tainly not be taken as such. It should only be considered as a system 178
that maintains, in its basic respects, a hunting and gathering tradi- 121
tion, while also maintaining, as completely as possible, a physiological
and ideological separation from a hostile village system.

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[P. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always patrilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band composition be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is comparable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology, it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 621 628 volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

P 439 621 121 C 439 621 121 C [611] [591] This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

P 439 621 608 571 The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

P [156]

P 439 608 571 The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571 12 boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 621 any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 554 others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571 man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554 the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621 other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439 as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438] individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628] either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571] even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621 cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166 is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621 the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621 be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594 true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554 leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157 the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
• 121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
561 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[648] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
522 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

DISPUTE	*Number Recorded*	*Number of Decisions or Judgments made*	*Instances of Positive Action*
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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forest as an incentive toward good behavior is far more important and far more strong than its negative aspect as a deterrent against bad behavior.

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likely to be highly disruptive but where disputes nonetheless occur. Any personal intervention or judgment would only be likely to lead to further disputes. The impersonal nature of the forest as arbitrator and judge maintains the impersonality of the laws; or if the forest is considered as endowed with personality, it is a spiritual personality and owes no more allegiance to one Mbuti than to another, and so is still impersonal in this context.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fo1

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

P 771 *177

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

P C 789 • 121

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

C 789 C [755] C 756 755 789

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

[P.268]

CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 602 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 601 593 [561] We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[114] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 561 121 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionalization of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 561 562 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 462 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the interdependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines. [224] [222] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[193] [2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *taté* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter 602 621 561 121 term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apua'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
626 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
621 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.282]

CHAPTER 16

Principles of Organization (2)

THE VILLAGE CONTEXT

*177 171 121 The principles of organization that have begun to emerge with reference to the forest world of the Mbuti only become fully comprehensible when we relate them to the village world. Gluckman (1960) gave some general but highly pertinent indications of a somewhat similar situation involving a dichotomy in the lives of Africans in North Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In that situation the conflict, or rather the opposition, was between the ancestral land and the town. The land represented subsistence to some extent, but primarily security; the town was a place to raid for money. While Gluckman did not see any "detribalization" involved, he pointed out that the African is tribalized, in towns and in rural areas, in two different ways, tribal attachments in urban areas having to work within a setting of urban associations: "Hence the African in rural areas and in town is two different men; for the social situation of tribal home and of urban employment determine his actions and associations, within the major politico-economic system covering both areas" (1960, p. 11).

Gluckman refers to the consequent social and mental conflict, and sees "considerable resolution of this conflict through the separation *177 of the spheres of activities" (1960, p. 11). In assessing the Forest/ 121 Village relationship we see a similar situation, with the village being 182 regarded as a place to raid, creating numerous social and mental conflicts which again are largely resolved by separation in what I have called a system of indigenous apartheid. There is more to it than that, however. We cannot suppose, however complete the barrier, that the Mbuti live an utterly schizophrenic existence; even within the opposition there must be order. Nor can we suppose that the order comes from a mere dilution of forest values when the Mbuti come to the village; it is rather, as Gluckman says, that the same values have to work within a setting of urban (village) associations.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

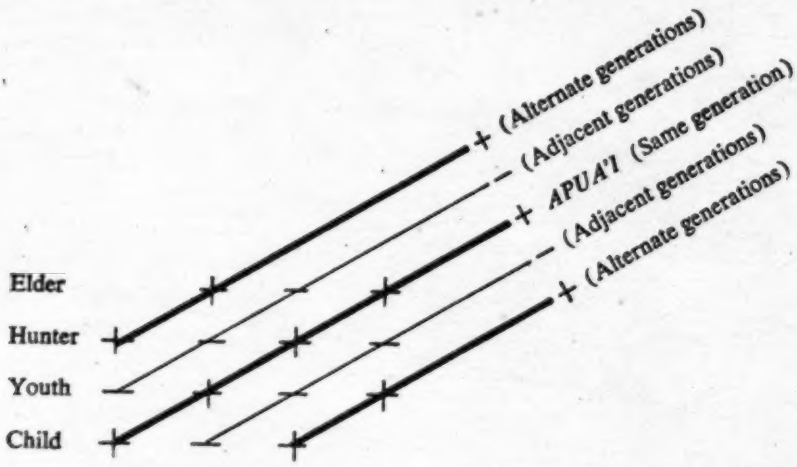
2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between
121 *f/s* and *mb/zs*.
561
571 *b/z* and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative
593 briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

602 Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick
121 lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points
561 at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the cor-
593 respondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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• 121 in the Mbuti/Villager situation. The basis of the proximity and dis-
*177 tance elements does not rest on kinship, and the relationship is as
571 much between the two groups as it is between individuals, otherwise
C the situation conforms to Radcliffe-Brown's model quite clearly—*viz.*
121 (1952, p. 95): "The show of hostility, the perpetual disrespect, is a
177 continual expression of that social disjunction which is an essential
571 part of the whole structural situation, but over which, without destroying or even weakening it, there is provided the social conjunction of friendliness and mutual aid."

In the Mbuti/Villager situation the relationship appears to be symmetrical and permissive, though both sides do occasionally take offense, the village side even sometimes taking counteraction. The ineffectiveness of taking offense or action, however, only serves to heighten the characteristic "social disjunction," and there is no doubt that beneath the display of hostility and disrespect there is cooperation, and even considerable amity. Considering the completely opposed value systems of the two worlds, this is, indeed, the only way in which the two peoples could meet and still retain a separate identity. The reasons for the meeting taking place at all, as we have already seen, are circumstantial—the historical invasion of the forest by the villagers, and their use of the Mbuti as guides; the continued parasitism of the Mbuti upon the villagers long after the original need for cooperation had gone; the contemporary mutual convenience of economic exchange; sheer territorial propinquity. These reasons do not lead automatically or easily to a structured relationship, particularly when the values of the two peoples are so divergent, so while a form of joking relationship helps to stabilize the alliance, maintaining the combination of Radcliffe-Brown's "conjunctive and disjunctive components," it is not by itself enough.

C We have seen the methods by which the villagers have sought to
563 further stabilize the situation, through a formal economic-exchange
177 system, a fictive parallel-kinship system, and through introduction to
608 village supernatural sanctions by establishment of magico-religious
881 bonds through *karé* blood brotherhood and *nkumbi* initiation. Any
439 one of these, had it worked, would have reduced the Mbuti to sub-
P ordination, yet this plainly has not been done. The defense of the
*177 Mbuti has lain in their own indigenous forest system, which works
439 not only to maintain internal cohesion but also to maintain the ut-
621 most possible structural distance from the village world while allowing a minimal amount of "mutually convenient" economic exchange.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

2

The Good Death of Balekimito

AFTER TWO YEARS' further preparation at Oxford I felt ready to return to the Ituri, to try and understand just what it was that made the People of the Forest what they were, what made them so very different from the villagers all around them, what made them seem to adopt village ways with such enthusiasm, only to abandon them with utter unconcern the moment they left the treeless confines of the village and returned to the forest. |2| •

If you land at Lomé, you drive first of all along the coast of Togo and Dahomey, where the Atlantic surf pounds day and night on 000

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. vii]

Acknowledgments

The present study is based on field work conducted during the years 1957 and 1958, under the support of a grant from the Emslie Horniman Anthropological Trust. To the trustees I owe thanks not only for their financial aid, but also for their personal interest and encouragement. 114 122

My academic debt lies above all to the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford and to its members under whom I studied. To them all I am sincerely grateful, and I hope that this work will to some extent justify their constantly cheerful, if at times somewhat skeptical, encouragement and optimism. 000

But for the patience and endurance of Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, I might never have enjoyed the privilege of being an anthropologist. Dr. John Peristiany was my first teacher, and his personal interest and understanding helped me to find my way during the first erratic years. But to Dr. Rodney Needham I owe more than I can say, for he undertook to supervise this study and has nursed it along over a period of several years and across many thousands of miles of land and water. Despite all too infrequent opportunities for meeting, he persisted in his attempts to make the work more sound and perceptive. I am most conscious of many shortcomings; some due to the ever-restricting factor of time, but others due to the sheer difficulty of dealing with a theoretical and geographical area for which there is so little published material of real use. Largely because of this factor, the study is isolated and does not attempt to draw upon the comparative material that is available. Such comparisons can most fruitfully be made after further intensive field studies of the Mbuti have been made. The inherent problems of the field work have created many serious gaps that remain to be filled on the next field study, and this, together with the necessity for presenting a lengthy ethnographic description, has made the task of analysis infinitely more difficult. Dr. Needham's perceptiveness as well as his own field ex- 128

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one. 121

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism: 121 123

1). I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps. [609]

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized. 114 121

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations. 101 114 131

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans. 114 131 122

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time [164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of [165] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; 648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- *177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 sults I wanted I had no alternative. Other methods would have produced different, though not necessarily contrary, results.

However, there were inherent limitations in the technique followed, which involved close identification and integration between myself and the Epulu net-hunters. For one, by identifying myself
123 with the Mbuti, my relationships with the villagers were automati-
648 cally worsened; the mere fact that I preferred to study the Mbuti rather than the villagers was ground enough for hostility. But being accepted by the Mbuti in their forest hunting camps was a privilege
• [122] denied to most villagers (though few would have wanted it), and learning to speak the village language with a strong Mbuti accent that made it almost unintelligible except to other Mbuti added further fuel to the fire. This all made it extremely difficult for me to see the Mbuti/Villager relationship from any but the Mbuti point of view, though I tried, at the end of 1958, to establish a better rapport with villages both in and beyond the Epulu area.

However, it was impossible for me not to take sides. Had I wished to work as an outside observer I am not even sure that it could have been done, as I do not think such an observer would have been tolerated for long in the forest camps. And as an outsider I would certainly have been denied familiarity with many aspects of Mbuti life, particularly the all-important *molimo* festival. In fact, as an "insider" I was able to observe the process of exclusion of the few outsiders temporarily admitted to a forest camp. But in any case I was quickly forced by purely practical considerations to take sides.

123 During the burial proceedings in the village, for instance, in the
648 first month of my stay, I was invited by both Mbuti and villagers to
764 take part. But whereas the villagers wanted me to stand by and watch the digging of the grave under villager supervision, the Mbuti wanted me to help out with the digging. By acceding to the latter wish I automatically lost my status among the supervisors, and in fact became unclean and had to ritually wash myself with the other gravediggers. And during the post-burial meeting of the men, when the villagers all argued among themselves as to which Mbuti witch had caused the death, I had the choice of listening on one side of the grave with the villagers or of standing on the other side with the Mbuti and being associated in this way with their mirth and their ridicule of what was, to them, an utterly nonsensical procedure. And when on one occasion a burial took place on the morning of the day that a wedding was to be held in a neighboring village, I had the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing.

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint.

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

[P.313]

MEDICAL TREATMENT

The following list represents only a third of the total number of treatments noted; for the rest it was not possible to obtain exact identification of the plants used. Only the general identification is given below of the treatments cited here, the full details being lodged with Smith, Kline, & French, who generously supported the project. [757] [824] [122]

HEADACHE: *amongolo pepé* (menispermaceae)
Leaves are pounded and rubbed into forehead.

doré (violaceae)
Seeds are pressed, and the juice is lightly rubbed on the forehead.

sungusungu (orchidaceae)
Leaves are roasted, then rubbed into light incisions in the skin of the forehead.

KNEE ACHE: *amakokosu* (uragoga pedunculari)
Stem, leaf and bloom are roasted, then rubbed into incisions on knee.

tapha (strychnos icaja)
Leaves are roasted and applied to incisions.

SORE THROAT: *kasa* (mapana bieleri)
Leaves are wrapped tightly around the throat.

EYE INFLAMMATION: *manoka* (manotes pruinosa)
Leaves are rubbed well between the hands, then put into a leaf cone. A little water is poured into the cone and allowed to drip into the eye.

STOMACHACHE: *amasobo* (violaceae)
The bark is stripped from young shoots, the core being pounded and roasted. The ashes are rubbed into incisions made over the afflicted area.

apisikalukba (araceae)
Leaves are pounded, water added, warmed, and drunk.

karama (dracaena maculata)
The leaves are pounded with salt, mixed with water, the concoction drunk. (The juice of the pounded leaf, without salt, is also put in the eyes of children "to make them see well.")

ebambu (annonaceae)
Bark is cut into small pieces, water is poured over it; when the water is red, a small quantity is drunk.

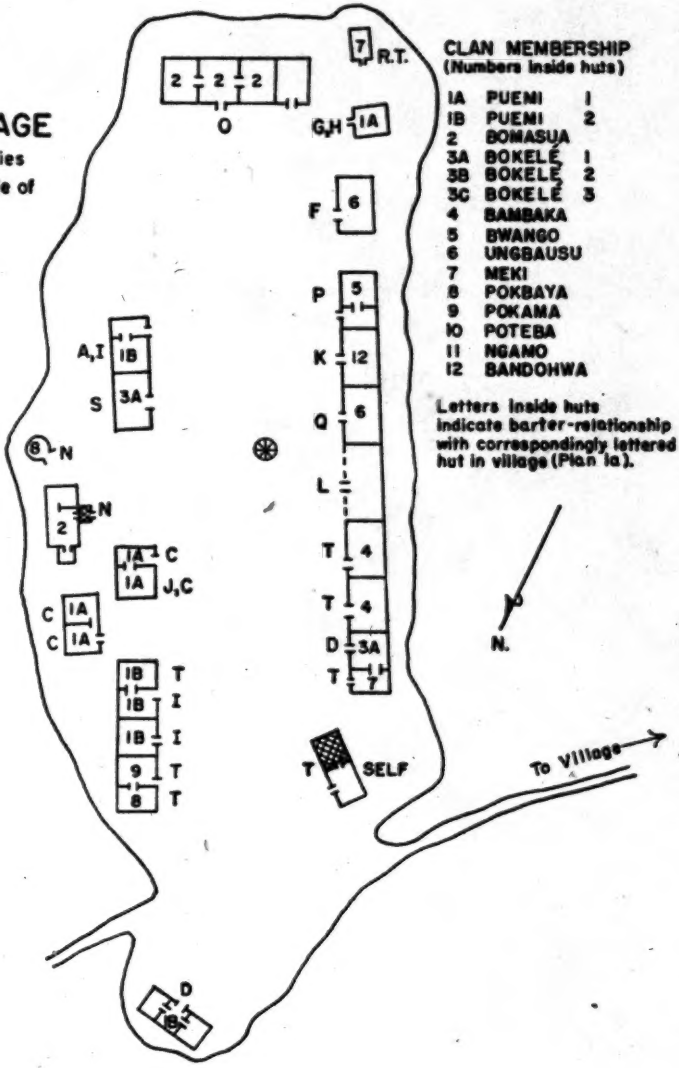
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C
439
177
P
*177
439
361
614
122
221
102

Plan Ib

EPULU VILLAGE

Camp of Pygmies
(About twice scale of Plan Ia)



CLAN MEMBERSHIP
(Numbers inside huts)

1A	PUENI	1
1B	PUENI	2
2	BOMASUA	
3A	BOKELÉ	1
3B	BOKELÉ	2
3C	BOKELÉ	3
4	BAMBAKA	
5	BWANGO	
6	UNGBAUSU	
7	MEKI	
8	POKBAYA	
9	POKAMA	
10	POTEBA	
11	NGAMO	
12	BANDOHWA	

Letters inside huts indicate barter-relationship with correspondingly lettered hut in village (Plan Ia).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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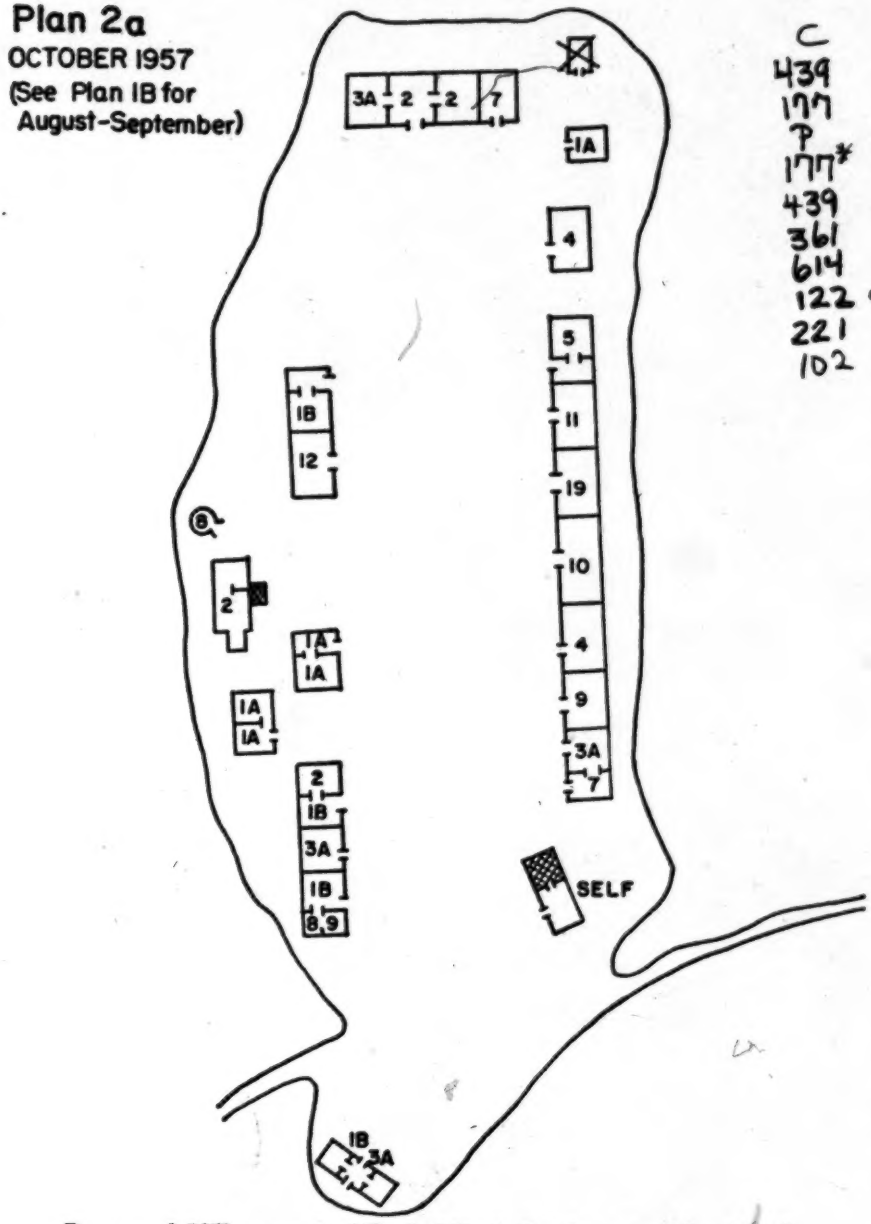

PLAN 2a–d *Village camp of Epulu Mbuti, October 1957–March 1958.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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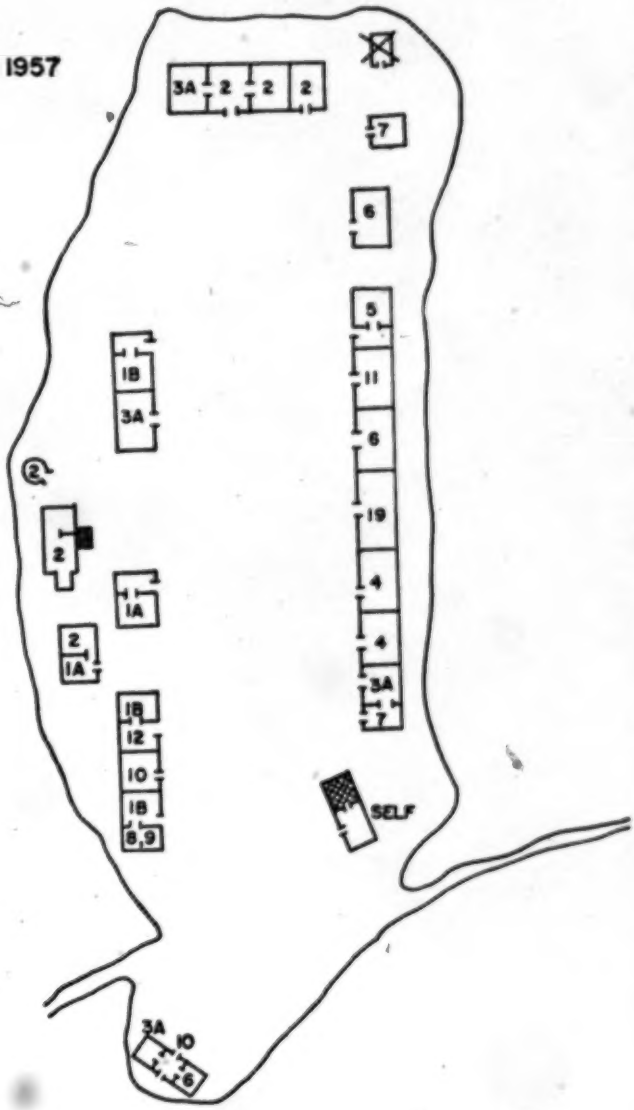
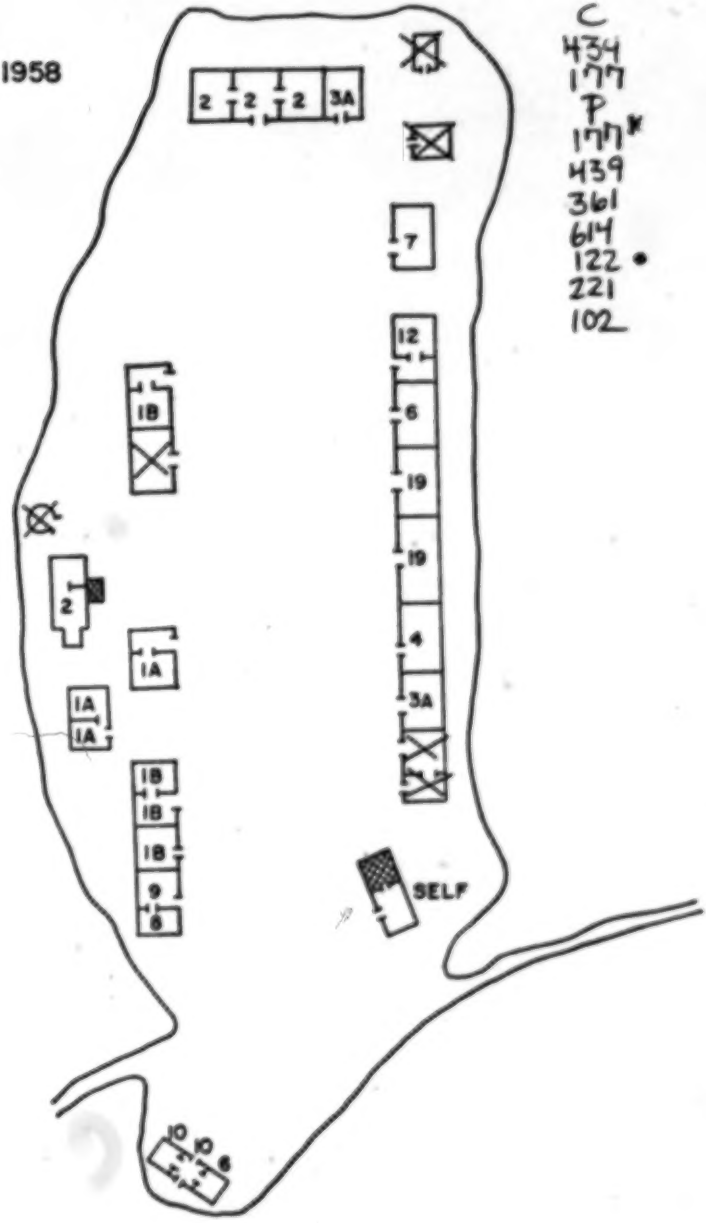
Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958



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2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

338

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122
221
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Plan 2d

MARCH 1958

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 3a-g: KEY

361
614
592
122

= Baraza (meeting veranda)

= Hut

= Abandoned hut

= Living but not in camp

= Hearth, used by more than one nuclear family

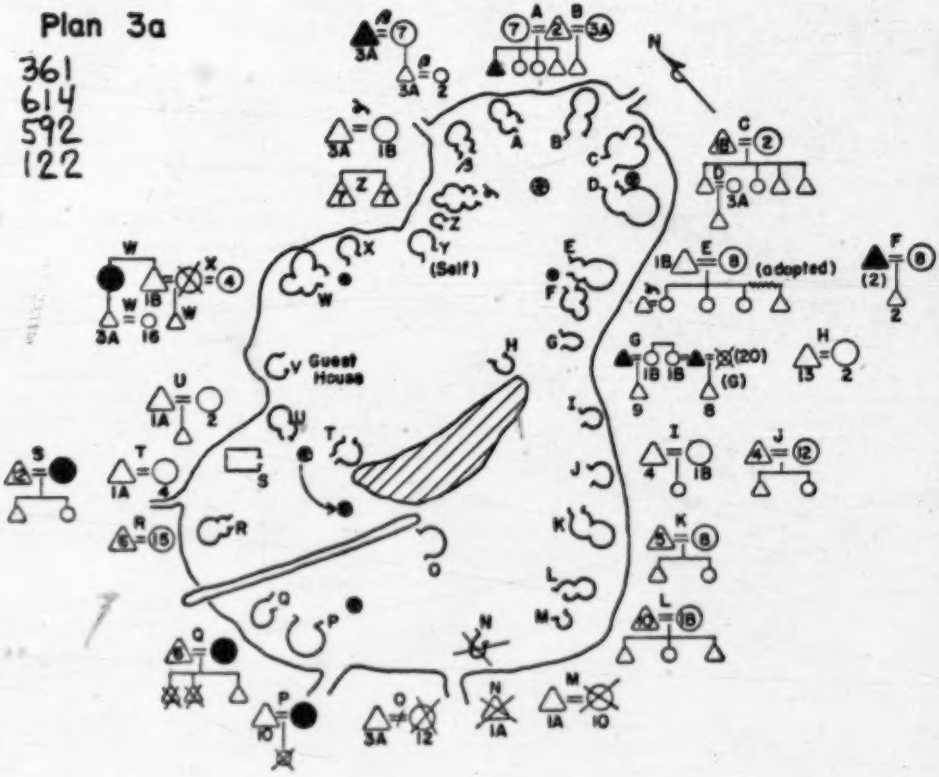
= Brush and tree trunks that effectively divide a camp

	CLAN	TOTEM		CLAN	TOTEM
1A,1B	PUEMI	2	11	NGAMO	1
2	BOMASUA	1	12	BANDOHWA	2
3A,B,C	BOKELÉ	3,1,6	13	POYA	4
4	BAMBAKA	6	14	MOLOMBA	4
5	BWANGO	1	15	POTOLA	1
6	UNGBAUSU	2	16	PASAMA	5
7	MEKI	4	17	PONGWANA	2
8	POKBAYA	1	18	PUKENA	1
9	POKAMA	6	19	PUSA	7
10	POTEBA	1	20	PUMA	4

TOTEMS:
1 LEOPARD
2 CHIMPANZEE
3 BUFFALO
4 SNAKE
5, 6, 7 — Different kinds of rare antelope

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/



PLAN 3a–g *Composition of hunting camps cited p. 98 for large and small camps of Epulu band.*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

361
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592
122

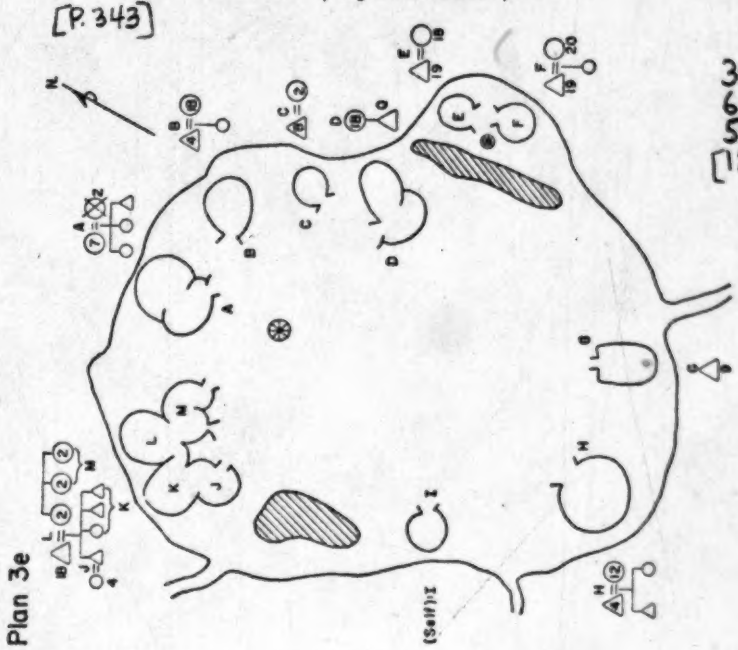
Plan 3b

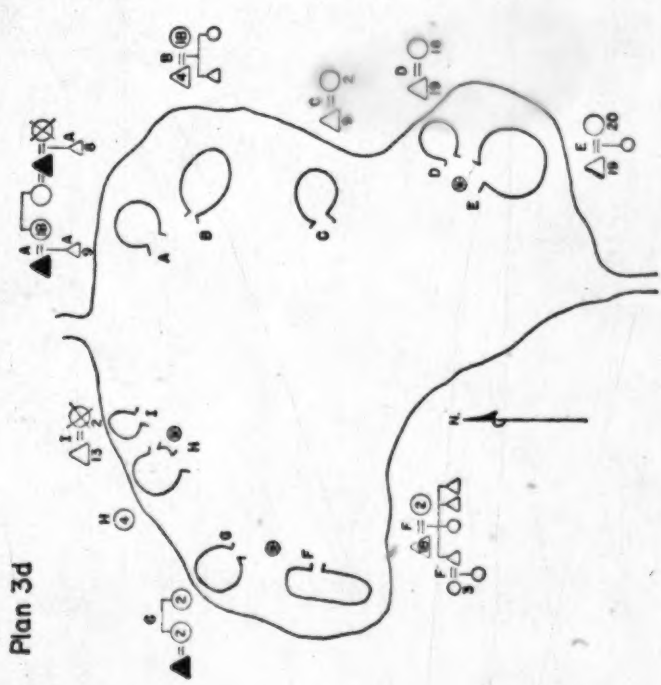
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

[P. 343]

361
614
592
[122]





115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge, Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation. Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

314 and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far
114 edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle
123 had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they
went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did
[222] they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

361 As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we
114 heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

361 The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had ar-
342 rived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the
342 path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for
[123] her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and
[122] leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she
[516] squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342 476
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their [522]
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
584 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
[462] had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
[578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were 765 562
left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was 123
whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had 186
"walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an 481
obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who [522] had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so 115
quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now 123
it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes 122
a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the 765
next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

9

The World of the Village

P
C
114
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[136]

I FOUND THE FIRST WEEK back in the village difficult and depressing. During the day the air was hot and dry, and filled with fine particles of dust. At night, when it was cooler, gnats and mosquitoes made me appreciate all the more their absence in the forest. My hut, ten times the size of my home in the hunting camp, seemed close and stuffy, and as I lay in bed I could hear the huge spiders, some several inches across, crawling about in the leaves of the roof. Occasionally one dropped onto the bed with a dull thud and lay there for a while before stalking away. At first I carried out an active campaign to get rid of them, but it was useless—and a mosquito net would have been unbearably hot.

THE WORLD OF THE VILLAGE

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unsmiling triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

P 114 I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and set-
P [122] ting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the
P [186] occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakoa. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakoa, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

C Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of
622 Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had
563 met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in
P his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend,
115 and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair
123 to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and
P [439] still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

14

The World Beyond

WE STOCKED UP WITH FOOD—stalks of plantains, a basket of rice, a large bundle of manioc roots, some dried fish and a large quantity of peanuts, and forest tomatoes, onions and peppers, with which I knew Kenge would make a delicious sauce. In case I could not persuade him to use local water for coffee, all I could think of in the way of acceptable liquid was beer.

We drove down to Beni, where the forest ends, passing through it in a violent storm that cut the visibility down to a few yards. It was almost impossible to see the edges of the road, and Kenge was not even aware that we had left the forest. But he noticed that we were

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122.
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one.

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism:

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps.

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized.

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations.

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans.

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- • 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time [164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of [165] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; 648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- *177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the 123
year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning fes- 114
tivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when 764
in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much 765
respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even [184]
among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migra- 114
tions, living in every camp it established during the course of some 166
fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it: on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts 114
of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion [126]
was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others 123
to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 sults I wanted I had no alternative. Other methods would have produced different, though not necessarily contrary, results.

However, there were inherent limitations in the technique followed, which involved close identification and integration between myself and the Epulu net-hunters. For one, by identifying myself with the Mbuti, my relationships with the villagers were automatically worsened; the mere fact that I preferred to study the Mbuti rather than the villagers was ground enough for hostility. But being accepted by the Mbuti in their forest hunting camps was a privilege denied to most villagers (though few would have wanted it), and learning to speak the village language with a strong Mbuti accent that made it almost unintelligible except to other Mbuti added further fuel to the fire. This all made it extremely difficult for me to see the Mbuti/Villager relationship from any but the Mbuti point of view, though I tried, at the end of 1958, to establish a better rapport with villages both in and beyond the Epulu area.

123 648 [122]

However, it was impossible for me not to take sides. Had I wished to work as an outside observer I am not even sure that it could have been done, as I do not think such an observer would have been tolerated for long in the forest camps. And as an outsider I would certainly have been denied familiarity with many aspects of Mbuti life, particularly the all-important *molimo* festival. In fact, as an "insider" I was able to observe the process of exclusion of the few outsiders temporarily admitted to a forest camp. But in any case I was quickly forced by purely practical considerations to take sides.

During the burial proceedings in the village, for instance, in the first month of my stay, I was invited by both Mbuti and villagers to take part. But whereas the villagers wanted me to stand by and watch the digging of the grave under villager supervision, the Mbuti wanted me to help out with the digging. By acceding to the latter wish I automatically lost my status among the supervisors, and in fact became unclean and had to ritually wash myself with the other gravediggers. And during the post-burial meeting of the men, when the villagers all argued among themselves as to which Mbuti witch had caused the death, I had the choice of listening on one side of the grave with the villagers or of standing on the other side with the Mbuti and being associated in this way with their mirth and their ridicule of what was, to them, an utterly nonsensical procedure. And when on one occasion a burial took place on the morning of the day that a wedding was to be held in a neighboring village, I had the

123 648 764

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing.

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint.

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 589 Being a bachelor made my integration into family life somewhat easier than it might have been otherwise, and my reciprocal duties were not heavy, mainly involving my working with other bachelors in collecting the saplings and leaves used for making the huts. But being unable to make any great contribution to the food economy, although I participated in the hunt, I found myself pushed into another category that I subsequently discovered to be a perfectly traditional one for incompetent hunters and some others—that of buffoon. This was very convenient, as it meant that I was the recipient of threats, ridicule, jokes and gossip, all of significance, and being made a general scapegoat I was also the center of a number of disputes. I have observed similar buffoons in almost every other hunting band, fulfilling the same function, harmlessly dispelling the many little jealousies and hostilities that arise in everyday camp life.

Later on I acquired a hunting net of my own, by virtue of my proven adult status, and was so able to contribute to the food economy. At this time I was able to watch another bachelor take my place as buffoon.

123 The advantages of this kind of participation are obvious enough, and particularly desirable when a six-foot field worker is living among four-foot pygmies is the way it helps him blend into the social landscape, at least. Among the Mbuti, however, there was an additional advantage. The amount of information I could get from them, even the extent to which I would be allowed to participate, depended upon my attitude to the forest. Fortunately this was something of which I was well aware. But the fact that I was prepared to eat the same food, and that often entirely excluded village plantation foods, and the fact that I was prepared to carry my few belongings myself, to sleep on leaves or branches, and take part in the forest songs that were sung almost nightly around a central fire, conveyed enough of my respect for the forest for the Mbuti to admit me still further.

The process was an interesting one, because it again demonstrated the close relationship between the Mbuti and the forest world around them. But it was also an exhausting and arduous one, and because of the very nature of forest life it was impossible for me to observe all that went on. As will be seen, in the normal course of events a number of different things are going on in different places at different times, and even in the course of the year I cannot be sure that I saw everything of significance. During the *molimo*, for instance, men were expected to stay awake and sing throughout the night until about an

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hour before dawn, then be up at dawn in preparation for the hunt. 123
This much I could manage, but whereas during the day individual men could stretch out and snatch an hour or two of sleep whenever they felt like it, I never had the chance to feel the same freedom. Acts associated with the *molimo*, such as the ritual gathering of food from every hut, continued throughout the day and I did not wish to miss anything new that might happen.

However, with all its drawbacks (and perhaps the physical and mental strain are not the least) the technique seems in this instance to have been justified by the results.

RESULTS

Both the general and the particular objectives were answered to 121
some extent during the course of the field work. The general form and structure of the Mbuti hunting band became evident, as did certain differentiations between the structure of the archers and that of the net-hunters. Further, certain principles were found that accounted for the cohesion of the band within itself, while at the same time enabling the band to present to the villagers a structure so fluid that any formal relationship of the kind envisaged by the villagers was impossible. Perhaps it is as well to point out here that the kinship system (or lack of it) that characterizes the Mbuti band today is not necessarily representative of what it was yesterday; indeed it may well be that the current ambivalence is in itself a response to the attempts of the patrilineal village society to enforce control through the myth of hereditary unilineal relationships. The origin does not concern us here, only the system as it exists in the present context.

The structural differences between archers and net-hunters are not 121
perhaps as wide as might have been supposed, but before any final 184
conclusions can be drawn there is great need for a detailed study to be made among the archers. Certain differences in behavior are shown, however, to achieve the same structural ends—for instance the process of fission and fusion, where the net-hunters and the archers behave in diametrically opposed cyclic patterns but to the same structural end.

The detailed study of the Epulu net-hunters was backed by suf- 121
ficient field work among other net-hunting bands to enable us to gen- 128
eralize with reasonable safety. Where generalization is not possible,
2 I cite the specific, and where it is possible but not with absolute cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

3: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114
123

[For numerous scattered references throughout this source on the author's participation in various Mbuti life cycle events, see whole text, category 116, passim.]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
177 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
881 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco, palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested, but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions; on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
[352] the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between us by all the discomforts we had shared together as well as by all the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
199 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123 •
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time [533]
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551]
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same
when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

their songs of praise to the forest, the molimo answered them, first 123
on this side, then on that, moving around so swiftly and silently 533
that it seemed to be everywhere at once. 534

Then, still unseen, it was right beside me, not more than two feet away, on the other side of a small but thick wall of leaves. As it replied to the song of the men, who continued to sing as though nothing were happening, the sound was sad and wistful, and immensely beautiful. Several of the older men were sitting near me, and one of them, without even looking up, asked me if I wanted to see the molimo. He then continued singing as though he didn't particularly care what my reply was, but I knew that he did. I was so overcome by curiosity that I almost said "yes"; I had been fighting hard to stop myself from trying to peer through the leaves to where it was now growling away almost angrily. But I knew that Pygmy youths were not allowed to see it until they had proved themselves as hunters, as adults in Pygmy eyes, and although I now carried the marks on my forehead I still felt unqualified. So I simply said, no, I did not think I was ready to see it.

The molimo gave a great burst of song and with a wild rush swept across the camp, surrounded by a dozen youths packed so tightly together that I could see nothing, and disappeared into the forest. Those left in the camp made no comment; they just kept on with their song, and after a while the voice of the molimo, replying to them, became fainter and fainter and was finally lost in the night and in the depths of the forest from where it had come.

This experience convinced me that here was something that I 123
could do that was really worth while, and that I was not doing it justice by coming armed with cameras and recording equipment, as I had on this trip. The Pygmies were more than curiosities to be filmed, and their music was more than a quaint sound to be put on

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 records. They were a people who had found in the forest something that made their life more than just worth living, something that made it, with all its hardships and problems and tragedies, a wonderful thing full of joy and happiness and free of care.

One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.
464 Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
[55] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, showing it to me with infinite pride.

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

to raid the Negro plantations myself, and to cut the huge banana leaves on which we used to sleep every night. On such occasions Kenge would return late, when he thought I was asleep, lie down beside me, and very soon begin to work the blanket off my back until he was comfortably covered. If I objected, he merely muttered something that I couldn't understand but that brought titters of laughter from all the other Pygmies lying around the fire.

When I told him he was fired, he took it as permission to take two or three days' holiday. Then one morning I would wake up to find a neatly dressed and unrepentant Kenge squatting over a smoky fire concocting an especially elaborate breakfast for the two of us. In the middle of eating breakfast, without asking me if I had had enough, he would often take the dish and pass it with a grand air to the other unmarried youths sitting hungrily around. If I protested he would simply tell me that I had eaten enough. If I said that I couldn't afford to feed all the bachelors in the camp, he would ask me how much my Leica camera had cost. Since it cost me four hundred dollars, and for four hundred dollars I could live in the Congo for four hundred weeks, there was no effective answer. Kenge knew it, and besides, he was on his own territory. I was a mere intruder.

So when I heard that Kenge had become chief bugler for the Animal Station I was both relieved and sad. I knew I had been saved a lot of headaches, but Kenge was worth them all, and more. I began to look around for someone else who could take his place. Then one morning, just a few days after I had arrived, I woke up, and there he was, a well-groomed Pygmy in buttonless shorts and shirt, a cup of coffee balanced expertly in one hand. I asked him about his bugling, and he said he was tired of having to get up so early every morning, and anyway it hurt his lips. He announced that he was going to work for me again. I told him I could not afford to pay him much, as I wanted to stay a long time and had to make my money last. Kenge looked at me in the frank, open-eyed way of the real

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [154] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 578 [583] If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we be[illegible]," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge, Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation. Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Agerongo were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way
across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen
tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top
of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only
paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride.
He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food
and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-
clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they
turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Many-
alibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting
as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down
their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their
houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets
down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with
bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been
examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night
before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest
behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and 361
leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that 342
she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we 412
would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and [123]
Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo
and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could 342
tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a 314
large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we 48
hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, 114
looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had 123
long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I [821]
would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them
put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and [487]
the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of
the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route.
But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not
bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically
on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every
now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny
that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick
growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a
mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a
forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-
shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cut- 314
ting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about 114
four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The 123
others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so [412]
they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no
more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had arrived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

was. He told me it was the *kumamolimo*, "the place of the molimo," and now that everyone was here we were going to start the festival. The food that had been collected from hut to hut was to feed the molimo, because the molimo was a hungry animal that ate a great deal. He added pointedly that it smoked a great deal too, and when I gave him several packets of cigarettes he solemnly put them with the food in the molimo basket.

About an hour later, when I was in my hut, I noticed that Makubasi and Ausu were standing outside, obviously wanting to say something. Usually they were not backward about interrupting, and I was puzzled when Ausu beckoned with his head that I should come outside. He whispered in my ear that a few of them were going off to get the molimos, as we were to start the festival that night. Masimongo, Kenge's brother-in-law, had said that he, as well as Manyalibo, wanted to bring out his molimo, and make it a doubly great festival. Half a dozen youths were waiting to see if I would go with them, but they told me that the place where the molimo lived was a long way off and we would have to run all the way and return when it was dark.

Of course I said I would go, and we started off immediately. But halfway across the camp Masimongo leaped into my way and shouted that I was not to go. For a moment there was a loud and sharp argument, most of which I could not follow. Finally Njobo, to whom everyone always listened, said that he had seen me in the forest and knew I could travel as well and as fast as the others, so that I would be safe. Masisi then objected with a shrill torrent of words, saying that the molimo was none of my business. For a moment I felt like saying I would not go, as I certainly did not want to cause any bad feeling. The others were already moving off at a run, down the path through the glade, not waiting for me.

Njobo pushed me on the shoulder and said to follow quickly, if I was sure I could keep up and would not be afraid of traveling in the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
• 123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly to Masimongo and Masisi, that the molimo had already sung to me
[885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lelo, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Ausu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was
[487] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

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The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched *the ground* but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

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and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

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Mbuti

765 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo,
534 which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen
123 from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional ma-
177 terials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer [533] pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the fronr end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Ausu, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night. 765 534 123 177

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up. 765 123 481

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Ausu said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway." 765 534 123 [322]

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Ausu took the end of the 765 534

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
• 123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the orginal struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he darced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
578 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumanolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I felt that air of importance and

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

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know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it 534
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting 322

765 534 322 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 • 123 [489] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. "It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 765 534 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better for old men to talk about these things. 765 534 123 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear. 888 115 [322] [411]

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. *So we call out the molimo and it makes* them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather 115 [157]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and
578 assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and
18 complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I
• 123 had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

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had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

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form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

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P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 438 179 The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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blanket, no matter how annoyed with me he was. These villagers—they were just animals.

When I awoke in the morning I hardly dared open my eyes, but a tentative exploration proved that the other half of the bed was empty. I thought all was well after all. Amina had cut her losses and left at dawn. But when I had put my trousers on and stooped through the low entrance of the hut into the camp, there she was. She was sitting on a log beside the hut, quietly fanning the fire and cooking my breakfast, just as every other wife was doing for her husband. Kenge was making it very obvious to everyone that he was eating with the bachelors, who were making it obvious that they had not slept in my hut that night. Everyone else studiously ignored my appearance, except old Moke, who was walking past on his way to the stream to bathe. He looked at me sideways, shook his head and gave a little knowing old laugh. And as he walked on he shook his head all the more vigorously and laughed all the louder.

I was about to go after him, thinking that at least I could ask his advice, but Amina caught hold of my trouser leg and said, "There is no need for you to go to the stream to bathe. I have brought you water—behind the hut." So I went behind the hut and washed, and then sat down and had breakfast, while Amina went to join the other women and chat with them. While she was gone Kenge strolled by and elaborately asked me if the food was all right. He also asked me, rather loudly, if I had slept well. Amina answered from across the camp, "Yes, he told me to mend the leak in the roof!" This proof of domestic bliss brought howls of mirth from all around, the more infuriating because I could not see what was funny about it. Then Kenge told me that this was what men always said to their wives when they wanted to be allowed to sleep in peace.

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That night, Amina and I came to an agreement. She was to stay with me and cook my food—and mend leaks in the roof every night.

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This way she would preserve her reputation and I mine, and there would be no complications. And so it was.

I grew very fond of Amina, and some time later, when I was in a village and became very ill, she walked ten miles every day to see me, and ten miles back. She brought me refreshing fruits and sweet-smelling plants and flowers, and sat beside my bed without saying a word. Only once, I woke up and found she was sitting on the edge of the bed and holding my hand in hers.

When the Pygmies moved camp, Amina took the opportunity to go back to her father's village. I was never sure whether I was glad, or more than just a little sorry, to see her go. But when I thought about it, I realized that apart from all the other reasons, Amina could never have stayed. No matter how well she was liked by the Pygmies, she was still a villager. She had not been brought up to do the hundred and one little things that a Pygmy woman has to know how to do. She did not even know how to beat on the hunt, let alone which vines to follow to find the delicacies hidden in the ground by their roots. She belonged to another world.

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese*, the Great Ones— 265
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123] •
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [392] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa ndo BaNguana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the Ba'bira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [976] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

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so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolonge, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

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• 123 it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the
484 majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki
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[515] by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

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It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing
171 was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house,
361 built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with
342 walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut,
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calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into
[353] two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying
[251] rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double
[417] duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the
[354] screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl
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knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister.
C
571 Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Fa-
177 ther," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak,
758 but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

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beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision. C [226]

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the P [533]

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outside their hut to sing, they were carefully guarded by their 881
mothers and older sisters. But the girls and their attendants cast sly glances at the young men who always drew close to watch and listen. They whispered and laughed among themselves, and when they 881
stood up to dance they often made it very clear by their gestures 882
which boy had taken their fancy. Sometimes they chose at random simply to annoy a special lover, and boys often stalked away in a huff. That was a mistake.

At any time of the day the girls were likely to emerge from the [411]
elima house armed with long fito whips. If you were close enough you could hear them plotting their strategy behind the door, but there was no escape once they burst out into the open. Any males, young or old, and particularly those who had shown annoyance at being teased, were liable to be chased and whipped by the eager young furies.

I myself was chased once, for a good half-mile down a forest trail, [123]
running as fast as I could. It was considered cowardly to run, but I ran with good reason, for to be whipped establishes an obligation to visit your assailant in the elima house. Once inside there is no need to do anything further, but you are subject to considerable attention if you refuse. And to get into the house, in the first place, requires no small amount of courage and strength. So I ran. Most other bachelors had less reason and no desire to escape, so they contented themselves with giving as good as they got, throwing sticks and stones at the girls, running around the village, dodging behind houses and through fields of sugar cane. The battles never lasted long, but sometimes they came to an abrupt end.

The girls often whipped old men or young boys, and in either case it was generally considered a compliment and did not carry the same obligations that it would have done had they been eligible bachelors. But sometimes they hit too hard, and the old men resented this and shouted, while the boys simply screamed their heads off.

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881 In the one case Mambunia would come out of his hut in a temper
832 and send all the girls back to their house, and in the other case Asofalinda would run amok among the girls, boxing their ears until they, in turn, cried like the children they had beaten.

881 But the elima beauties did not confine themselves to their own
914 village. After all, most of the men there were relatives and so could not decently be invited into the elima house. Many strangers came to visit from other groups, but sometimes the attendance was disappointing. Then the girls would set out to visit one of their hunting
[123] camps. I followed them on one such escapade, having secured a promise first that I would be given complete immunity. It was a strange procession, the girls all oiled and painted to look their best, wearing grass skirts in imitation of the boys' initiation (an innovation that infuriated the villagers, who felt that their customs were being desecrated, and that caused open hostilities in the end), and carrying stout whips, twice as tall as they were. There were about eight of them in all, led of course by the irrepressible Akidinimba, bouncing her breasts up and down in a determined manner as she marched along the road, past the Station de Chasse, and over the bridge to the far side of the Epulu River. The villagers came out to look as we passed, but from a respectful distance. On other occasions I have seen a party such as this dive into the midst of a group of village men and women, lashing out with all their might—not entirely in the friendly way in which they would whip, say, old Tungana, as a compliment to his virility.

On the far side of the Epulu we climbed up the hill toward Eboyo, the sun beating down on us so that the chatter and laughter of the girls was almost stilled. But just before reaching Eboyo we turned off, following a trail through an old plantation and into the
881 forest. As the trees closed in around and above us, the girls began to
914 sing. They sang loudly and proudly, marching with even more de-
833 termination than before, their heads back, looking at the familiar

dered out into the middle of the village, where he played with the children. The next thing I knew he had disappeared again, and I was told he had stolen one of the villager's bicycles and gone off down the road to Katala.

The Pygmies were obviously going to have nothing further to do with the villagers, and I felt sorry for Maliamo who had come and sat down beside them in the baraza. Feeling that I was in some way responsible, I asked if it was proper for me to offer them some palm wine. This eased the situation slightly. Munyunga and his friends stayed and drank their beer and palm wine, while Masisi and Moke did their best to pacify them by offering to have a meal cooked. But they said no, all they wanted was to drink. Only two Pygmies came to join them, and then only to see if they would be offered any leftovers. But Munyunga was not parting with a drop, even for Maliamo, who continued to sit uncomplainingly by his side. When the beer and palm wine were all finished, Munyunga still stayed —angry, surly, and very drunk indeed. Occasionally he called for more to drink, or asked where his new hat was, but nobody answered him. The few people that were in the village just went their way as though there were no visitors at all. Moke was fast asleep outside his hut, and Masisi was fashioning a new bow, never so much as glancing at the baraza.

It was beginning to darken when the villagers left, saying that the Pygmies were a lot of animals who didn't know how to behave, and that if Maliamo did not bear Kenge any children it would not be *their* fault.

As soon as the unwelcomed guests had left, the whole atmosphere changed. Pygmies appeared unexpectedly from all directions, crowding around Maliamo to greet her. She went to the little hut that had been given to her and Kenge and began cooking. Kenge appeared, as if by magic, laughing and telling how he had met Mu-

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not allowed to sleep in the camp at night. Only the "fathers," that being understood to mean the real fathers and the older brothers of the boys, were allowed to sleep in the "place of the nkumbi." That meant, in this case, only Pygmies. The BaMbuti had different notions. Recognizing that I was anxious to be with them right through the whole period of seclusion, they invited me to join them. After all, they said, I was really the father of all the eight boys. In this way I became one of the *baganza*, the people of the initiation.

The invitation was not intended as a deliberate slight to the villagers; the Pygmies merely thought it would be fun, particularly as they were sure that I would keep them supplied with tobacco and palm wine and other luxuries. From their point of view no harm was being done. From the villagers' point of view, however, this breach of custom was likely to bring disaster not only on me but also on the rest of the baganza. Beyond issuing the gravest warnings, they made no attempt to discourage me and soon came to accept my presence.

So from the first day to the last I was with the nkumbi, day and night: and at night, when all the villagers had left, I learned what the nkumbi really means to the people of the forest. The moment their instructors were gone, and only Pygmies were left, the boys leaped from the bed where they were supposed to be sleeping and joined their fathers around the fire, eating forbidden foods in forbidden company and in a forbidden manner, using their fingers. One boy jumped onto a log and swung his arms around in imitation of someone swinging a bull-roarer, which of course he should never have seen. Others played their favorite game of punch ball with the sacred banana. A shower of rain was an invitation to run outside and wash off all the dirt that had accumulated during the day. The villagers not only forbade the candidates to get wet, even by washing, but they smeared them constantly with white clay, from head to foot, as a sign of their death as children. To the naturally clean Pygmies this was intolerable, and the boys were encouraged by their fathers to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 114 I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and set-
P [122] ting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the
P [186] occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakoa. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakoa, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

C Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of
§22 Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had
563 met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in
P 115 his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend,
• 123 and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and
P [139] still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

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C 624 B8 563 p 115 123

What shall I say when the administrator comes and finds the cotton is not ready?"

I suggested that he could send one of his sons into the forest after the Pygmies, guessing what the answer would be, if Pygmies here were like Pygmies at Epulu. And sure enough Kachui shook his head and said he had sent three sons after his Pygmies, but each time when they reached the hunting camp it was deserted, and nobody seemed to know where they had gone. Kenge shook his head and I was afraid he was going to laugh. But he merely said what a terrible way that was to behave, and that everyone knew that Pygmies should always do what their master told them. This surprised Kachui, and he warmed to his theme, telling of all the ways in which he was constantly being tricked and cheated and robbed by the Ba-Mbuti. Kenge continued to look disapproving, clucking his tongue and nodding in agreement whenever Kachui said he would be justified in putting every last Pygmy in jail—when he could find them.

But Kenge proved to be more than diplomatic. In turn he began questioning Kachui and showed that over the past year he had come to know just the kinds of topics I liked to hear discussed. The fact that he raised the subjects dispelled all suspicions that Kachui might have had, and he even told us the exact whereabouts of such Pygmies as he knew he could find for us, most of whom were tending his illegal plantations. He offered to call them in if we wanted to question them, but we said no, we would rather go and visit them. After some hesitation Kachui agreed, and made arrangements for us to leave the next morning. He installed us in his official guest house and sent over one of his sons with gifts of food. He also sent over two of his daughters, and I was tempted to find out whether they were both intended for me, or whether one was for Kenge. But I merely gave them a small gift apiece and said we were tired and were going to sleep. Kenge was thoroughly disgusted and assured me that they did not have leprosy. I had a hard time trying to convince him that

C 574 p 115 123

2: Turnbull - E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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C 574 P 115 123 this was not the point, and he finally just rolled over in his blanket, muttering that sometimes he thought Europeans were as crazy as villagers.

For the next few days we visited Kachui's plantations and talked with such Pygmies as we found there. But it was impossible to shake off the chief's sons, who stuck to us like leeches. As a result I could get no response at all; everything that the Pygmies said was said to impress the villagers. The only useful information was obtained by Kenge, who got into the habit of slipping away while I was "holding court," as he called it, and talking to his fellow Pygmies well out of earshot.

C 563 P 179 184 One thing was plain, however, and that was that no matter how powerful Kachui was—and it was certainly within his power to have any Pygmies put in jail and flogged—he was no match for the people of the forest. Kenge learned that the main group had been away for over six months and had no intention of returning yet. They were a long way off and came close to the village only when they wanted to raid the plantations. Even while we were there Kachui's sons tried to find out where the rest of the Pygmies were, but everyone protested complete ignorance.

C 648 186 622 563 123 P 123 C 622 A few days at Bafwakua were more than enough. With Kachui lying in wait the Pygmies were not likely to tell us where their companions were, and even if they did Kachui was not likely to let us out of sight. He became uncooperative when I asked to look at the tribunal records, for which I had official permission. He was forced into admitting that he did not consider the Pygmies real people, and therefore they had no right to have cases tried in the tribunal. He said that any complaints by the villagers against Pygmies were heard by him; he judged them himself and no records were kept. He made it quite plain that the judgment always went in favor of the villager. Kenge then disgraced himself by asking what happened if a Pygmy brought a complaint against a villager. Kachui

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of the Ituri River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukambo, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

"How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

Jr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 P04 Pygmies P04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa P01

C 563 P 177 184 We did meet some Pygmies, however, and they laughed and told us that no Pygmy would ever come near Isiaka; there were plenty of other villagers who gave them much more in return for their meat, while Isiaka always expected them to work on his plantations for nothing. This, in fact, was the picture we got wherever we stopped. The villagers throughout the forest complained bitterly C (186) about the Pygmies, saying, "They eat us up until we are ready to die"—meaning that the Pygmies take from them but give little in return.

P C 177 439 C 829 It was not until we reached the western limits of the forest and turned north that we really had any luck. Some miles east of Wamba we left the car and followed a track through the forest. At the end of a full day we arrived at a series of old established villages of the Mabudo tribe. These people had a much more realistic attitude toward the Pygmies and consequently got along much better with them. They talked freely and willingly. They said that, after all, the Pygmies had been in the forest long before the Mabudo arrived, so they had the right to live as they wished. If they preferred to stay in the forest and live like animals, that was their concern, but if they wanted to come to the villages and work for the Mabudo, that was fine. At the time of harvest the villagers all gave gifts of the first fruits to the local Pygmies, because, as they said, it was their land. And any time the Pygmies were near a Mabudo village they invariably brought in gifts of meat or honey.

P 123 There were a few Pygmies in one of the villages when we arrived, and after a couple of days they agreed to take us out to one of the hunting camps. Kenge had done some talking to them on the side, assuring them that I was not really like a villager, but just like them, a "*mòki ndo ndura*"—son of the forest. When he introduced me to them he proudly pointed to the marks on my forehead that proclaimed me an adult. "The villagers call him Mulefu, because he is

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 153
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kawaki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back. 114 484

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been extremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face peking out from behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status. 607 484 609 123 186 826 [825]

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, movie-makers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and 609 184 [114]

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pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself 824 524
almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what 734
strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering
through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why 734
Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better 481
with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. 123
"What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach
Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most [152]
truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried
once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

734 481 123 sense, and she must not refuse. Did she want her child to die like other cripples who had been unable to fend for themselves?

Reluctantly she agreed, but Lizabeti, as soon as I reached for her, burst into tears and dragged herself back into the farthest corner of her mother's hut. Masisi started to go in after her again, but Kenge called to him to leave her alone, and handed his crutches and those we had made for Lizabeti to the eagerly waiting children. Soon it was the most popular game in the camp. Even Masisi and Maipe tried "walking on one leg." I saw Lizabeti's tear-stained face peering from the door of her hut to watch.

The next morning Asofalinda came over to me and said that Lizabeti wanted to try this new game, but if she fell once she would never be allowed to try again. Not a soul left the camp that morning; they all wanted to see what would happen. Between us Kenge and I lifted the girl, who was bravely trying not to cry, and put the crutches under her arms. We showed her how to hold them with her hands at the sides, and how to take the weight off her good leg and swing it backward and forward. The greatest difficulty was getting her to trust that leg enough to move her crutches on in front of her. But little by little, moving one crutch at a time, she got more confidence. I went in front to catch her if she fell, and Kenge held her lightly around the waist from behind. Lizabeti began to walk. Kenge let go, and then, as she realized that Kenge was not even holding her, that she was actually walking upright, like the other children she had watched from the ground all her life, her face became contorted with fear and she stumbled. Kenge caught her just in time. He swung her high into the air with a triumphant shout to drown her wails of terror, and all the children joined in, laughing and chanting their congratulations.

734 481 123 152 We had almost completed a circle of the camp, and I looked over to see if Asofalinda had noticed Lizabeti start to fall. I was just in time to see her bury her face in her hands, her whole body shaking as she

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sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

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BaLese The major village tribe to the east and northeast of the Epulu district.

BaMbuti General term for all Pygmies of the Ituri Forest.

BaNgwana An Islamic tribe scattered throughout the area. Their unsavory reputation, acquired in the days when they aided and abetted the slave-traders, has continued right up to the present day. KiNgwana has become the lingua franca of the entire area.

Banja A pair of short sticks, split into many strands at one end and clapped together on a log as rhythmic accompaniment to certain songs of the Pygmies, particularly the *molimo* songs.

Bantu General term for all tribes speaking a certain type of language, characterized by the use of prefixes, as indicated under BaBira, above, etc. The Bantu peoples extend throughout eastern, southern, and central Africa.

Baraza The meeting place of a family or village. Sometimes a large veranda built onto a house; more often a separate building consisting of a roof supported by poles, but with no walls.

Dawa "Medicine"; may refer to effective herbs or equally to magical incantations or spells.

[551] [123] **Eramunyama** Literally, "His Father Killed an Animal"; the name which the Pygmies gave to me, being their condensation of the story that I told to explain my name, "Turnbull." (A borderland Scot saved the king's life by leaping on the back of a bull and turning it away from the king by twisting its

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776
close the forest to them, until they make the 782
propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are ex- [178]
pected to make offerings to Kalisia from their
food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and
Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this
purpose (*ende kola*). The hunters may less cere-
moniously throw offerings of food into the
forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right
mind would fail to make these propitiatory
sacrifices: *"à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira"*
(Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Sche- 114
besta does not always identify his source of
information. However, from a number of ad- [24]
missions such as that noted above, we must
assume that his informants were frequently
villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied
on the question-and-answer technique among
both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933,
171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776
forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171]
villagers, who regard him in no way as benevo-
lent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity
Songe (the moon), with its own remote world,
as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 260-A]

539 114 and by others. Although only a limited though representative selection of the legends is presented, a word should be said about the way the legends are told and the way these particular examples were collected and translated (Turnbull, 1959).

539 114 126 The original manuscripts were prepared under extremely difficult conditions by Mrs. Putnam while living in one of the Mbuti hunting camps. No typewriter was available. Apart from the physical difficulty of making a longhand rendition of the legends, as they were told, was the problem of translation. Mrs. Putnam did the only thing anyone except a proficient linguist could do, she translated the legend as it was told and wrote it down in English. This [91] procedure was further necessitated by the habit of these Mbuti, who speak three languages, of changing in the telling of a single legend from one to another as the mood seizes them.

539 114 Certainly, the ideal would have been to record the original texts, but these we do not have and could hardly expect to have under the circumstances. But we can be sure of the content and the general form of expression. I myself worked on the original manuscripts shortly af-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.iv]

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1966) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning festivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migrations, living in every camp it established during the course of some fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it; on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *ensemba*, *lubumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *ensemba* or *lusemba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

DISPUTE	Number Recorded	Number of Decisions or Judgments made	Instances of Positive Action
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

3t Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4489, Music of the Ituri Forest

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each [284] about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4.
Mbuti

INTRODUCTION

[P.145-A]

114 THE PRESENT SURVEY was originally written as
12 a thesis for the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford University and submitted in 1956 for the degree of Bachelor of Letters (B. Litt.). It is difficult, having just completed for publication a monograph based on my own field work, to undertake the publication of a thesis written in student days, dealing with the same area but based on the work of others. It inevitably leads to self-conflict, for the new self does not always agree with the old. Further, the survey does not claim to be comprehensive. It is presented, however, as a first step in the gathering together of the earlier literature that can be best relied upon for information concerning the social structure of the Mbuti Pygmies of the Congo. It has two major objectives.

121 One, and the most important, is to set down
.127 in English a straightforward description of such ethnographic facts as are known about the Mbuti Pygmies of the Ituri Forest, based on the published and unpublished material available up to 1956, with the addition of a few references up to 1960. For the Putnam material I am most indebted to Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who made available all the notes left by her late husband, Patrick Tracy Lowell Putnam.

[p.196-A]

114 must confess to leaving out such references
127 wherever it seemed plain that the whole passage referred to that one authority. The impression of insidiousness is heightened by the fact that almost the entire bulk of the material available is general and descriptive rather than specific and analytical. In trying to sift that which falls properly into the latter category, then, we necessarily must abandon the continuity and sense that existed in the original works. It is therefore not to be expected that the present survey will in any way offer a coherent ethnography of the Mbuti.

121 Fifth, in the course of the survey (pp. 194–
114 241) I make similar use of the unpublished notes
127 of Patrick and Anne Putnam and expand their account of the net hunters with a limited amount of material from my own field notes dating from 1951 and 1954–1955. My own interest during those two first visits to the Ituri were other than strictly anthropological but concerned certain aspects of social organization. As I was working in the same area as the Putnams, the material is valid and useful for the rounding out of their observations. In

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have a concentrated body of Mbuti Pygmies in 101
the Ituri Forest and some apparently scattered 128
Pygmy groups farther west and through the forests of equatorial Africa (Figs. 1–2). Of the latter, unfortunately, too little is known for inclusion here.

For the Ituri Mbuti one of our main sources 101
is the *four-volume work* by Schebesta (1938, 114
[P.152-8] 127

101
114
[127]

1941, 1948, 1950). Schebesta divides the Mbuti (whom he calls "Bambuti") into three major groups: Aka in the north, Sua in the south, and Efe in the east (Fig. 3). His first trip to the Ituri was spent in an over-all coverage of the forest, during which he culled facts from all these groups but necessarily at a superficial level. Realizing this and desiring to make a more profound study, he returned and concentrated on the Efe in the triangle bounded by the roads joining Mambasa, Irumu, and Beni (Fig. 3). The bulk of his work concerns these Efe, who hunt primarily with bow and arrows, and as it is the only group of which he has detailed knowledge it is the only group that we present from his work with any degree of fullness. His references to the Kango in the west, the Aka, and the Sua, are too few to form a systematic account of these societies as such, and, as already mentioned, we see little value in isolated, unsystematic ethnographic data.

[P. 153-B]

There is, however, another source on the Ituri Pygmies (mostly unpublished) in the form of the field notes of an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam, who first went to the Ituri in 1928 and was resident there until his death at the end of 1953. His material is concerned with the Sua who, unlike the Efe, are net hunters. With this material are also the notes of his widow, Mrs. Anne-Eisner Putnam, who lived in the Ituri for more than eight years, until 1954; and, finally, my own field notes covering my first two visits to the same area (Epulu District) in 1951 and 1954. I combine this material as a single source, indicating its exact origin in the text, partly because, in the main, it covers one definite area, and even one definite hunting band, and partly because both Anne Putnam and myself benefited by the immense knowledge of Patrick Putnam, without necessarily being in complete agreement.

Apart from these two main sources, and a

114 127 [101] 127 128 127

[P.153-C]

•127 number of articles published in various anthropological journals, there is nothing that we can draw upon for the present work. We have, then,
101 two distinct groups—Schebesta's Efe Mbuti and Putnam's Epulu (Sua) Mbuti, archers and net hunters, respectively.

101 A word should be said about classification.
197 Schebesta's division of the Ituri Mbuti into Aka, Efe, and Sua is a linguistic classification and, at that, a division not according to Mbuti languages but to the villager linguistic groups—Mangbetu, Lese, and Bira, respectively. It thus corresponds to tribal groupings of villagers and does not seem to be particularly significant for the purposes of sociological analysis. (Schebesta is more concerned with problems of racial and cultural purity, and believes the Efe language to be of Pygmy origin; consequently, he considered the Efe Pygmies to be racially and culturally the purest.

[P. 154-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 190
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are not hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.155-A]

127 related to either of these economic groups of
128 Mbuti—archers or net hunters. When sources cannot be related to our detailed study of these two types, we omit them, unless there is some special reason for their inclusion.

128 Now, before the survey itself, it is necessary
114 to evaluate briefly our two main sources, as certain deficiencies in each should be understood. The more properly critical section follows the survey; here such criticism as is presented is offered so that we can estimate the true nature and value of the facts presented by each source.

Schebesta

114 Schebesta, as a follower of Schmidt, is concerned with the over-all problem of "the pygmy races of the world" and their interrelationship. He began his study among the Semang Negritos in 1924. Then in 1929 he undertook the first of three trips to Africa on which he based his work "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri." The first trip, lasting a year and a half, was spent traveling through the Ituri "*sur des pistes caravanières . . . dans toutes les directions*" (Schebesta, 1952, 16) in order to get an all-over picture of all the Mbuti and to "*établir leur unité de race et de structure sociale*" (Schebesta,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

tain cautions are essential. In the present survey I have tried to make Schebesta's material more useful for analytical purposes by culling such information as can be taken specifically to refer to one or another *particular* group of Mbuti. The bulk of such pinpointed information in Schebesta's writings refers to the Efe archers of the southeastern Ituri. This group can then be contrasted with the other major group, the Sua net hunters, for which we have additional sources. 114 128.

The result is inevitably somewhat disjointed and full of lamentable gaps. There is also the tiresome necessity of continually specifying "according to Schebesta, . . ." "Schebesta says, . . ." "in Schebesta's account, . . ." and I

[1] Such an approach is at least better than that of Gusinde, whom we must abandon altogether as a possible ethnographic source because he (1955, 12) holds that all African Pygmies and Pygmoids from the Gabon to Rwanda, and whom he groups together under the single unfortunate term "Twides," *are essentially the same in their mode of living and cultural organization.* It is difficult to see much similarity, I find, between his "Twides" in the Great Lakes region, whom he describes as sedentary grassland potters, and his Ituri "Twides" who are nomadic forest hunters and gatherers.

[P. 145-D]

[p.146-A]

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• 128 wherever it seemed plain that the whole passage referred to that one authority. The impression of inadequacy is heightened by the fact that almost the entire bulk of the material available is general and descriptive rather than specific and analytical. In trying to sift that which falls properly into the latter category, then, we necessarily must abandon the continuity and sense that existed in the original works. It is therefore not to be expected that the present survey will in any way offer a coherent ethnography of the Mbuti.

121 Fifth, in the course of the survey (pp. 194–
114 241) I make similar use of the unpublished notes
[127] of Patrick and Anne Putnam and expand their account of the net hunters with a limited amount of material from my own field notes dating from 1951 and 1954–1955. My own interest during those two first visits to the Ituri were other than strictly anthropological but concerned certain aspects of social organization. As I was working in the same area as the Putnams, the material is valid and useful for the rounding out of their observations. In

[p.147-A]

114 derstandable, more valuable, and more usable.

121 An examination of all the available source material indicates very clearly the necessity for immediately establishing a limited study of well-defined groups, uninfluenced by any theoretical preoccupations with questions of sociological unity, anteriority, or origin. The term "Pygmy" leads far too easily to meaningless generalization. It may well prove that even the [101] term "Mbuti," by which is understood the Pygmy population of the Ituri Forest, is too broad. The breakdown in this survey between the different economic groups of Mbuti is only a tentative investigation to discover significant similarities and differences.

114 In view of the existence of Schebesta's (1938, 1941, 1948, 1950) major work, "Die Bambuti-Pygmäen vom Ituri," with its special reference to archers, and my own field work and recent and forthcoming publications on the net hunters, the survey here has been kept to reasonable dimensions and does not pretend to give a complete picture. The accounts of Schebesta and Putnam are presented with as little speculation as possible. It will be readily seen that there is insufficient information, almost throughout, for any effective analysis to be made. But certain problems arise, and in the conclusions some attempt is made to outline these further, particularly the nature of the Pygmy-villager relationship.

[P.147-C]

particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 182

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tic or racial differential. It might be well to define how certain other terms are used.

CAMP: This term distinguishes the settlement of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There may be hunting camps, those situated in the forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

BAND: This refers to the total Mbuti hunting population, regardless of kinship, that recognizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. The band may occupy a single camp or split into several camps within the same territory.

VILLAGE: The settlement of the Bantu and Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the forest. Such a village is likely to have a much more clear-cut kinship composition and political identity than an Mbuti band.

VILLAGER: This term, unless otherwise stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cultivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that

[P. 147-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Z 101 104 128 the basis of the relationship is the fact that these tribes are village cultivators and not forest hunters.

Z P 104 128 121 613 LINEAGE: We adhere to the definition and usage suggested in "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" (1954, 88–89). The definition is given as follows: "A lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person through a determinate number of generations."

Z P 121 128 104 614 [613] CLAN: Similarly, we use this term as suggested in "Notes and Queries" (1954, 89–90) whereby clan members may trace their unilineal relationship through one line or the other, i.e., we do not use it in the sense of a matriclan as opposed to a gens. Further, we here regard the lineage as a subdivision of the clan, lineage members being able to trace their membership to a known ancestor. A number of such lineages hold themselves to be related by the common descent of the lineage ancestors from a remote, possibly fictional or totemic ancestor.

000 GROUP: Whereas I have in the original sur-

[P. 148-A]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P Z 101 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P Z 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P. 148-B]

114 [101] If we were not dogged by this notion of the "Pygmies" as one people, supported by their undoubted racial homogeneity and territorial contiguity, we would certainly think we were dealing with a number of totally different social systems, if not different peoples.

The more unreliable and imaginative sources have already been rejected, and we must accept the remaining information as given, however much it contradicts itself. The only alternative is to reject this material *in toto*, and there is certainly no justification for so doing other than the convenience of avoiding the contradictions. It seems preferable to accept the contradictions without trying to unify the facts. That is to say, a thorough summary of these early sources indicates that we are by no means dealing with a single people, even within as limited an area as the Ituri Forest or, indeed, one section of it. This consideration has affected the format of the present work and its limitation to a specific section of the African Pygmies. Reference to facts to be found in the early sources are made only when it is certain that they apply to the particular Pygmies under discussion. This method seems to be the only valid way of utilizing the material. It reduces the bulk of ethnographic evidence considerably, as it is seldom made clear exactly which group of Pygmies is

114 101 128

[P 151-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 151-c]

under discussion, and the material nowhere deals with any one specific group fully.

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[01
128]

Having spent some time examining a large body of literature, one is naturally loath to make so little use of it, but this demonstration of the need for detached localized studies rather than generalized studies concerned with or dominated by the notion of racial and cultural unity is in itself no small contribution. The extent to which one must localize sociological studies among the Ituri is as yet unknown, but some indication will appear in the following work.

It might be added that Schebesta, who made an exhaustive study of these same sources, also found himself unable to make a great deal of use of them. He (1948, 295) criticizes Hutereau, whom he regards as being one of the most important sources, for generalizing from one group to another (though Hutereau was mainly concerned with the Aka). He regards the others as even less reliable, and most of his references to them are accompanied by cautions as to their trustworthiness.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

CONTEMPORARY SOURCES

128 •

Having decided, for the purpose of the present survey, to reject the historical sources for the most part, we must determine the extent to which the survey will be limited and then give a brief account and evaluation of the contemporary sources from which it will be drawn.

It must be emphasized that we are not attempting to summarize all available material on the "Pygmies" in general. Ethnography itself can have meaning only when we know to what people our facts belong and when the facts are sufficiently comprehensive to appear in a system of relationships. We see above, in the review of historical sources, that facts that would otherwise be of considerable value are useless to us because with few exceptions we cannot relate them to any one specific group of people. Further, the facts are so few and so isolated that we have no way of relating them to one another in any kind of system. When we come to contemporary sources we are not much better off. We must first decide not to include Pygmoids, 101
such as the Twa and Tswa, because of the very 128
obvious sociological differences and the feeling that we should make the present survey as detailed and as apposite as possible. Once we have limited ourselves to true Pygmies, we find we

[P. 151- D] [TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 150-B]

have a concentrated body of Mbuti Pygmies in 101
the Ituri Forest and some apparently scattered 128.
Pygmy groups farther west and through the forests of equatorial Africa (Figs. 1–2). Of the latter, unfortunately, too little is known for inclusion here.

For the Ituri Mbuti one of our main sources 101
is the four-volume work by Schebesta (1938, 114
[P.152-B] 127

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

There is, however, another source on the 114
Ituri Pygmies (mostly unpublished) in the 127
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cerned with the Sua who, unlike the *Efe*, are net hunters. With this material are also the notes of his widow, Mrs. Anne Eisner Putnam, who lived in the Ituri for more than eight years, until 1954; and, finally, my own field notes covering my first two visits to the same area (Epulu District) in 1951 and 1954. I combine 127
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Apart from these two main sources, and a 127
[P.153-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 199
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's *Efe* are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.155-A]

127 related to either of these economic groups of
.128 Mbuti—archers or net hunters. When sources cannot be related to our detailed study of these two types, we omit them, unless there is some special reason for their inclusion.

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Schebesta

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[P.158-9]

114 some of the "facts" she observes, she presents much as the local villagers would.

114 With regard to my own early material, which I add to our sources on the Epulu net hunters, I
• 128 must also add a caution. My first trip, in 1951, lasting about four months, was primarily concerned with the music of the Mbuti. I was, during almost the entire time, among this same hunting band at the Epulu. My second trip, in 1954, took me through west and equatorial Africa and the Ubangi district of the Congo, so I was able to see Pygmies other than those of the Ituri, but again I concentrated most of my time at the Epulu. I use my own field notes mainly to fill in gaps in the Putnam material and to add two detailed sections on initiation and the men's religious association, here called

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
taining the material I did, and I include it be-
• 128 cause it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
621

[1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage
[192] of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-B]

[P.160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
• 128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 163-8]

cons" were not infrequently discussed around the campfires; the decision, however, was generally in favor of maintaining the *status quo*. 178

PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

128 • 14

Physical anthropology is not treated here, partly because it is a highly specialized field and partly because, again, there is not sufficient material. The work of Schebesta (1938), Jadin (1936), and Gusinde (1948) is notable but still has produced no conclusive results other than to point out the undoubted genetic difference between the Mbuti and their village neighbors. [114]

There is no published study of nutrition among the Mbuti, and nothing in the existing anthropological studies from which one can draw any conclusions on this subject. 146 114

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 • 536 177 157 811

[P 232-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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824

theft, but among the Mbuti is used as indication of spiritual presence during the *molimo* festival.

128

For this section we follow the same outline as that for the archers, but a fuller account of the net-hunters' magico-religious complex is given in the final section (pp. 248–259). It is excluded from the present survey because the lack of

[P. 236-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128 •
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of his Sua material are net hunters or archers. But, except for his remarks on the Kango and "village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the extreme west of the Ituri forest, he seems to have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti. His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184] greatly from that for the archers. The names 176 given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti, Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neighboring villagers. According to Schebesta, Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [224] owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benevolent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt, guiding their weapons and assisting the beat, preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187] is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes known to the elder, telling the hunter where to find game.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 242-A]

EVALUATION

128 THE SURVEY that is given above of the available reliable material on the Pygmies of the Ituri Forest does not claim to be exhaustive. Every opportunity has been taken to follow up any references that promised to bring to light information, however slight, to a point where the quality of such information is so poor that further search becomes uneconomic, not justifying the further expenditure of either time or energy. It is possible, then, that isolated pieces of valuable information have escaped our scrutiny.

The survey as it stands, based on a careful selection of the most reliable information available, is in itself anything but satisfactory and falls short of the standards of authenticity and completeness of detail that are a *sine qua non* for proper anthropological analysis. The historical sources were, for the most part, not sufficiently well documented to be acceptable as fact; contemporary sources (with particular reference to the field of social anthropology) are virtually limited to Schebesta and the Putnam material.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 242-C]

Putnam, and nearly one decade in the case of 114
Anne Putnam.

The vital gaps in this combined material, 128
together with its general nature, render any at- 121
tempt at systematization fruitless. As it is presented, however, it stands as a body of facts, more or less reliable, related to two specific types of Mbuti society—archers and net hunters. We can use it initially, then, to test the validity of this classification. Second, the survey suggests a new approach to the relationship between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors. Incidentally it throws a clearer light on Schebesta's notions as to the cultural unity of the Ituri Mbuti and on the irrelevance of his division of the Mbuti into linguistic groups which correspond only to villager groupings, and not directly to any significant structural differences among the Mbuti themselves. Here we concern ourselves with a brief comparison of our two major sources, section by section, with reference mainly to the classification of the Mbuti according to hunting technique.

[p. 243-A]

192 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently.
[177] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[128] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[144] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

[P. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
221 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
• 128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

[P 248 - A]

184 nature of the hunt also makes possible a more
182 permanent settlement near the village. The
224 trade relationship among the archers, then, as-
439 sumes greater importance and is more formalized. Schebesta further understands it as being an inter-lineage relationship. Putnam, while acknowledging its importance also for the net hunters, says that it is interfamilial and can be broken by either side. The net-hunting technique makes more game available for trade, so there is less demand by villagers upon the net hunters than by the Lese of the archers. The necessity of a more strictly nomadic life also militates against permanent and continuous attachment between the net-hunting Mbuti and any one villager "master."

128 Of the legal system no more can be added to the section dealing with authority and leadership. There are simply not enough data even for comparison of the concepts of property and ownership between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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THE MBUTI-VILLAGER RELATIONSHIP

121 In the preceding sections we dealt with the
177 survey briefly, mainly in order to test the valid-
439 ity of our classification of the Mbuti into net
[128] hunters and archers. We deliberately avoided, as far as possible, reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship, although in the final section on religious life it became particularly obvious that this relationship could not be ignored. In Mbuti society a number of institutions in one way or another are associated with or appear to be identical with villager institutions, and we must understand this connection. The only alternative is to assume that the relationship between the two peoples is one of straightforward symbiosis based on an exchange of meat for plantation products and that, in the course of this symbiosis, certain customs have been adopted and are practiced either separately or jointly. This often-drawn picture represents only the outward appearance of the facts. When one tries to understand it as part of a coherent system, however, it can be done only by creating a hypothetical Mbuti social system that is in fact a hodgepodge culled from all over the Ituri area, from which any offending portions are plucked with the excuse that they are of villager origin.

121 We must determine, then, the underlying
177 facts, as opposed to the mere outward appearance: the extent to which various institutions have been adopted by the Mbuti; how far their underlying values have also been adopted, or

[P249-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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In the final section we consider some legends collected by Anne Putnam among these same Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*. 128 • 186 539

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

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In order to understand the Pygmy values more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti rejection of villager values is effectively valid and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by four of the more important hunters belonging to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters [181] [186] [177] 539 114

[P. 259 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ter their completion and had the opportunity of hearing many of the tales retold, sometimes spontaneously but more often with a little prompting given with the aid of the manuscripts. The only legends that were retold in recognizable form were those concerning creation myth, origin, and tradition, and a few of the more popular ones concerning the *satani*, or forest spirits.

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128

In transcribing from the manuscripts I have not altered the content, but I have attempted to reproduce the legends in a way that will convey something of the manner in which they are told, and I have omitted the often endless repetition. For the present purpose I have divided the legends into three groups: (1) creation myths, legends of origin and tradition; (2) legends dealing with social relations; and (3) legends dealing with relationships to the supernatural.

The bulk of the collection is divided equally between the second and third categories. Only three of the total of 200 legends concern the creation of the world, the stars, and the sky. Fewer than a dozen may be said to deal with the origin and traditional history of the Mbuti. The creation legends are very curtailed versions

[P. 260-B]

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Mbuti

[P. 260-C]

of villager legends. The legends of tradition are 539
somewhat more original and are told in a 128
slightly less summary way but still without any
great show of interest or enthusiasm.

Most of the tales concern the Mbuti and 539
their relationship with the three planes of exis- [82]
tence that they acknowledge: the human, ani- [772]
mal, and supernatural worlds. By various no-
table omissions and commissions they add to our
understanding of their social and religious life.
Whether the tales are villager in origin or not
is for the present purpose not particularly signif-
icant. In practice they are never told the same
way twice. They are often spontaneous crea-
tions arising from a certain set of circumstances,
or they may be adaptations of dimly remem-
bered tales, or of traditional villager tales,
again made to fit certain sets of circumstances.
One of the weaknesses of the present collection
is the absence of such surrounding details.

A full analysis of legends and the circum- 539
stances under which they are told, together 121
with a similar analysis of other Mbuti arts, such
as music and drama (all vitally important
means of expression to the Pygmy), would give

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Satani are very popular with the Mbuti as subject matter for their legends, and they let their imaginations run riot. A *satani* can do almost anything except kill a really clever Pygmy. They are used frequently as excuses for failure in the hunt or in honey gathering. When a Pygmy has found a good honey tree and has managed to consume most of the honey himself, his excuse to the camp for not bringing back more will be that he was waylaid by a *satani* who was so tricky that he turned into the Pygmy's grandmother, so he had to hand over all his honey, or something to that effect. (This excuse I heard myself.) Rather than examine more *satani* legends, we now briefly review the collection as here presented and draw such conclusions as we can.

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.128

Any conclusions are necessarily general and tentative and are of course based not only on a knowledge of the entire collection of legends, only a bare tenth of which is reproduced here, but of the Mbuti themselves. Also it must be emphasized that we are dealing with only one particular band of Pygmies, a net-hunting group in the Epulu District of the Ituri Forest.

My classification of the legends into three groups, which is quite arbitrary and satisfactory

[P 269- B]

[P. 269-C]

only for certain purposes, reveals at once a lack 538
of interest in the past which is in accord with 128.
the apparent shortness of memory among these Pygmies, particularly noticeable when an investigator tries to construct some sort of genealogy. For me it heightens my suspicion of such genealogies given by a people who at times are only too willing to please by inventing totally fictitious names. The legends prove singularly unrewarding to anyone seeking some evidence of a [181]
lineage system. If they represent anything, they represent a people who are wholly absorbed in the present. If we accept this evidence, we can look for its consequences in the magico-religious life of the Mbuti as well as in other spheres.

Also with reference to the Mbuti magico-religious system, there is possibly some significance in the tendency to emphasize the natural 538 183
order of events in the legends relating to social life. The ideal represented in the legend is the normal; consequently, these particular legends seem singularly unimaginative. They read like reports of actual occurrences. A certain amount of cleverness is normal, but an excess of it (when the term becomes best translated as "trickery") is abnormal and leads us, as we have seen, into

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CONCLUSIONS

[P.273-A]

121 We set out to make an ethnographic survey
128 of material on the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, to evaluate that material, and to see what problems it raised and which direction further field work should take. Rather than attempt to record the material from all sources, we used only the material that added to our knowledge of two specific groups of Mbuti—the archers of the southeastern Ituri Forest and the net hunters of the Epulu District. The rest of the material consists largely of isolated descriptive remarks which cannot always be accurately associated with any one particular region, let alone any particular group or band of hunters. Its inclusion would have added nothing to the sociological value of this work.

114 The material on the two groups to which we limited ourselves is by no means adequate either. Schebesta's information for the archers is to be regarded with caution because of his admittedly preconceived notions and his faulty methodology and field-work technique. The

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114 Putnam material is drawn not from a single coherent account, but from a number of isolated manuscript notes and from the written observations of Anne Putnam, put together by myself in the light of my own partial knowledge at the time of writing, of the particular Pygmies of whom the Putnams write.

• 128 The survey must be taken as a survey of source material and not as an ethnographic description of two types of Mbuti society. Though I have tried to draw from the material as much description as possible, obvious gaps are revealed, particularly in our knowledge of the social structure of the Mbuti. We have virtually no information, for instance, on the kinship, legal, or political systems of either group. Undoubtedly, the social structure is simple, but it is all the more regrettable that we do not have any detailed description of it. Our ethnographic description, in so far as it is such, gives an account of various institutions but with no hint as to their interrelationship. The account itself is never sufficiently detailed to permit speculation with any accuracy. In one sense it is virgin ground for the field worker, but not completely so. The survey reveals that
128 the Mbuti should be studied with regard to
101 their economic classification as archers and net
[P.273-B]

[P.273-C]

hunters rather than as Efe, Aka, or Sua—the 128 •
linguistic division made by Schebesta which 101
does not correspond to any sociological division. It may well emerge that there is a better classification, according to structural principles rather than purely economic differences, but at the moment this cannot be seen.

The survey also reveals a strange contrast 182
between an apparently simple social structure 53
and primitive material culture and a highly developed artistic sense. It seems worth while for the future field worker to pay particular attention to myth and mime, noting all the surrounding circumstances and not only the subject of representation. Similarly music is of obvious social importance and should be fully treated, with special attention to the social context. We might in this way gain some insight into the Mbuti system of values, which not only would be of significance itself but would immeasurably help our understanding of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

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But for the patience and endurance of Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard, I might never have enjoyed the privilege of being an anthropologist. Dr. John Peristiany was my first teacher, and his personal interest and understanding helped me to find my way during the first erratic years. But to Dr. Rodney Needham I owe more than I can say, for he undertook to supervise this study and has nursed it along over a period of several years and across many thousands of miles of land and water. Despite all too infrequent opportunities for meeting, he persisted in his attempts to make the work more sound and perceptive. I am most conscious of many shortcomings; some due to the ever-restricting factor of time, but others due to the sheer difficulty of dealing with a theoretical and geographical area for which there is so little published material of real use. Largely because of this factor, the study is isolated and does not attempt to draw upon the comparative material that is available. Such comparisons can most fruitfully be made after further intensive field studies of the Mbuti have been made. The inherent problems of the field work have created many serious gaps that remain to be filled on the next field study, and this, together with the necessity for presenting a lengthy ethnographic description, has made the task of analysis infinitely more difficult. Dr. Needham's perceptiveness as well as his own field ex- 128

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perience have been invaluable, but shortcomings still persist and are in no way his fault. 128

I would also like to thank the staff of the Anthropology Department of The American Museum of Natural History for their constant interest, agreement and disagreement, the Museum for allowing time for the work to be completed, and its library for their most friendly and helpful co-operation. 000

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Finally my thanks to those often neglected helpers who are invariably left to do the real donkeywork: Eleanor Skinner and Joseph Towles for typing and retyping, for checking and cross-checking, and for generally keeping track of where the various parts of the manuscript were; Nicholas Amorosi for his painstaking labors with the charts, plans and maps; and Merilee Oakes for checking on all references, quotations and translations. 128

However incomplete this work may be, it would have been far more incomplete without such help. It is hoped that at least it is another step forward, and a sound one, offering a springboard for the further research that is so urgently needed. 000

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hour before dawn, then be up at dawn in preparation for the hunt. 123
This much I could manage, but whereas during the day individual men could stretch out and snatch an hour or two of sleep whenever they felt like it, I never had the chance to feel the same freedom. Acts associated with the *molimo*, such as the ritual gathering of food from every hut, continued throughout the day and I did not wish to miss anything new that might happen.

However, with all its drawbacks (and perhaps the physical and mental strain are not the least) the technique seems in this instance to have been justified by the results.

RESULTS

Both the general and the particular objectives were answered to 121
some extent during the course of the field work. The general form and structure of the Mbuti hunting band became evident, as did certain differentiations between the structure of the archers and that of the net-hunters. Further, certain principles were found that accounted for the cohesion of the band within itself, while at the same time enabling the band to present to the villagers a structure so fluid that any formal relationship of the kind envisaged by the villagers was impossible. Perhaps it is as well to point out here that the kinship system (or lack of it) that characterizes the Mbuti band today is not necessarily representative of what it was yesterday; indeed it may well be that the current ambivalence is in itself a response to the attempts of the patrilineal village society to enforce control through the myth of hereditary unilineal relationships. The origin does not concern us here, only the system as it exists in the present context.

The structural differences between archers and net-hunters are not 121
perhaps as wide as might have been supposed, but before any final 184
conclusions can be drawn there is great need for a detailed study to be made among the archers. Certain differences in behavior are shown, however, to achieve the same structural ends—for instance the process of fission and fusion, where the net-hunters and the archers behave in diametrically opposed cyclic patterns but to the same structural end.

The detailed study of the Epulu net-hunters was backed by suf- 121
ficient field work among other net-hunting bands to enable us to gen- 128
eralize with reasonable safety. Where generalization is not possible, I cite the specific, and where it is possible but not with absolute cer-

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tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the villagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

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ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems. 121 177 18

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination. 121 177 *

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightforward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed. 128 •

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

197 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be
101 used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Ne-
144 gro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, neces-
128 sary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to rule if the ceremony is to be effective, whatever its purpose. By 121
"festival" I mean something rather different. It in no way necessarily 128 •
implies an annual or regularly recurrent event; its objectives may be precisely the same as those of a ceremony, but the means employed are different. There is no precisely regulated pattern of behavior. On the contrary, there is an important element of spontaneity that gives the occasion a vital immediacy, keeping it in the current context rather than connecting it with the past. I confess that the term "festival" has, for me, other less easily definable connotations that make it more suitable for use in the Mbuti situation, the most important of these being that it implies wider, freer participation, less pomposity and more enjoyment, an abandonment that is almost subversive with respect to the commonly accepted norms of behavior.

Most important, I have to revoke my earlier usage of the term "Es- 121
sumba" or "Lusumba" (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1], 1957[2]). The con- 128
text in earlier writing, I hope, makes it plain when I am referring to a 114
magico-religious festival of the Mbuti as distinct from a ceremony 192
practiced under the same name by the villagers. The misleading terminology employed before my last field trip was due in part to the difficulties of the linguistic situation and the fact that I was then using the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as my major means of communication. The importance and significance of the confusion will appear later in the text, but as I now wish to use a terminology that will clarify the situation as much as the actual linguistic confusion permits, I have to state that wherever in the past I have referred to the magico-religious festival of the net-hunting Mbuti, in which the men play a predominant part, and where I have used either "Essumba" or "Lusumba," it would have been more correct to have used the term *molimo*. Even this term, however, has its counterpart in the Bira *molimo* ceremony, but at least we can now distinguish more easily between both of these and the other local ceremonies known variously as *essumba*, *lusumba* and *ishumba*, which ceremonies are connected primarily with the Ngwana villagers and their earlier slave-trading and ivory-collecting practices.

One last small correction of past usage; whereas before I once or twice (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) used the spelling *Alima* for the festival associated with the puberty of Mbuti girls, I now use the form and spelling *elima*.

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	*Members* Male	Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] [361] [184]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analyst]

4: Putnam E-5 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 * Putnam has been living with the people of whom he spoke for nearly two decades. He dictated to me a somewhat longer story of pygmy life, which I have condensed to its present [128] compass. He went over the copy carefully and made corrections. He is not satisfied with it, and has gone back to learn more. Meanwhile he is willing to let you read what follows. This material has never before been published.

[P. 322-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.152-A]

102
114
131
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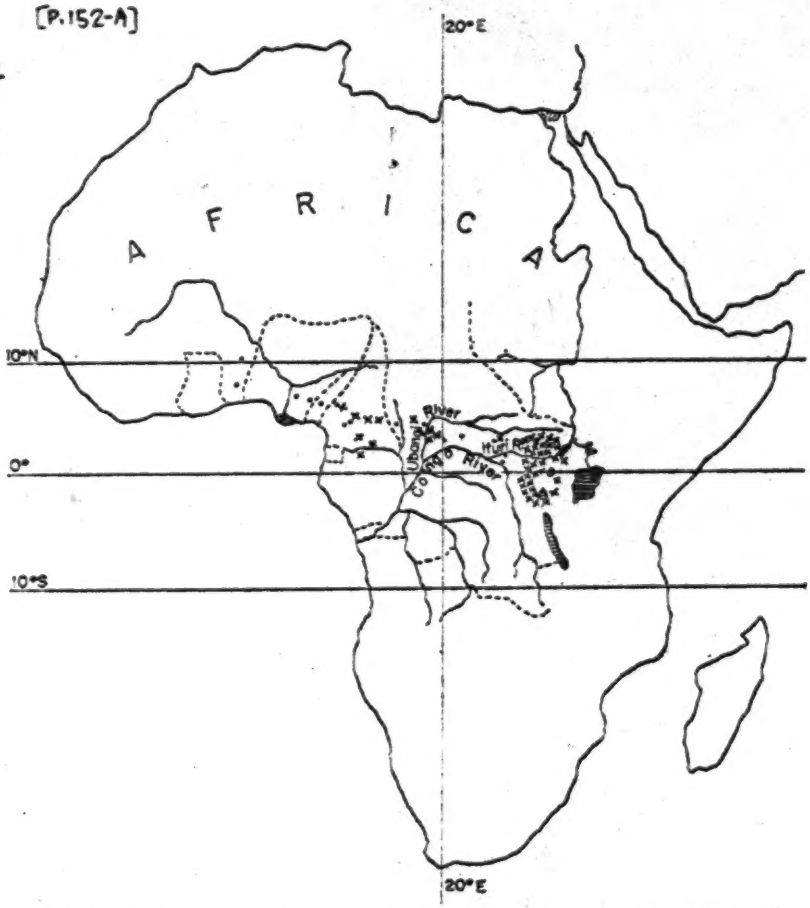
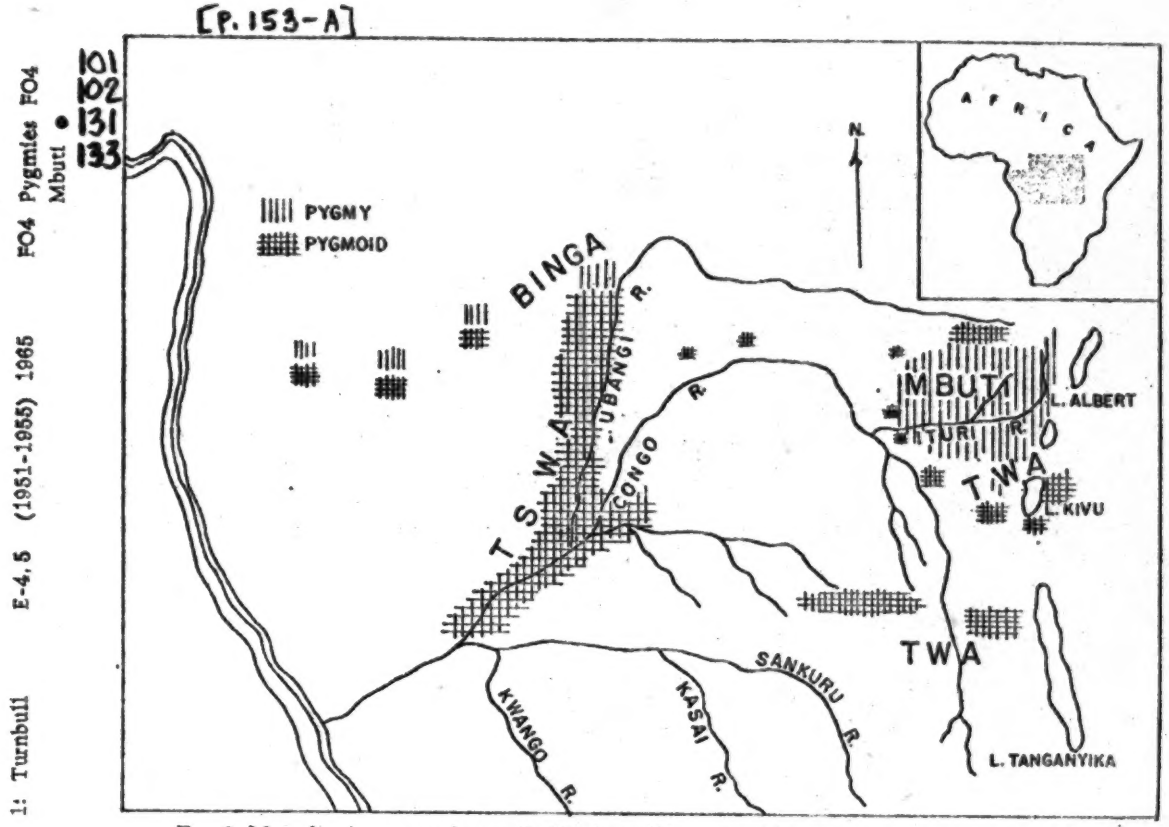


FIG. 1. Map showing extent of personal knowledge of Pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* or through personal contact made during the author's 1957–1958 field trip, not covering the central and southern Congo. Circles indicate accounts of Pygmy or Pygmoid hunting bands; crosses, actual contact.



1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti • 131

FIG. 2. Map showing approximate distribution of Pygmy and Pygmoid groups in central Africa.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
128 taining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
• 131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
621

[1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage
[192] of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158- B]

[P. 158-C]

the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a relatively large one and shows some interesting tendencies toward fission. It did not always move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part of the band would be several days' journey off in the forest, while the rest remained at the village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam frequently visited the hunting band at its various camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam was more or less entirely confined by his illness to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as their camp language. They also use a great many KiLese words, however, and the local Bira affirm that they frequently cannot understand what they call "KiMbuti," though they recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tan-
[141] ganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly
[144] "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence
[184] it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb
131 at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

[P.159-C]

forest to the east. Their southern limit is 131.
bounded by a line from the Ruwenzori, through Beni to Bafwasende. The western boundary runs north from Bafwasende to Panga and to the confluence of the Bomokandi and Uele. (See Fig. 3.) Apart from the Lindi and Ituri rivers, Schebesta says that Pygmies also inhabit the areas near the Epulu, Ngayu, Nepoko, and Poko rivers. Putnam makes no attempt to delimit Mbuti territory, but his notes show that he traveled throughout the area described by Schebesta, with the possible exception of the extreme south, and found Mbuti everywhere, away from the major rivers as well as along their banks.

Schebesta makes the threefold division al- 197
ready mentioned, of Twa, Tswa, and Mbuti, 101
and further subdivides the Ituri Mbuti into [619]
three major groups: the Aka to the north; Sua to the south; and Efe to the east (Fig. 3). These are linguistic groups, speaking dialects of Mangbetu, Bira, and Lese, respectively.

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131 •
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [p. 159-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

121 In paying special attention to this relationship it was felt that the otherwise intangible value-system of the Mbuti would be more clearly revealed, leading to an understanding of the ritual relationship that appeared to exist between the Mbuti and the forest, as implied in the accounts of other observers and in my own prior experience, but nowhere made explicit.

EXECUTION

114 101 Field work was undertaken between the summer of 1957 and the 131 late winter of 1958, entering the then Belgian Congo by driving through from the West Coast, collecting as many local accounts of pygmy or pygmoid hunters and gatherers along the way as possible, for future reference. Such accounts were gathered in Dahomey, Nigeria (particularly towards the east), the Cameroons, Gabon, and throughout the Congo, but few hunting bands were encountered until well towards the Ubangi River (see Map 1). It was decided not to spend time trying to make contact, except on the far side of the Ubangi, where contact was relatively easy, and where there were also some Binga pygmies from the west bank of the river.

114 From the Ubangi over to the Ituri it was quite obvious that, as 131 elsewhere, true hunting bands only existed where there was substan- [144] tial primary forest, and that elsewhere not only was the hunting and gathering economy defunct, but there had been so much intermarriage that one could not truly speak of a pygmy physical type any more than one could speak of a pygmy culture.

Leaving aside the forested area south of the Congo River, which I did not cover but for which pygmoid groups are reported, I found relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) as well as in the forested regions around the Ubangi River. But by far the heaviest concentration is [101] in the Ituri Forest, where all the pygmies recognize their unity in the name Mbuti, and where both the physical and the cultural integrity of the hunters and gatherers seems to have been best preserved.

121 There was no question that this was the right area for the major bulk of the field work, but there was some question as to which band to select for the intensive study. I eventually decided on the Epulu

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one. 121

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism: 121 123

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps. [609]

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized. 114 121

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations. 101 114 131

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans. 114 131 122

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

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There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
621 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)^A was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

^A [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[3] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assumption that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to express and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[3]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[3] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14), may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 621 628 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 224 166 131 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 131 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 224 131 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING BANDS

It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the encroaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the encroaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seeking a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge occur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-operation as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by • 131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, [192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep- 708 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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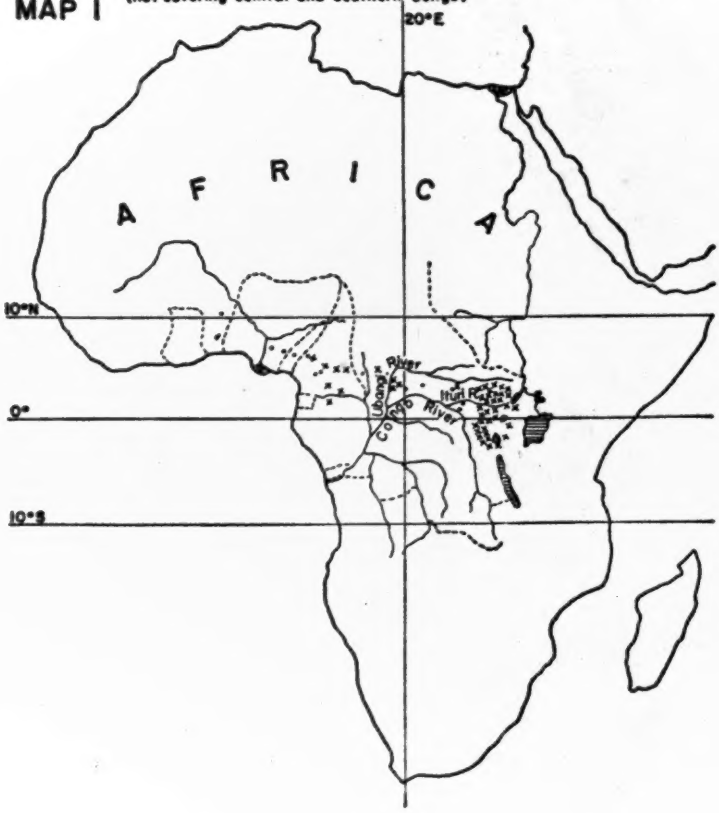
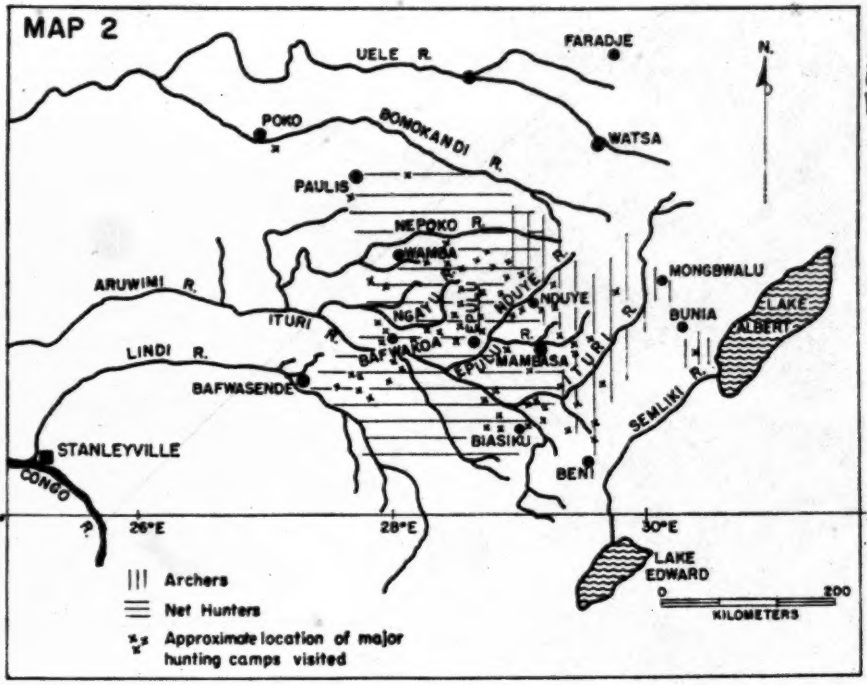
MAP I

Extent of personal knowledge of pygmy groups according to accounts heard in situ and personal contact made during 1957/8 field trip (not covering central and southern Congo)



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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Approximate location of hunting bands visited in the Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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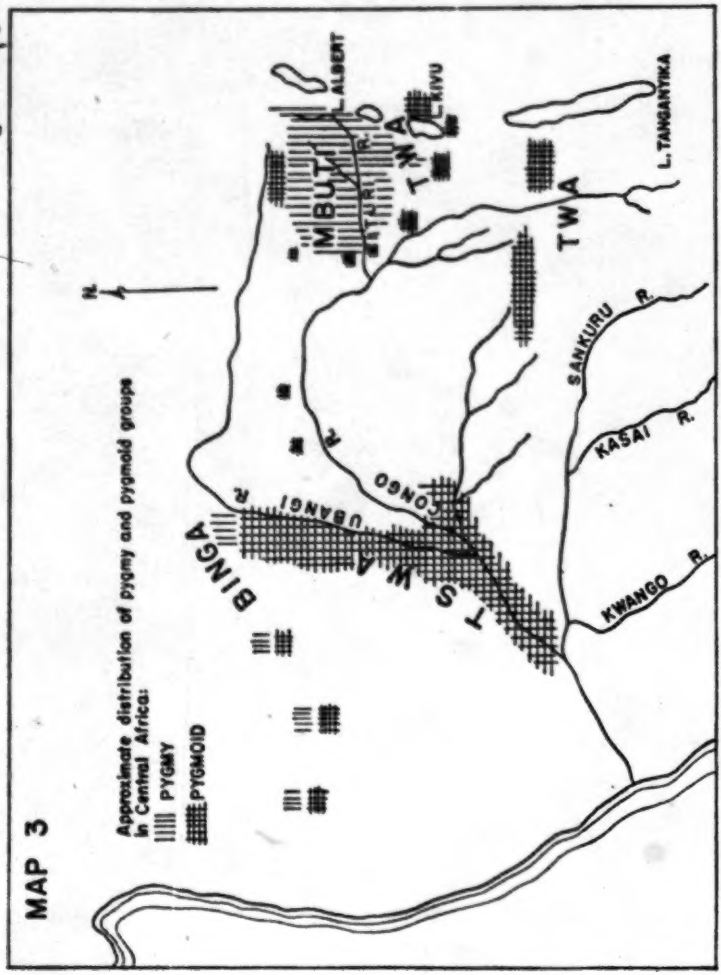
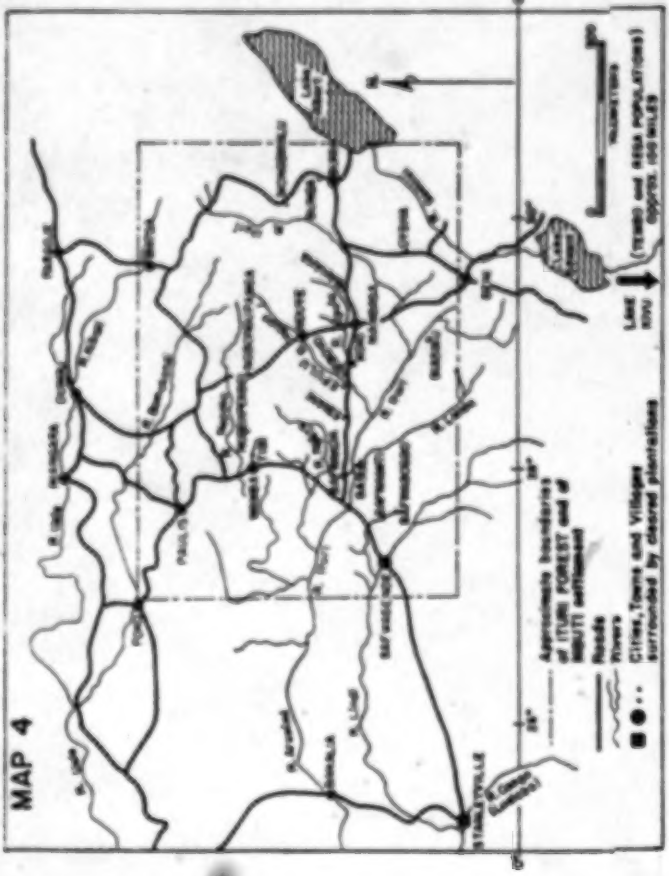
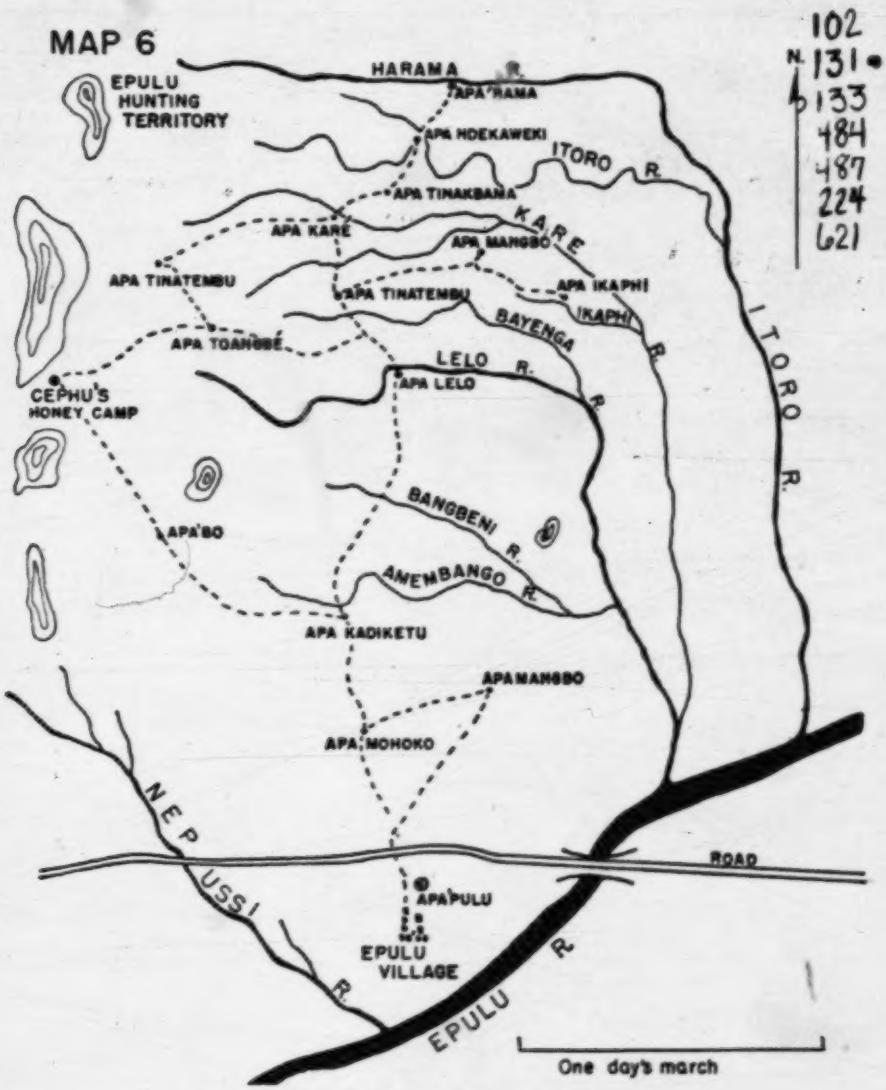


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti


MAP 4
Approximate boundaries of ITURI FOREST and of MBUTI settlement
Roads
Rivers
Cities, Towns and Villages surrounded by cleared plantations
Lake Albert
Lake Edward
Lake Kivu
(TOWNS and AREA POPULATIONS) approx. 100 miles
STANLEYVILLE
BAFWASENDE
BANDAKA
BASOKO
BUNIA
PAULIS
IRUMU
MAMBASA
MOMBUTU
WATSA
BUTA
BANDUNDU
BANDUNDU
BANDUNDU

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1

The World of the Forest

IN THE NORTHEAST CORNER of the Belgian Congo, almost exactly in the middle of the map of Africa, . . . lies the Ituri Forest, a vast expanse of dense, damp and inhospitable-looking darkness. Here is the heart of Stanley's Dark Continent, the country he loved and hated, the scene of his ill-fated expedition to relieve Emin Pasha, an expedition costing hundreds of lives and imposing almost unbearable hardships on the survivors, who trekked across the great forest not once, but three times, losing more lives each time through fighting, sickness and desertion.

Anyone who has stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain

000 the sands, beating right up to the first line of tall, waving palm trees. Then you climb gently inland to the rolling hills of Nigeria, lightly wooded in places, but for the most part open and fertile. When you cross into the Cameroons there is an abrupt change. You pass steeply up into a massive range of mountains, through a narrow but dense belt of forest, and climb still higher until you are above tree line.

The road is appalling, covered with loose stones and boulders, with a gradient as much as one in four in places, deeply scoured with gulleys made by the heavy rains pouring off the mountainside. The road twists and turns until you lose all sense of direction, but at the top there is an open, flat stretch of grassland, and at the far side of that, in the French Cameroons, you find yourself faced with a descent as uncomfortable as the climb on the British side. But here, instead of looking down on rich farmland, open and sunny, you look out over a vast sea of dense, shimmering tree tops, so dark they are almost black. On all sides this ocean of forest stretches for as far as you can see, quiet and peaceful, asking only to be left undisturbed, or at least approached in peace. But the darkness also carries a threat, a warning to outsiders that they would do well to stay away. The same darkness welcomes those who understand, and there is no feeling quite the same as the refreshing coolness of the first shadows cast by the leafy giants at the forest edge, after years away from its shade and shelter.

131 133 From there on, the forest stretches east and south, silent and aloof, for thousands of miles. To the west the Atlantic is only a short distance away; to the east the forest reaches all the way to the Mountains of the Moon. It is still with you when you cross the Ubangi Chari River, possessively covering the land right down to the water's edge. On the far side of that great river there is still another thousand miles before you reach the river Aruwimi, the wide and proud tributary of the even mightier Congo. After a few hundred miles the Aruwimi becomes less wide but more tempestuous and turbulent,

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion still stood.

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481 484 and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their 186 slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484 evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, 224 [015] he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131 Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484 what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [014] lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222 and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114] quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
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others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132 •
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
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tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
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undergrowth.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788
involves them in any significant change of 182
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224] hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184] steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal relationship with the forest, but a very different one. The forest surrounds them on all sides, but they do not live in it or by it, only despite it. Their initial act is one of destruction, the cutting down of the forest to make way for village and plantation which in turn are destroyed in the final act. The hostility is mutual, as the villagers see it. They have to fight not only the forest itself, but also the creatures that live in it. Elephants, leopards, baboons and Mbuti, all are a menace to life and livelihood. A whole plantation can be destroyed in a few hours by even a modest sprinkling of elephants. The excessive and sometimes erratic rainfall can cause hunger for a whole season. Baboons and Mbuti come in the night and steal the ripening fruit. Leopards prey on the few scrawny goats and chickens the villagers manage to raise.

As for the Mbuti, so for the villagers is the forest an entity to be reckoned with, upon which life and death depend; it is also an entity that is natural and supernatural. But instead of acceding to the natural, the villagers with their superior technology combat it; and instead of respecting the supernatural in the sense that the Mbuti respect it, the villagers oppose it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate. They people the forest with evil spirits, and they fill their lives with magic, witchcraft and a belief in sorcery.

The forest achieves the establishment of two virtually irreconcilable systems of values. It further determines, for both Mbuti and villagers, a certain degree of nomadism, and it tends to fragment large populations into small, relatively isolated bands or villages. For the Mbuti the forest merely indicates natural boundaries, such as valleys, ridges, rivers, caves and so forth, within which a band can conveniently roam at will throughout the years, economically self-sufficient. Within that nomadic framework there is an enormous sense of permanence and of territory. But for the villagers the forest announces, at the end of every three years or so, that the village must pack up and move, it does not much matter where. The move will inevitably bring the village into renewed conflict with the forest, and may well bring it into conflict with a neighboring village which has also been forced to move. In spite of the vast size of the forest and its small population, the villagers are unwilling to go off entirely on their own. At the present time they move up and down the long road that connects Stanleyville with Irumu, or Wamba with Nia-Nia and Mambasa. Formerly it seems that villages were similarly stretched out along recognized trails, and seldom moved away from them. On any given trail, or road, the number of suitable sites for a semi-permanent village is limited, but fric-

132 Anyone who has
137 stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain forest must know how Stanley and his followers felt, coming as they all did from an open country of rolling plains, of sunlight and warmth. Many people who have visited the Ituri since, and many who have lived there, feel just the same, overpowered by the heaviness of everything—the damp air, the gigantic water-laden trees that are constantly dripping, never quite drying out between the violent storms that come with monotonous regularity, the very earth itself heavy and cloying after the slightest shower. And, above all, such people feel overpowered by the seeming silence and the age-old remoteness and loneliness of it all.

132 But these are the feelings of outsiders, of those who do not belong
137 to the forest. If you *are* of the forest it is a very different place. What
182 seems to other people to be eternal and depressing gloom becomes a cool, restful, shady world with light filtering lazily through the tree tops that meet high overhead and shut out the direct sunlight—the sunlight that dries up the non-forest world of the outsiders and makes it hot and dusty and dirty.

136 Even the silence is a myth. If you have ears for them, the forest
137 is full of sounds—exciting, mysterious, mournful, joyful. The shrill
182 trumpeting of an elephant, the sickening cough of a leopard (or the
825 hundred and one sounds that can be mistaken for it), always makes your heart beat a little unevenly, telling you that you are just the slightest bit scared, or even more. At night, in the honey season, you hear a weird, long-drawn-out, soulful cry high up in the trees. It seems to go on and on, and you wonder what kind of creature can cry for so long without taking breath. The people of the forest say it is the chameleon, telling them that there is honey nearby. Scientists will tell you that chameleons are unable to make any such sound. But the forest people of faraway Ceylon also know the song of the chameleon. Then in the early morning comes the pathetic cry of the pigeon, a plaintive cooing that slides from one note down to the next until it dies away in a soft, sad, little moan.

B: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of
114 what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

137 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountain-
132 ous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective.
137 Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist.
[136] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all
[361] but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342 476
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their [522]
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
584 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
[462] had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
[578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

The Forest Environment.

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The Ituri forest is rolling country, so densely covered with trees that the relief of the landscape is invisible except from the air. It is a primary rain forest; that is, in most of the region it rains every day or every other day, averaging about one half of the days, from four to six in the afternoon—some 180 days a year. The annual rainfall is correspondingly great, about one and a half meters. The temperature is about 70° F. at night, and varies during the day from 75° to 80° F., depending upon whether it is sunny or cloudy. During January and February, the "dry" season, there are many overcast days; during the rest of the year it is either actually raining or else sunny, with quick changes. When the rain comes, it comes suddenly. It may be bright during the earlier part of the day, and then in the afternoon cloud up all at once in thunderheads. For a few minutes high winds rage through the trees, which tremble like grass in a breeze. Rotten branches and even huge trees crack and fall, crash-

[P. 322-B]

132 ing to the ground. The lightning flashes from the somber sky, and thunder rolls and re-echoes, followed by a pelting downpour. Then in an hour or two it will suddenly stop, sometimes for a brief period of sunshine before the dark of night.

137 The forest varies greatly in regard to underbrush. In some spots there is no undergrowth at all, and nothing but leaf mold between the boles of the trees; in others there is a wild tangle of bushes, reeds, and lianas. The densest thickets are found in small patches of secondary growth, where the Negroes have made clearings and then abandoned them. Most of the forest, however, is virgin growth, and unimpeded except for fallen tree trunks.

136 137 The forest provides game enough for the pygmies, and some to spare for their hosts. Many kinds of wild plants, huge trees, small shrubs, small plants, growing low on the forest floor, bear either edible fruits or medicinal leaves or bark. Many edible fungi are abundant.

133 The forest is also well watered; the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.152-A]

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FIG. 1. Map showing extent of personal knowledge of Pygmy groups according to accounts heard *in situ* or through personal contact made during the author's 1957–1958 field trip, not covering the central and southern Congo. Circles indicate accounts of Pygmy or Pygmoid hunting bands; crosses, actual contact.

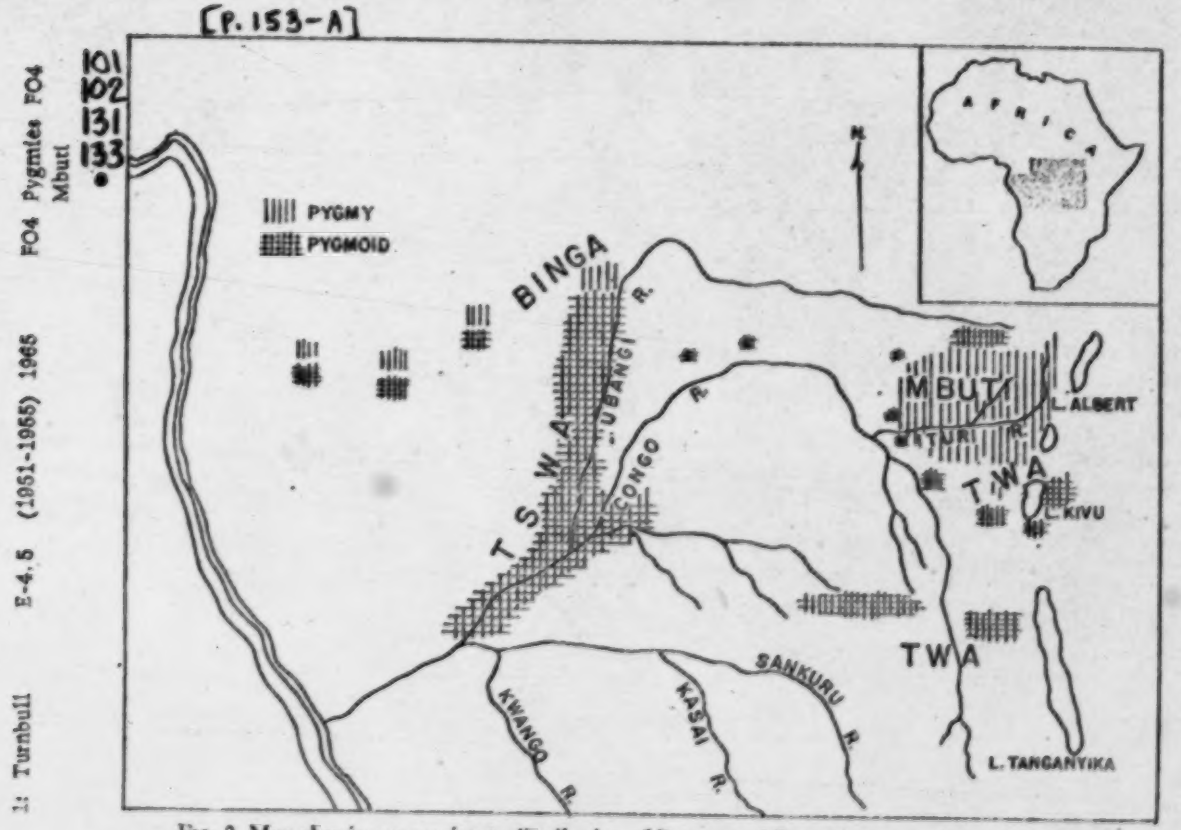

FIG. 2. Map showing approximate distribution of Pygmy and Pygmoid groups in central Africa.

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133 rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182 dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166] streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823] aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484] dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large expanses of water and lacks the knowledge of how to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491] others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177] (Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent attempts, by both villagers and European movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts that the Pygmy probably never has to go more than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132 throughout the year vary only between a low of 70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F. during the day. The forest varies with respect 137 to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold between the trees. Where villagers have made a clearing, however, there is thickly tangled undergrowth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. ii]

• 133
137

[Frontispiece]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

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For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
62 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
• 133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

[A] [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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114
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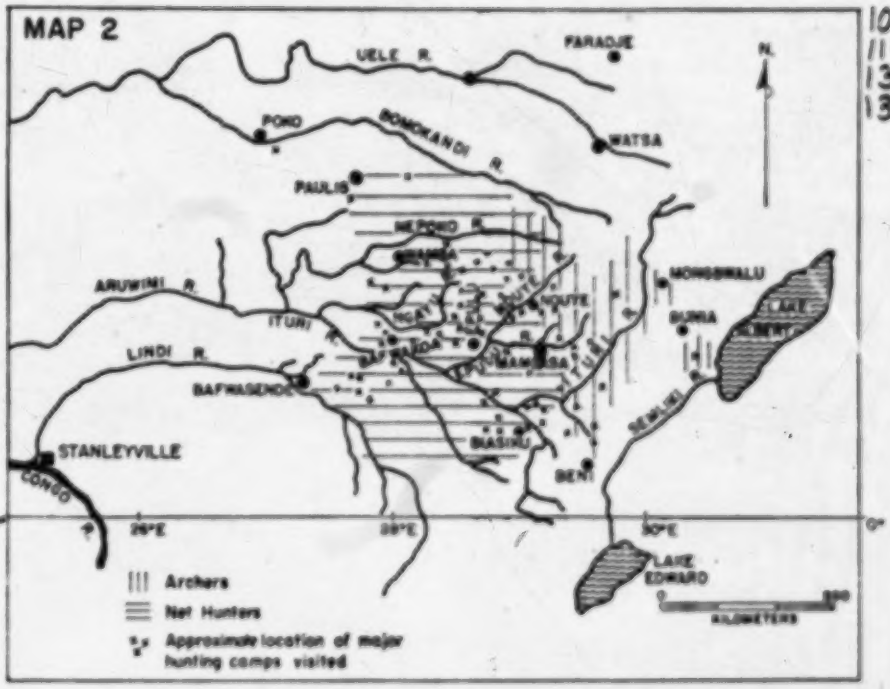
• 133

MAP I

Extent of personal knowledge of pygmy groups according to accounts heard in situ and personal contact made during 1957/8 field trip (not covering central and southern Congo)

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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Approximate location of hunting bands visited in the Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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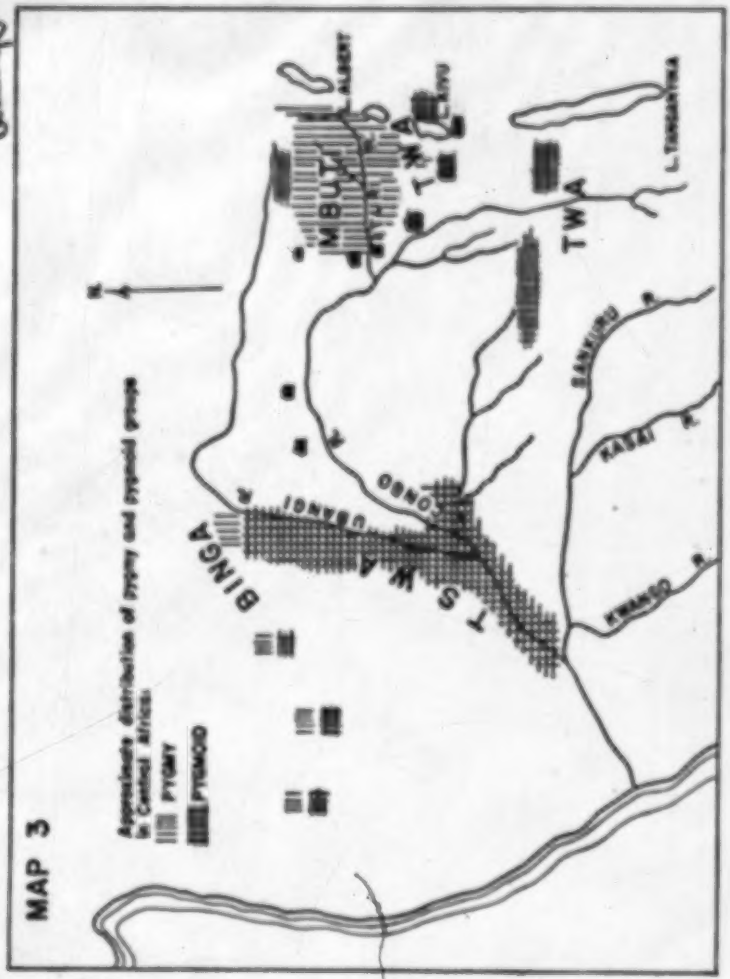

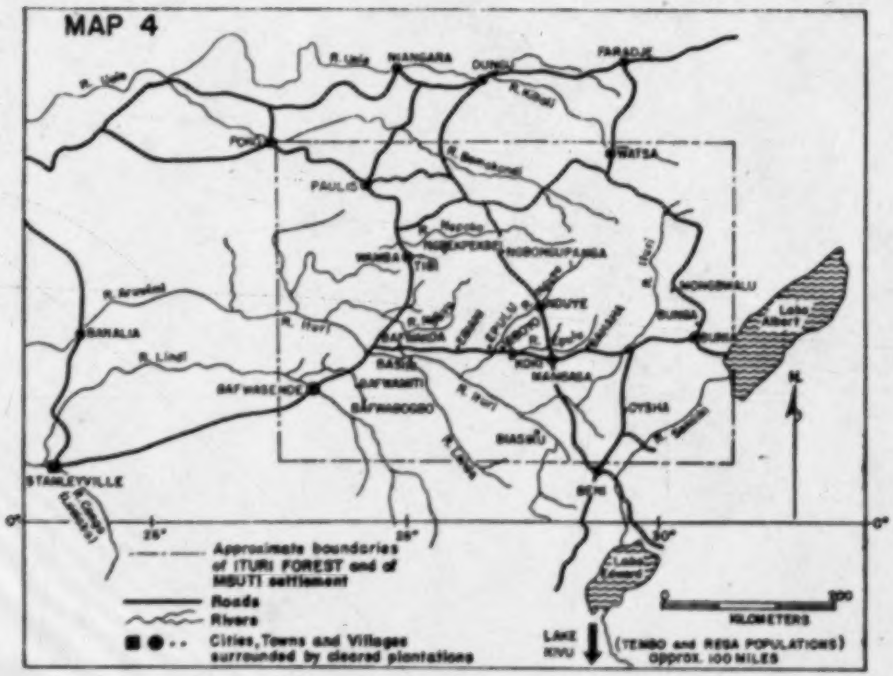

Boundaries of Ituri Forest and of Mbuti settlement.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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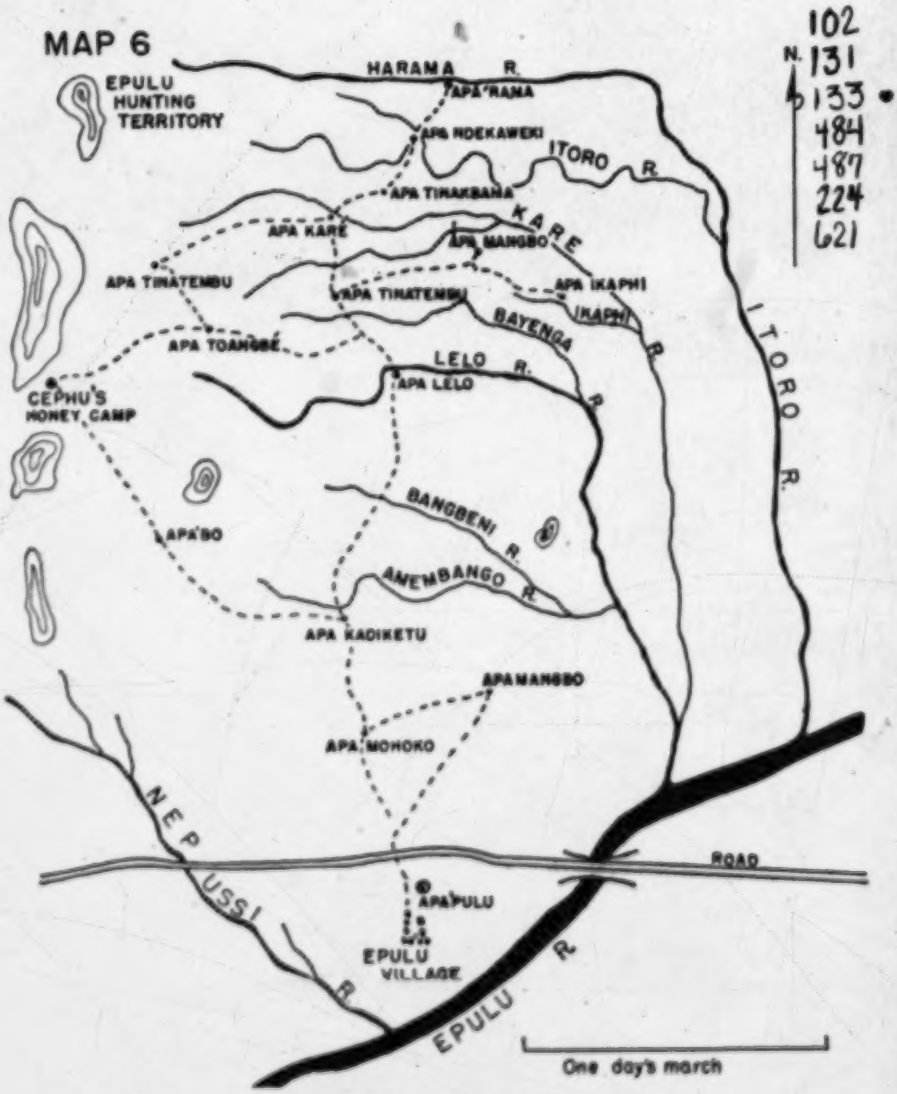

The Epulu hunting territory.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

*Now Republic of the Congo
[P. 10-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Area of Map 2
[P. 10-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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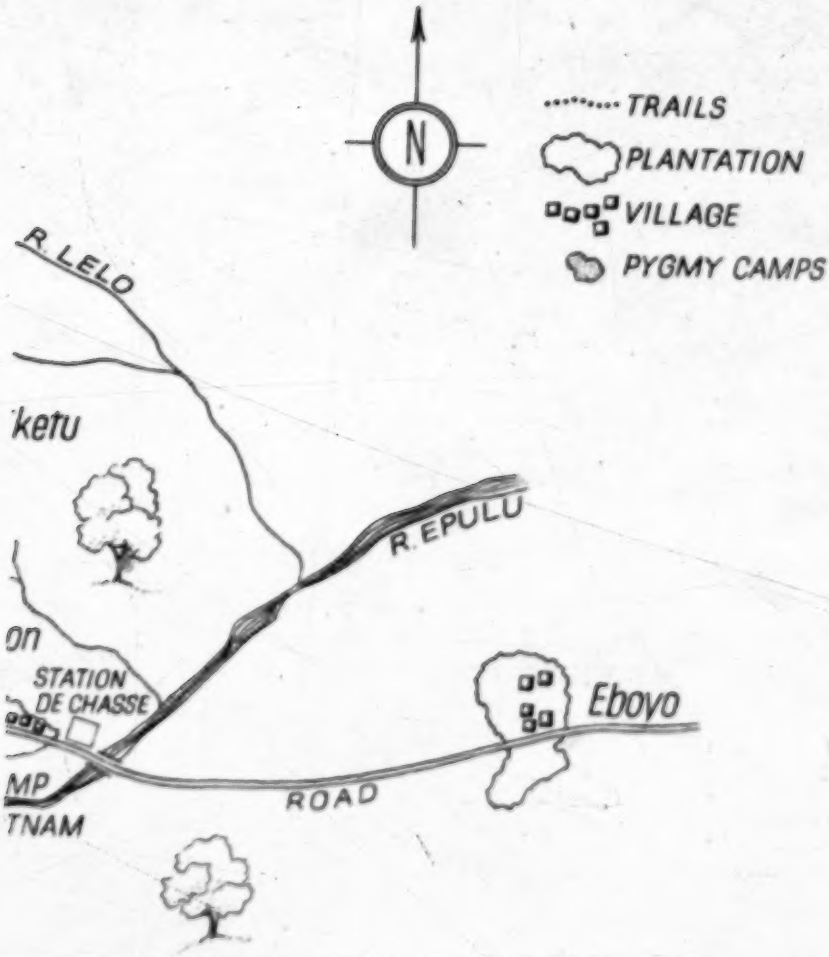
MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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Area of Map 3

[P. 10-E]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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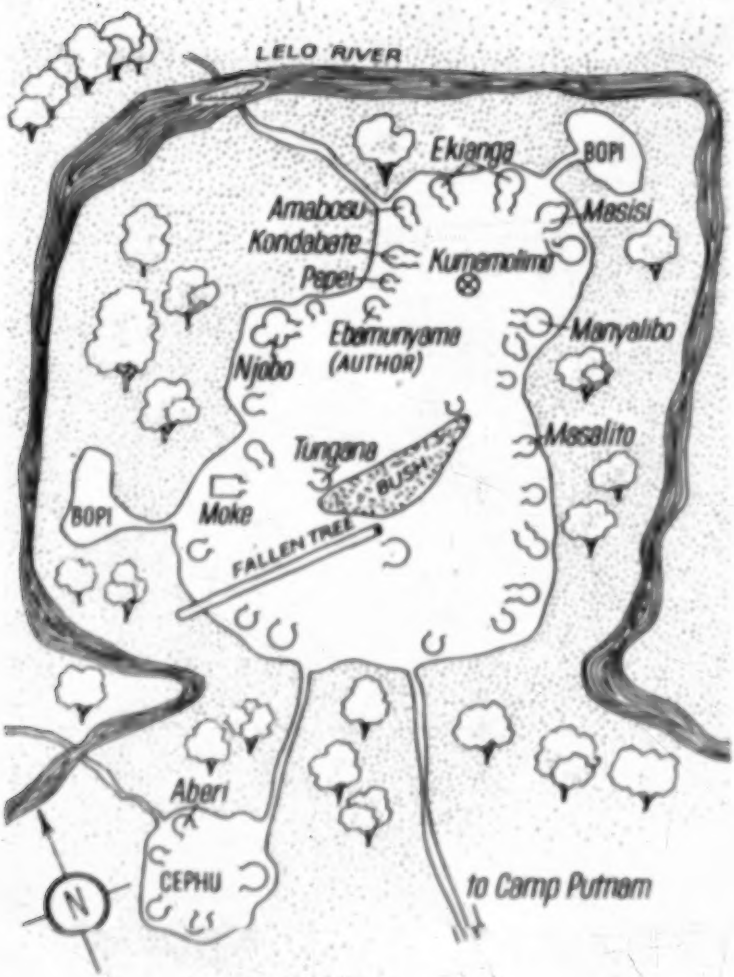

MAP 3: Apa Lelo
[P. 10-F]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 the sands, beating right up to the first line of tall, waving palm trees. Then you climb gently inland to the rolling hills of Nigeria, lightly wooded in places, but for the most part open and fertile. When you cross into the Cameroons there is an abrupt change. You pass steeply up into a massive range of mountains, through a narrow but dense belt of forest, and climb still higher until you are above tree line.

The road is appalling, covered with loose stones and boulders, with a gradient as much as one in four in places, deeply scoured with gulleys made by the heavy rains pouring off the mountainside. The road twists and turns until you lose all sense of direction, but at the top there is an open, flat stretch of grassland, and at the far side of that, in the French Cameroons, you find yourself faced with a descent as uncomfortable as the climb on the British side. But here, instead of looking down on rich farmland, open and sunny, you look out over a vast sea of dense, shimmering tree tops, so dark they are almost black. On all sides this ocean of forest stretches for as far as you can see, quiet and peaceful, asking only to be left undisturbed, or at least approached in peace. But the darkness also carries a threat, a warning to outsiders that they would do well to stay away. The same darkness welcomes those who understand, and there is no feeling quite the same as the refreshing coolness of the first shadows cast by the leafy giants at the forest edge, after years away from its shade and shelter.

131 From there on, the forest stretches east and south, silent and aloof,
• 133 for thousands of miles. To the west the Atlantic is only a short distance away; to the east the forest reaches all the way to the Mountains of the Moon. It is still with you when you cross the Ubangi Chari River, possessively covering the land right down to the water's edge. On the far side of that great river there is still another thousand miles before you reach the river Aruwimi, the wide and proud tributary of the even mightier Congo. After a few hundred miles the Aruwimi becomes less wide but more tempestuous and turbulent,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion still stood.

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before.

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4489, Music of the Ituri Forest

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, 372 484
keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by 484
recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now 133
and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main [515]
stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into [821]
the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally 361
arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. 484
It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most 361
114

361 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of
114 what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

137 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountain-
132 ous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective.
137 Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist.
[136] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all
[361] but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

4

The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched the ground but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

481 and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped
123 through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash.
[133] The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets
[136] and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

765 I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but
182 I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had
191 known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting,
[825] they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything
[798] except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a
765 whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly
182 on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. *"Apa nde Kaweki,"* he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of the Ituri River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukamba, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

"How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

31 Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

The Forest Environment.

133 137 The Ituri forest is rolling country, so densely covered with trees that the relief of the landscape is invisible except from the air. It is a primary rain forest; that is, in most of the region it rains every day or every other day, averaging about one half of the days, from four to six in the afternoon—some 180 days a year. The annual rainfall is correspondingly great, about one and a half meters. The temperature is about 70° F. at night, and varies during the day from 75° to 80° F., depending upon whether it is sunny or cloudy. During January and February, the "dry" season, there are many overcast days; during the rest of the year it is either actually raining or else sunny, with quick changes. When the rain comes, it comes suddenly. It may be bright during the earlier part of the day, and then in the afternoon cloud up all at once in thunderheads. For a few minutes high winds rage through the trees, which tremble like grass in a breeze. Rotten branches and even huge trees crack and fall, crash-

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[P. 322-B]

132 ing to the ground. The lightning flashes from the somber sky, and thunder rolls and re-echoes, followed by a pelting downpour. Then in an hour or two it will suddenly stop, sometimes for a brief period of sunshine before the dark of night.

137 The forest varies greatly in regard to underbrush. In some spots there is no undergrowth at all, and nothing but leaf mold between the boles of the trees; in others there is a wild tangle of bushes, reeds, and lianas. The densest thickets are found in small patches of secondary growth, where the Negroes have made clearings and then abandoned them. Most of the forest, however, is virgin growth, and unimpeded except for fallen tree trunks.

136 137 The forest provides game enough for the pygmies, and some to spare for their hosts. Many kinds of wild plants, huge trees, small shrubs, small plants, growing low on the forest floor, bear either edible fruits or medicinal leaves or bark. Many edible fungi are abundant.

133 The forest is also well watered; the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

• 133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

[312]

Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P 323-A]

ENVIRONMENT

[P.164-A]

•136 137 182 Both Schebesta and Putnam agree on the profound importance of the environment, which is the same throughout the Ituri, in determining to a great extent the life and thought of these forest people. In the primary rain forest there is little seasonal change. Different species of fruits, edible fungus, nuts, roots, and vegetables may flourish more abundantly at one time than another, but there is ample food of this kind at all times. The game is not migratory, except within very small areas, and 182 is always plentiful. The combination of warmth and humidity that produces this lush environment, with its plentiful supply of food for the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, also adds directly to their material comfort. In the absence of climatic extremes the Pygmy is little troubled by problems of clothing or shelter. All his basic needs are attended to for him by his environment, a fact that, writes Schebesta (1952, 42) does not favor "cultural evolution," but the hallmark of hunting and gathering communities is in any case one of "*la primitivité conservatrice*."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

The environment that so favors a hunting and gathering economy also allows the adapted form of cultivation practiced by the villagers who now live in the forest. These village tribes, generally highly segmented and living in relatively isolated communities, cut large clearings and make plantations, the main products of which are plantains, manioc, peanuts, corn, rice, beans, and various kinds of squash. Plantains seem to be the staple food throughout. But the cutting of large clearings opens these villages to the intense heat of direct sunlight, from which the Mbuti never suffer in the uncut forest.

Z 241 361 262 182 P 182

The Ituri is full of all kinds of game, the most important of which for the Mbuti are elephant, various kinds of antelope, forest pig, and monkey. The okapi is also hunted occasionally, though the Pygmies know that to do so is prohibited by game laws. It is in any case a difficult animal to catch and is pursued only if an easy opportunity offers. Danger comes in the form of forest buffalo, leopard, and a number of poisonous snakes such as the Gaboon viper and the horned viper.

P 136 • P [224]

There is a profusion of wild flowers and or-

000

[P. 164-D]

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *begbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magbe*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 132
and leopards being the major sources of danger.
It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed
by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous
snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and
diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd
gummed to one end) is administered, with the
use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro*
bark for the former complaint, and *tebo* liana
for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755]
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch
doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their
efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's
account for the archers, cited examples of wail-
ing. The following instances taken from the
notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
• 136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as bigh,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyn]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

132 Anyone who has
137 stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain forest must know how Stanley and his followers felt, coming as they all did from an open country of rolling plains, of sunlight and warmth. Many people who have visited the Ituri since, and many who have lived there, feel just the same, overpowered by the heaviness of everything—the damp air, the gigantic water-laden trees that are constantly dripping, never quite drying out between the violent storms that come with monotonous regularity, the very earth itself heavy and cloying after the slightest shower. And, above all, such people feel overpowered by the seeming silence and the age-old remoteness and loneliness of it all.

132 But these are the feelings of outsiders, of those who do not belong
137 to the forest. If you *are* of the forest it is a very different place. What
182 seems to other people to be eternal and depressing gloom becomes a cool, restful, shady world with light filtering lazily through the tree tops that meet high overhead and shut out the direct sunlight—the sunlight that dries up the non-forest world of the outsiders and makes it hot and dusty and dirty.

• 136 Even the silence is a myth. If you have ears for them, the forest
137 is full of sounds—exciting, mysterious, mournful, joyful. The shrill
182 trumpeting of an elephant, the sickening cough of a leopard (or the
825 hundred and one sounds that can be mistaken for it), always makes your heart beat a little unevenly, telling you that you are just the slightest bit scared, or even more. At night, in the honey season, you hear a weird, long-drawn-out, soulful cry high up in the trees. It seems to go on and on, and you wonder what kind of creature can cry for so long without taking breath. The people of the forest say it is the chameleon, telling them that there is honey nearby. Scientists will tell you that chameleons are unable to make any such sound. But the forest people of faraway Ceylon also know the song of the chameleon. Then in the early morning comes the pathetic cry of the pigeon, a plaintive cooing that slides from one note down to the next until it dies away in a soft, sad, little moan.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

There are a multitude of sounds, but most of them are as joyful as the brightly colored birds that chase one another through the trees, singing as they go, or the chatter of the handsome black-and-white Colobus monkeys as they leap from branch to branch, watching with curiosity everything that goes on down below. And the most joyful sound of all, to me, is the sound of the voices of the forest people as they sing a lusty chorus of praise to this wonderful world of theirs —a world that gives them everything they want. This cascade of sound echoes among the giant trees until it seems to come at you from all sides in sheer beauty and truth and goodness, full of the joy of living. But if you are an outsider from the non-forest world, I suppose this glorious song would just be another noise to grate on your nerves.

P 136 182 825 P 182 533

The world of the forest is a closed, possessive world, hostile to all those who do not understand it. At first sight you might think it hostile to all human beings, because in every village you find the same suspicion and fear of the forest, that blank, impenetrable wall. The villagers are friendly and hospitable to strangers, offering them the best of whatever food and drink they have, and always clearing out a house where the traveler can rest in comfort and safety. But these villages are set among plantations in great clearings cut from the heart of the forest around them. It is from the plantations that the food comes, not from the forest, and for the villagers life is a constant battle to prevent their plantations from being overgrown.

C 182 C [609] [574] C 182 241 361

They speak of the world beyond the plantations as being a fearful place, full of malevolent spirits and not fit to be lived in except by animals and BaMbuti, which is what the village people call the Pygmies. The villagers, some Bantu and some Sudanic, keep to their plantations and seldom go into the forest unless it is absolutely necessary. For them it is a place of evil. They are outsiders.

C 716 182 825 829

But the BaMbuti are the real people of the forest. Whereas the other tribes are relatively recent arrivals, the Pygmies have been in

P 182

222 Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles
[482] and hitched them[3] to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we
484 came up behind the women who had started early. They had also
[222] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the
[482] small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been
[136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we
484 passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

3 [i.e., bundles of mushrooms. - Analyst]

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of
114 what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

139 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountain-
132 ous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective.
137 Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist.
• [136] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all
[361] but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[546] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
[825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

115 But, most important, he told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not
[533] looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[i.e. Moke - analyst]

224 The end of the net stopped a few feet short of the boulders, and Maipe deftly joined it to his net; then, slipping each coil off his shoulder in turn, he hung his own net, fastening it to low branches and saplings. It stretched for about three hundred feet, so that one end was completely out of sight from the other. It stood about four feet high, and Maipe walked the length of it, silently adjusting it so that it touched the ground all the way along and was securely fastened above. If he found the net drooping where there was no support, he cut a sapling, stuck it in the ground and hung the net on it, bending the top sharply back, twisting it around and through the mesh so that the net could not slip. When this was done he took up his spear and casually sharpened it with a stone picked off the ground.

It was about another five minutes before he suddenly stood up and beckoned me to do the same. He stood absolutely motionless, his head slightly on one side, listening; his spear was raised just a few inches from the ground. I listened too, but could hear nothing. The forest had become silent; even the crickets had stopped their almost incessant chirping. Maipe raised his spear higher, and then at some signal that I did not even notice there was a burst of shouting, yelling, hooting and clapping, as the women and children started the beat. They must have been about half a mile away, and as they came closer the noise was deafening. We saw one antelope, a large [136] red sondu, ears back, leaping toward the boulders as though it were heading straight for our net, but at the last moment it saw us and veered away to the left. Maipe could probably have killed it with his spear, but he said, "That is not for us. It will probably fall into Ekianga's net." Just then there was a lot of yelling from Moke's nephew. Maipe vaulted over the net and ran swiftly, leaping and bounding like the sondu to avoid obstacles. I followed as best I could, but was passed by several youngsters from farther down the [136] line before I reached the others. The sondu had gone into Ekianga's

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula*, had tried to fight its way through Moke's net. 224 [136]

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekianga with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed [114] from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing [325] at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back.

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds 825 that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death [223] comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked [231] around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually 224
did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, 123
"Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked [136] •
up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, [237]
"but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is [291]
too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to him- 224
self and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. 224
They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they 825
came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard 536
lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers. The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

9

The World of the Village

PC 114 122 PC [136]

I FOUND THE FIRST WEEK back in the village difficult and depressing. During the day the air was hot and dry, and filled with fine particles of dust. At night, when it was cooler, gnats and mosquitoes made me appreciate all the more their absence in the forest. My hut, ten times the size of my home in the hunting camp, seemed close and stuffy, and as I lay in bed I could hear the huge spiders, some several inches across, crawling about in the leaves of the roof. Occasionally one dropped onto the bed with a dull thud and lay there for a while before stalking away. At first I carried out an active campaign to get rid of them, but it was useless—and a mosquito net would have been unbearably hot.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

000 the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

C 563 P 117 439 [136] A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and P [482] brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoulders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to P C [686] be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal, and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading, C [694] cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the north-east, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kawaki*," he said; "Kawaki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

132 ing to the ground. The lightning flashes from the somber sky, and thunder rolls and re-echoes, followed by a pelting downpour. Then in an hour or two it will suddenly stop, sometimes for a brief period of sunshine before the dark of night.

137 The forest varies greatly in regard to underbrush. In some spots there is no undergrowth at all, and nothing but leaf mold between the boles of the trees; in others there is a wild tangle of bushes, reeds, and lianas. The densest thickets are found in small patches of secondary growth, where the Negroes have made clearings and then abandoned them. Most of the forest, however, is virgin growth, and unimpeded except for fallen tree trunks.

136 137 The forest provides game enough for the pygmies, and some to spare for their hosts. Many kinds of wild plants, huge trees, small shrubs, small plants, growing low on the forest floor, bear either edible fruits or medicinal leaves or bark. Many edible fungi are abundant.

133 The forest is also well watered; the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

165 After this come the various diseases
164 which kill the pygmies. Pneumonia and dysentery are the greatest killers; infection is rare. Far less important
• 136 than disease even is the action of hostile
165 animals—elephants, buffalo, or leopards. Once in a while an old leopard, too old to catch antelope, will dare run the risk of sneaking into a pygmy camp at night. The pygmy houses have no doors, and the leopard may slink into a house and grab a pygmy. At the noise so created, other pygmies will wake up and attack the leopard with spears or firebrands. Sometimes the leopard wins completely and carries off his victim's body, to munch at leisure. Sometimes he drops the mangled corpse, and at other times the pygmy may survive. I have seen one pygmy woman who had most of her face bitten away by a leopard and who
165 still lived. The pygmy resistance to
164 wound infections is incredibly great, although they will die like flies from pneumonia.

165 Another occasional cause of death is
372 burning. Pygmies are unusually restless during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire.
[276] Here he will often light up his pipe and take a deep puff of tobacco, apparently to get the maximum effect of the nico-

[P.341-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ENVIRONMENT

[P.164-9]

136 Both Schebesta and Putnam agree on the
•137 profound importance of the environment,
182 which is the same throughout the Ituri, in determining to a great extent the life and thought of these forest people. In the primary rain forest there is little seasonal change. Different species of fruits, edible fungus, nuts, roots, and vegetables may flourish more abundantly at one time than another, but there is ample food of this kind at all times. The game is not migratory, except within very small areas, and
182 is always plentiful. The combination of warmth and humidity that produces this lush environment, with its plentiful supply of food for the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, also adds directly to their material comfort. In the absence of climatic extremes the Pygmy is little troubled by problems of clothing or shelter. All his basic needs are attended to for him by his environment, a fact that, writes Schebesta (1952, 42) does not favor "cultural evolution," but the hallmark of hunting and gathering communities is in any case one of "*la primitivité conservatrice*."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 EO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

[P. 165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The Mbuti make great use of various species of *Ficus* for the manufacture of barkcloth, and certain vines are used to make string and hunting nets. There are also trees that give a sap
[314] which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another, can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of effective medicines prepared from plants and roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no culture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to their remarkable adaptation to the forest environment. The level of their culture may not be high, but, even though primitive and "conservative," it is distinctly a forest culture and distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw material is abundant. The striking thing is the minimal extent to which they utilize this material. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the environment itself which, making minimal de-
mands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

[NET HUNTERS]

222 Putnam says that, for most of the year, gather-
221 ing can be said only to supplement vegetable
439 food obtained from the villager plantations, al-
though during the "dry season" (January–February) certain seeds and fruits ripen, and forest foods become so plentiful that the Pygmy can live entirely by gathering.

222 Particularly important among the fruits is
[137] the *ibambi*, a large fruit somewhat resembling an outsized pineapple. When ripe it can be heard falling to the ground, at which there is a

[P. 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

race between Pygmies and chimpanzees to get 222
to it first. Pygmies say that chimpanzees, if they [825]
are already well fed, will take a fallen *ibambi*
and hide it in the fork of a tree, but an obser-
vant Pygmy will find it. The *eseli* nut is the [137]
most important of the nuts and is too tough for
chimpanzees to open, and the *itaba* is the most
important of the edible roots. Following the dry [221]
season comes the season of termites, and then
that of caterpillars. The honey season, however,
is the only season of real significance.

[P. 209-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 29-A/

/Caption appears on p.290/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224
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/Plate 34-A/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

[P. 301-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. ii]

133
137

[Frontispiece]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the 136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are [186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that 262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds, [137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major [621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo- [313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE VILLAGE WORLD

[P.108-A]

PC
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1. The village of Epulu, shady but constantly threatened by the encroachments of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 108-C]

P
C
342
139

3. An abandoned village, overgrown in a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

PC
137
252
291
571
412
142
415

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

342
361
137

[P.108-G]

8. This village camp of the Mbuti at Epulu was built in imitation of the main village. It soon became fouled and was abandoned, succeeding village camps being built in the forest at the edge of the plantations.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-A]
THE FOREST WORLD

361
137
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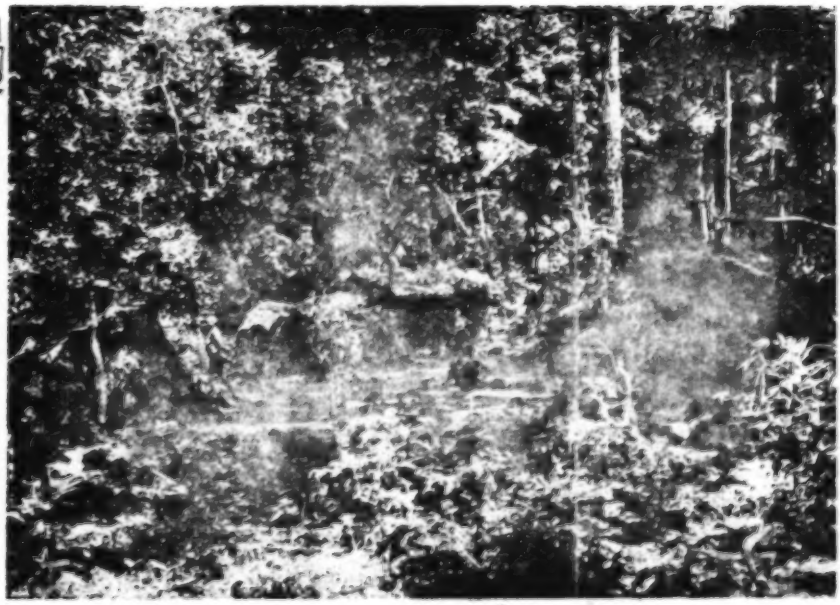

17. A forest camp (a corner of apa Lelo) is far removed from the dust and dirt and heat of the village. When the Mbuti tire of the village, they can escape to the forest and build a camp such as this in a matter of a few hours.

[166]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.156-B]

361
342
137

[595]

18. Apa Kadiketu, showing Ekianga's village-style hut, where he lived with his controversial youngest wife.[1]

[1][see pages 102-103 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-D]

224
137

30. The hunt sets off, well camouflaged against the leafy background. The men and youths

[P.276-F]

224
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[184]

32. Masisi stops on his way to the hunt to try for a monkey in the treetops. For net-hunters the bow and arrow is only an incidental means of food-getting. As seen here, poisoned arrows are preferred to those with metal tips provided by the villagers.

224
41
[882]

33. Two youths, armed with spears, carry their fathers' hunting nets. They will not have nets of their own until they are married but may, on occasion, take the place of their fathers on the hunt.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-L]

• 137

[065
784
534]

41. A spot like this, in the Lelo River, was the resting place of the *molimo* trumpets used in honor of Balekimito. Vines are stretched across the stream to warn intruders to keep away. The precaution, however, is as much for fear of theft as for fear of desecration.

132 Anyone who has
137 stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain forest must know how Stanley and his followers felt, coming as they all did from an open country of rolling plains, of sunlight and warmth. Many people who have visited the Ituri since, and many who have lived there, feel just the same, overpowered by the heaviness of everything—the damp air, the gigantic water-laden trees that are constantly dripping, never quite drying out between the violent storms that come with monotonous regularity, the very earth itself heavy and cloying after the slightest shower. And, above all, such people feel overpowered by the seeming silence and the age-old remoteness and loneliness of it all.

132 But these are the feelings of outsiders, of those who do not belong
137 to the forest. If you *are* of the forest it is a very different place. What
182 seems to other people to be eternal and depressing gloom becomes a cool, restful, shady world with light filtering lazily through the tree tops that meet high overhead and shut out the direct sunlight—the sunlight that dries up the non-forest world of the outsiders and makes it hot and dusty and dirty.

136 Even the silence is a myth. If you have ears for them, the forest
137 is full of sounds—exciting, mysterious, mournful, joyful. The shrill
182 trumpeting of an elephant, the sickening cough of a leopard (or the
825 hundred and one sounds that can be mistaken for it), always makes your heart beat a little unevenly, telling you that you are just the slightest bit scared, or even more. At night, in the honey season, you hear a weird, long-drawn-out, soulful cry high up in the trees. It seems to go on and on, and you wonder what kind of creature can cry for so long without taking breath. The people of the forest say it is the chameleon, telling them that there is honey nearby. Scientists will tell you that chameleons are unable to make any such sound. But the forest people of faraway Ceylon also know the song of the chameleon. Then in the early morning comes the pathetic cry of the pigeon, a plaintive cooing that slides from one note down to the next until it dies away in a soft, sad, little moan.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4483, Music of the Ituri Forest

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

361 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of
114 what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

137 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountain-
132 ous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective.
137 Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist.
[136] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all
[361] but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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A group of men sets off for the hunt, some carrying their hunting

[P. 72-F 1]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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nets, others spears or bows and arrows.

[P. 72-F2]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P
C
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252
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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P. 72 - K]

765 534 322 [224] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [489] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

The Forest Environment.

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137 The Ituri forest is rolling country, so densely covered with trees that the relief of the landscape is invisible ex-
132 cept from the air. It is a primary rain forest; that is, in most of the region it rains every day or every other day, averaging about one half of the days, from four to six in the afternoon—some 180 days a year. The annual rainfall is correspondingly great, about one and a half meters. The temperature is about 70° F. at night, and varies during the day from 75° to 80° F., depending upon whether it is sunny or cloudy. During January and February, the "dry" season, there are many overcast days; during the rest of the year it is either actually raining or else sunny, with quick changes. When the rain comes, it comes suddenly. It may be bright during the earlier part of the day, and then in the afternoon cloud up all at once in thunderheads. For a few minutes high winds rage through the trees, which tremble like grass in a breeze. Rotten branches and even huge trees crack and fall, crash-

[P. 322-B]

132 ing to the ground. The lightning flashes from the somber sky, and thunder rolls and re-echoes, followed by a pelting downpour. Then in an hour or two it will suddenly stop, sometimes for a brief period of sunshine before the dark of night.

137 The forest varies greatly in regard to underbrush. In some spots there is no undergrowth at all, and nothing but leaf mold between the boles of the trees; in others there is a wild tangle of bushes, reeds, and lianas. The densest thickets are found in small patches of secondary growth, where the Negroes have made clearings and then abandoned them. Most of the forest, however, is virgin growth, and unimpeded except for fallen tree trunks.

136 137 The forest provides game enough for the pygmies, and some to spare for their hosts. Many kinds of wild plants, huge trees, small shrubs, small plants, growing low on the forest floor, bear either edible fruits or medicinal leaves or bark. Many edible fungi are abundant.

133 The forest is also well watered; the

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 323-A]

224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 411 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries two kinds of arrows, the first with iron tips, which he generally uses on the larger, antelope-size, animals, and wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned, and which he uses for monkeys. He rarely shoots a monkey with an iron-tipped arrow, through fear of losing it. Each man makes his own poison as well as his own darts. The [824] plants from which the poison is made are well known, and there is neither ritual nor mystery attached to the proc- [137] ess. The vital plant is a strophanthus; they will mix other plants with it, but they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart stimulant. Its action is not immediate. The monkey runs along a bit, grows weaker, and urinates. The pygmies watch for this, for the moment of 224 urinating is the fatal one. If the monkey is out on a limb where there are no other branches, he will fall off; if he is within reach of a lateral branch or one rising upward, he will clutch it, and the hunter will be obliged to climb the tree if he wants the monkey. To do this he uses the technique described under pygmy locomotion. Since the monkeys are usually high in the trees and the pygmies are such poor marksmen, they undoubtedly miss more of them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant hunting involves a technique that is wholly different from either of the above two. The pygmy elephant hunter is a specialist; not every pygmy has the courage to face an elephant and kill it, and not every man the skill. Wheth- [177] er or not pygmies ever killed elephants in the early days, the present form of

[P. 330-A]

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The
[137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when
[825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pygmies seem to be a little less talkative
571
[P.333-B]

[P.147-C]

particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 182

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 163-8]

cons" were not infrequently discussed around the campfires; the decision, however, was generally in favor of maintaining the *status quo*. 178

PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

128 14.

Physical anthropology is not treated here, partly because it is a highly specialized field and partly because, again, there is not sufficient material. The work of Schebesta (1938), Jadin (1936), and Gusinde (1948) is notable but still has produced no conclusive results other than to point out the undoubted genetic difference between the Mbuti and their village neighbors. [114]

There is no published study of nutrition among the Mbuti, and nothing in the existing anthropological studies from which one can draw any conclusions on this subject. 146 114

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly [141] [144] "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence [184] it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb 131 at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they
[141] average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of 593
his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law 578
were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy 276
was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and 152
gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to 593
thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was posi- 578
tively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four 152
feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then [141]
pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by [536]
a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

PLATE 26 [1]

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

888 142 [292] a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [301] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

1. /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[P 284]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888
142
292
302

/Plate 26-A/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P. 285-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

885
142
201
302

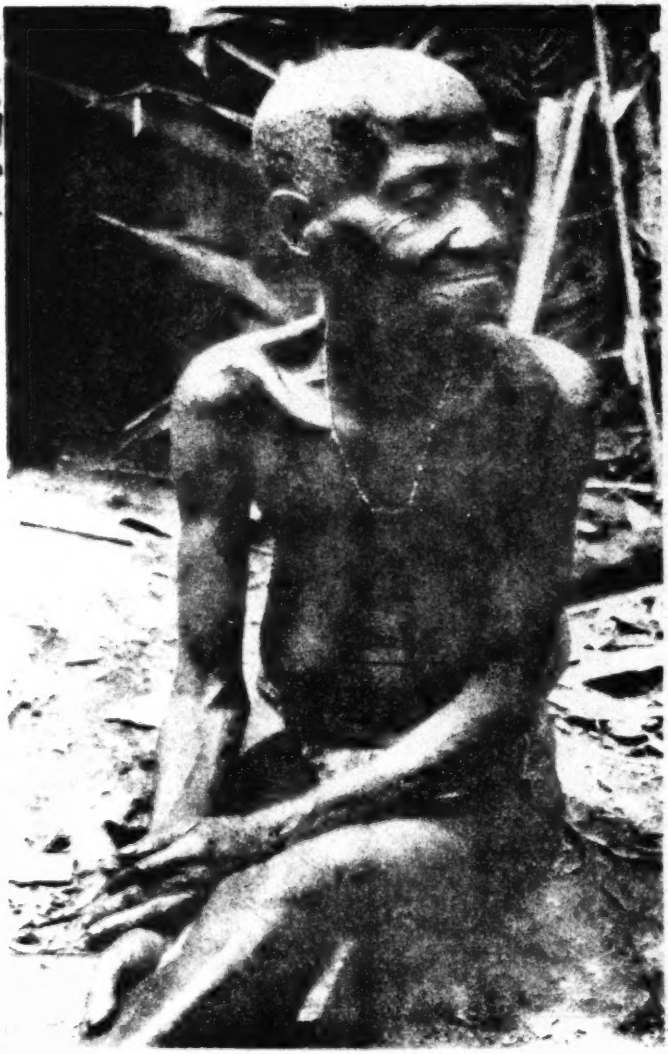
/Plate 26-B/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P 285-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 142
301
888
177
516
302



/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/

[P. 287-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

854
• 142
302

/Plate 27-B/

/Caption appears on p. 286/

[P. 287-B]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
855
851

/Plate 28-A/

/Caption appears on p. 288/

[P.289-A]

/1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
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882
885
202

/Plate 28-B/

/Caption appears on p.288/

[P.289-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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602
887
• 142
302

/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P. 291-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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516
462
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/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P.293-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
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287
412
883
516
197

/Plate 31/

[p 295] /Caption appears on p. 294/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
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412
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177

/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P.297-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
462
482
415
392
291
301

[P 299]

/Plate 33/
/Caption appears on p. 298/

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
291
222
412

/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P. 305-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 142
302
262
222

/Plate 36-B/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P.305-B]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
534
411
516
302

/Plate 37/
[R300] /Caption appears on p. 306/

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
271
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716
821
533
519

[P309] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

PC
137
252
291
571
412
• 142
415

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 108-E]

142
516
342
302
291
854

5. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring roofing leaves into village for village houses.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

[P.108-F]

P
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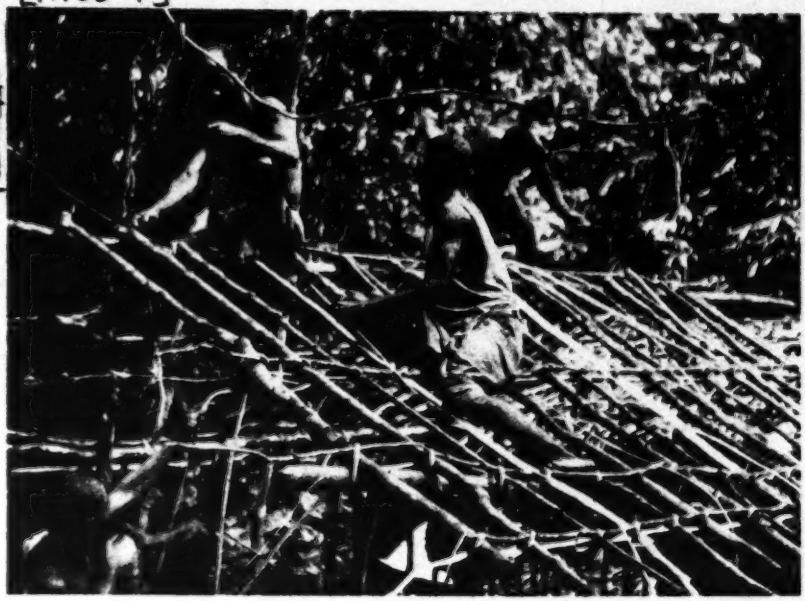
342
464
291
571
142



6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their *kpara*, are fed as part of their "payment."

P
C
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465
464
291
142

[P.108-H]

361
344
352
142
291
516

9. The Mbuti village *baraza* was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

142
516
412
415
853
482

10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-I]

P
352
142
516
533
C
534
352

11. An Mbuti hunter amuses himself in the village by playing a village-made zither.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 108-J]

P
535
142
291

*P
[177]

12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

P
[302]
[386]

C
585
563
P
142
291
585
*177

13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Makubasi. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her *kpara*'s sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R 108-L]

C
881
242
342

15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching *nkumbi* during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

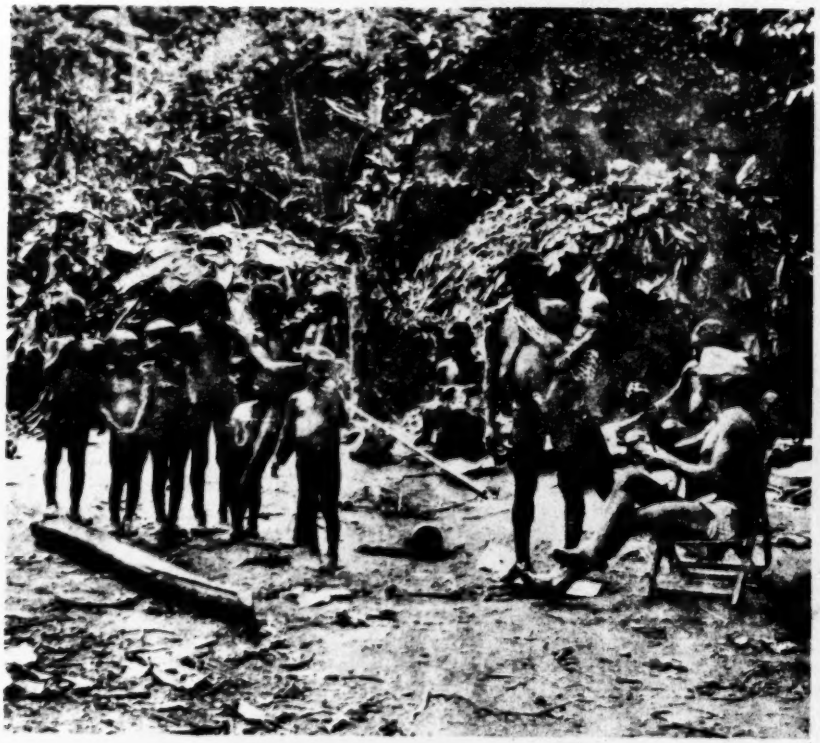
P
516
147
881
304
152
C
[152]

16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult; but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-C]

142
291
352
342
854



[164]

19. In one of Cephu's camps, Aberi talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 142
302

[P.156-D]

20. Cephu the troublemaker,[2] but also Cephu the great storyteller.

[1][see pages 101-109; 194-198 -- Analyst]

[P. 228-A]

142
516
252
291
302

[412] [439] 21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.228-B]

142
302
291
251
342
417

22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

142
302
412
287

23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

142
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287

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.228-D]

142
291
881
535

25. Akidimimbu celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage doing an *elima* dance.

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854
853

26. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to fondle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-A]

142
291
516

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

[578]
[593]
[152]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P276-B]

142
854
516

[142]

28. Moké, an elder and a peacemaker, with two of his adopted families. It is considered no shame for an Mbuti male to fondle and care for the needs of even the youngest children.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

142
302
291
415
516
372

29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-E]

142
301
291
482
372

31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
462
[222]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-G]

142
302
291
883
224

34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[881
985
593]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P·276-I]

142
302
291
202

36. When the kill is assured, a youth signals back to the camp and to other hunters, to let them know what kind of game has fallen into whose net. Relatively complex messages can be signaled in this way, variations in rhythm combining with variations in pitch achieved by flexing the elbow, which forms a sound box when clapped with the other hand.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-J]

222
142
302
291
412

37. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

38. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemoké's uncle, Masalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

222
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302

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

142
302
534

39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the *molimo* and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

40. Balekimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long *molimo* festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Agerronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative—to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Tungana, a grandfather many times over, in a gennet-skin cap.

[P. 72-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
534
411
115

Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.
[P. 72-E]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Opposite: Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with *kangay* juice for a wedding.

142
291
881
535
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Akidinimba (in hat) celebrates her forthcoming wedding with the other girls of the *elima*.

[P. 72-G]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 142
302
301
516
585
824

Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Masalito comforts the young Kaoya during the *nkumbi* rites at a Negro village.

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302
881

[P 72-I]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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361
342
352
516

A Pygmy camp. This one is Cephu's.

[P. 72-J]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P
C
137
252
• 142
291
571
412
415

A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P. 72-K]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

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Old Moke (in a sloth-skin hat) listens as Cephu tells a legend.

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[P.72-L]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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302
222

Kelekome and his uncle, Massalito, examine a piece of honeycomb to see if the hive is ready for raiding. Honey is probably the most prized food in the forest.

[P.72-M]

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Kondabate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end. They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night. It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest, and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing; the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-79.

[P. 325-B]

ooo ways associated with *crises* and *change*, you will see that the reason is to be found in the lack of annual variation in the climate, and the paucity of critical situations. A thunderstorm, accidents in the water, and the excitement of an elephant hunt all have their rituals. Physically the African pygmies described by Putnam are much like the Andamanese, and many culture historians have speculated about their cultural similarities. What can you see that the two peoples had in common which might not be explained away by the similarity of environment alone?

[p. 342]

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tan-
[141] ganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly
[144] "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence
[184] it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb
131 at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P. 159-D]

563 582 [166] There is no reliable detailed information as to population movement, though the general opinion is that the population has remained static for some time; nor are there data on the frequency of intermarriage between Mbuti and villagers. Jadin (1936) and Costermans (1937) confirm Schebesta's (1952, 47) opinion that miscegenation is a one-way movement. A village male may take a Pygmy wife, in which case the children will be brought up in the village, but a Pygmy male will never take a villager wife. This holds equally among archers and net hunters (Putnam, 1948, 325). Information for the Aka is, as usual, conflicting and unreliable. Schweinfurth (1874) asserts that there is intermarriage between the Aka and the Mangbetu; Burrows (1898) claims that there is no such intermarriage.

Information as to the attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward miscegenation is also lacking. Schebesta says that certain northern tribes of villagers aver horror at the idea of intermarriage, but that in spite of this it takes place and is nowhere unknown. Both the Lese and the [144] Bira tribes, with which the archers and net hunters are most in contact, are considerably modified physically owing to the frequency of miscegenation (Schebesta, 1952; Geluwe, 1956), [P.161-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 161-C]
but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the 563
proportion of Negro blood passed to the 582
Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), how- [144]
ever, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare.

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the 197
question of Pygmy language. Some take the 114
view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira.

[P. 243-A]

190 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently.
[177] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[28] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[144] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Intermarriage

P 144 582 As pointed out above, this traffic is one-way. There are no records of Pygmy men taking villager wives, nor any acknowledged instances Z 144 563 582 of Pygmy men begetting children by villager mistresses. Blood counts (Schebesta, 1938, 111), however, reveal a small proportion of villager influence in hunting communities, which may or may not be accounted for by the return of the half-breed offspring from the village to the P Z [B51] forest. Normally the children of such unions are brought up as villagers. The father will, to the best of his ability, prevent children by his Pygmy wife from returning to the forest, and apparently the Pygmies themselves regard such children as villagers.

Z P 582 There are not enough data on individual intermarriage for us to determine how far this one-way tendency is a form of hypergamy. It may, in fact, simply be the result of the practical consideration that no villager woman could fulfill the requirements of a woman and wife in a Pygmy hunting camp. Even if the latter is the P 582 case, it does not answer the question as to why 186 a Pygmy girl should marry a villager. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that gives us even the hint of an answer. There is certainly no

[P 251-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 In paying special attention to this relationship it was felt that the otherwise intangible value-system of the Mbuti would be more clearly revealed, leading to an understanding of the ritual relationship that appeared to exist between the Mbuti and the forest, as implied in the accounts of other observers and in my own prior experience, but nowhere made explicit.

EXECUTION

114 101 131 Field work was undertaken between the summer of 1957 and the late winter of 1958, entering the then Belgian Congo by driving through from the West Coast, collecting as many local accounts of pygmy or pygmoid hunters and gatherers along the way as possible, for future reference. Such accounts were gathered in Dahomey, Nigeria (particularly towards the east), the Cameroons, Gabon, and throughout the Congo, but few hunting bands were encountered until well towards the Ubangi River (see Map 1). It was decided not to spend time trying to make contact, except on the far side of the Ubangi, where contact was relatively easy, and where there were also some Binga pygmies from the west bank of the river.

114 131 [144] From the Ubangi over to the Ituri it was quite obvious that, as elsewhere, true hunting bands only existed where there was substantial primary forest, and that elsewhere not only was the hunting and gathering economy defunct, but there had been so much intermarriage that one could not truly speak of a pygmy physical type any more than one could speak of a pygmy culture.

Leaving aside the forested area south of the Congo River, which I did not cover but for which pygmoid groups are reported, I found relatively isolated bands of pygmy and pygmoid hunters and gatherers to exist in the forests of the Gabon and the Cameroons, and in the Congo Republic (Brazzaville) as well as in the forested regions around the Ubangi River. But by far the heaviest concentration is [101] in the Ituri Forest, where all the pygmies recognize their unity in the name Mbuti, and where both the physical and the cultural integrity of the hunters and gatherers seems to have been best preserved.

121 There was no question that this was the right area for the major bulk of the field work, but there was some question as to which band to select for the intensive study. I eventually decided on the Epulu

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 16]

CHAPTER 2

Orientation

THE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

101 The Mbuti pygmies form the largest single group of pygmy hunters
• 144 and gatherers in Africa, and are probably also the purest in both the biological and cultural senses. Throughout the equatorial rain forest other similar groups exist, but while some of them (notably in the Gabon and in the Ubangi area) appear to be comparable with the Mbuti, the majority, like the Twa and the Tswa of the Kivu and central Congo districts (see Map 3)[1] have at one time or another intermarried with Negro tribes of cultivators, losing many of the true pygmy physical characteristics and at the same time losing a great deal of their original hunting and gathering culture.

181 Far more important, from the structural point of view, is the altered relationship between all these pygmoids and the world they live in, for as we shall see, the structure of Mbuti society pivots
• [179] around a powerful forest-oriented system of values. This value system to a large extent overrides economic considerations in determining the relationship between the Mbuti and their village neighbors, whereas among the pygmoids the economic factor appears to be dominant, and the consequent dependency of the pygmoids upon the villagers in other respects is also greater.

• 177 This is in no way to say that the structure to be found among the
178 Mbuti is representative of an original pygmy hunting and gathering structure; in fact probably far from it, for the repercussions of the invasion of the forest by the village cultivators have been enormous. But the response of the Mbuti, for whatever reason, has been different from that of the Twa and the Tswa and it is of much greater structural interest and significance, incidentally throwing light on the whole process of acculturation. At the same time, however, the peculiar structural development of the Mbuti does enable us to observe a

[1] [see page 318 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tion between villages is due only in part to rivalry for territory. It is also due to suspicion of witchcraft and sorcery, a suspicion that seems to increase as the distance of separation decreases. This, of course, can also be interpreted as an expression of territorial friction, but it is conceived in personal rather than territorial terms, and is accompanied by a general dislike and mistrust of strangers.

Nor must we lose sight of the fact that whereas the Mbuti, even with their nomadism, in which hunting camps are shifted every month, have a strong sense of basic territorial permanence, the villagers have none, and this gives rise to further instability. To mention only one example, it is believed among the Bira that the dead should be buried according to a prescribed ritual, and that the grave should be cared for in a prescribed manner. The burial is always carried out but it is a constant source of conflict having to care for a grave that may be some miles away. Every time a village moves the villagers have to face the fact that they are abandoning their dead, to some extent, and they are unpleasantly reminded of the uncertainty of their own future. We do not know what the original burial practice was before the Bira moved into the forest; undoubtedly changes have been made, but they have not adequately met the new situation.

It is only in light of the relationship between each of these peoples and the environment in which they live that we can understand the relationship between the people themselves. It is in part ignorance of this factor that has led to the gross misunderstanding of Mbuti/Villager relationship, and indeed of Mbuti society itself. Before considering either the Mbuti or their relationship with the villagers, however, a certain amount of further ground-clearing is necessary.

MBUTI, BAMBUTI, BAMBUTI

A certain amount of confusion concerning the Mbuti arises out of conflicting terminology, some of it totally inapplicable or lacking in significance. First we have to be clear why we group together, under any one name, all the pygmy hunters of the Ituri Forest, even though they speak different languages and use different hunting techniques.

Racially, they are clearly one people, quite distinct from any of the surrounding Negro tribes. They form a strongly, visibly distinct unit. Culturally, they are equally distinguished from their neighbors as a unit, being hunters and gatherers, and not cultivators, with a consequently totally distinct social structure. Differences in hunting techniques do not affect the basic structural unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

197 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be
101 used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Ne-
144 gro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, neces-
122 sary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

175 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twen-
114 ties to study them.

114 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in
144 which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later
174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not
533 ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's
177 account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 163-8]

cons" were not infrequently discussed around the campfires; the decision, however, was generally in favor of maintaining the *status quo*. 178

PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Physical anthropology is not treated here, partly because it is a highly specialized field and partly because, again, there is not sufficient material. The work of Schebesta (1933), Jadin (1936), and Gusinde (1948) is notable but still has produced no conclusive results other than to point out the undoubted genetic difference between the Mbuti and their village neighbors. 128 14 [114]

There is no published study of nutrition among the Mbuti, and nothing in the existing anthropological studies from which one can draw any conclusions on this subject. 146 114

THE WORLD BEYOND

Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clearings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers? 648 177 361

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans were being cooked for lunch.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill outside the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 648 177 361 147 164

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

648 361 177 147 164 181 177 361 782

impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

[829]

182 114 [15] [181] [184] *trice.*" Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes that the forest environment induces fear, suspicion, and guile, and limits the intellectual horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 825 Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." [P.164-B]

[P.166-C]

According to Mbuti opinion the villager is deficient in the senses of sight, smell, hearing, and touch. There is little doubt that the Pygmy is extra-sensitive in these respects, but no scientific investigation has been conducted as yet to determine the exact extent. But if the environment favors a certain type of physical development, it also favors a certain type of emotional development. We must think of the forest not only as a place of abundance, offering a sufficiency of food and shelter, relatively free from danger, but also as a closed world, very unlike the open world of the plains dwellers. Not only has the Pygmy little incentive to develop beyond his diurnal economy, each day taking care of itself, but also he has little to make him think except in terms of the present. 182 [829] [51].

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[546] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
[825] had seen a *sonda*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sonda, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

In Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
181

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.

177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
587 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
514 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

119 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
•(151) Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 832
body and birth of twins are, among some 825
[P. 181- D] 827

183 (A)

[ARCHERS]

[P.183-A]

P M 764 177 nent among the many archers who had hastened to attend the funeral took charge. He measured the corpse with his stick and drew the outline of the grave on the ground. His son, assisted by others, opened a grave, using pointed sticks, a hatchet, and a bush knife, and cleared the loosened earth with their hands. The crying P [152] of the women became louder, calling "*Afael*" (father). A few women sat nearby, singing dirges. Not only the relatives mourned, but all present. With the help of the Lese *karl*, the P M [608] floor of the grave was covered with sticks, then leaves. The womenfolk hurried to the edge of the grave as the corpse, decorated only with an arm ring, was brought through a hole in the side of the hut and placed in the grave. The wailing P [152] reached its climax; the wife, children, and even the eldest grown son, threw themselves on the ground as the men began to fill in the grave. One man had to hold the eldest daughter to prevent her from throwing herself into the grave. The earth was stamped down, and the mourners moved away, women and children and some of the young men crying. One daughter remained near the grave as the house was pulled down to cover it (after the household goods had been removed).

Shortly after the burial some men went off hunting. By three o'clock the entire camp was deserted, and a new one had been built by evening.

[NET HUNTERS]

764 miles away. There was some suggestion that the Mbuti should be buried in the village of his patron, but the eldest son refused and said that the forest was his father's "earth," and this was where he should be buried.

The grave was dug by Mbuti and villagers, about 4 feet deep, with half of it 1½ feet deeper. The body was placed in the deep section, on its side, facing north, covered with sticks and phrynium leaves. Then everyone threw in earth and filled the grave. The women at the funeral became hysterical at this point, falling to the ground and beating themselves. The dead man's second wife tried to throw herself into the grave on top of the body. When the grave was filled, everyone sat down and talked and smoked. The youngest son of the deceased had been playing around quite happily all the time. After smoking, villagers and Mbuti all washed their hands and feet in a nearby stream.

• 152 Both Patrick and Anne Putnam claim that there is, among the Epulu Mbuti, formal and controlled wailing, also wailing as a manifestation of genuine grief among both men and women. Men and women will weep apart during

[177] [1] Suggestions of this kind are sometimes made by the Mbuti in their village context, in imitation of the villagers. They by no means necessarily indicate Mbuti belief.

[P 223-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.223-C]
the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

In the absence of any "elder," it is difficult at first to understand the legal system and how it functions. From the examples cited, however, it appears that one of the first rights of every Mbuti is the right of self help, but because of the nature of the band in which he lives it is unlikely that any serious dispute will remain restricted to the original participants and left to them to settle. Such can happen, and has, but usually the dispute is widened, involving more and more of the others and, finally, the whole band itself, until a settlement is reached. 627 578

Thus in a case of incest between members of the same lineage, the first act on the part of the girl's family was to pursue the boy, threatening him with knives and spears and driving him from the camp. There, they said, he could die. He would get no shelter and no food. Returning from this chase, they promptly tore down the house of the boy's "father" (actually his father's brother, with whom the boy was staying). As far as the offended family were concerned, the matter was finished, but the "father" thought otherwise and threatened to take counteraction. At this point, while the womenfolk on the girl's side were making the usual demonstrations of grief (throwing themselves on the ground and beating themselves) and the men on both sides were brandishing spears, knives, and bows and arrows, the dispute degenerated into the practical consideration of where the houseless "father" was 627 684 [52]

[P 230-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 259-C]

lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go. 177 18 533 [152]

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers. 177 18 121

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with which the body of the villager is treated before burial. Owing to my somewhat peripheral relationship with the villagers I was not allowed to witness the more intimate rituals when the *karé* Mbuti was closeted with the deceased on one occasion for about three hours, on another occasion for one hour. Nor was I able to elicit much from the Mbuti, who said that they knew nothing about it, and only did what they were told to do by the villagers. When asked what that was, they repeated the above information, which was as much as I had gathered from the villagers, and no more except a few colorful and imaginative details about the appearance and odor of the corpse. This being clearly something better investigated from the villager side, I did not press the matter. It seems sufficiently well established, however, that the ritual connection between *karé* is considerable as seen by the villagers, and this was borne out on one occasion when an important Bira noble died and the entire funeral ceremony, including the burial, was held up for a day and a half because of the non-appearance of the dead man's Mbuti *karé*. On this occasion the Mbuti eventually arrived on the run carrying a spear, loudly shouting his complaints at being brought from the forest for such stupidity (again the term *mbafu*). There were several hundred villagers assembled, and the Mbuti ran through them to the compound of the deceased. He evidently knew in advance what was expected, and broke his way in to the closed hut where the widows were wailing. There was great concern among the villagers because he took his spear with him, and they said he might kill the women, but they did nothing to prevent him. Happily there was a full complement of widows at the subsequent burial.

The villagers recognize that they cannot force the Mbuti *karé* to fulfill their obligations by political or economic pressure, but they now have another weapon. By the act of ritual circumcision, according to tribal lore, the Mbuti are placed in a direct relationship with the tribal village ancestors, and by the *karé* bond each Mbuti is placed in a direct relationship with the protective spirits that look after the welfare of their respective individual villager partners. Every step of the *nkumbi* reinforces the authority of the tribal ancestors, through the supernatural powers at their disposal, over the Mbuti as well as over the villager initiates. Failure to fulfill "kinship" or *karé* obligations on the part of the Mbuti cannot be dealt with by the legal mechanisms available to the villagers, but it can now be countered by supernatural sanctions. Villager lore defines the Mbuti responsibili-

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[R 108-L]

C 8/2 342

15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching ekombi during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult, but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[514] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[524] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
• 152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[9]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[523] [9] The drama not only appears like a remastment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
761 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person,
152 it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
761 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
763 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not
152 going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[889] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763
children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152
sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764
the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768
a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152]
there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]
the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764
the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152
same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764
and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177
not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152
by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception [187]
to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766
small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768
be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death. 761 765 [182] [621]

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp. 764 768 184

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment. 764 [184] [066]

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide. 765 302

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst. 765 [52] [761]

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Mbuti

765 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they
152 should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death
765 at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not
[783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an-
[594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby
462 female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *uwai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their
[171] women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

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became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

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Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

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Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[5]

[5] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

224 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the
482 camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or
578 acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt
•152 returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be al-
626 most deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the
[476] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

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Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absent-mindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

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554 156 157 [595] particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). 554 156 593 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 554 555 157 [224] Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and [448] frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, 156 152 554 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 604 596 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

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When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down. 156 604 592 [554] [571] [561]

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark. 156 152 578 554

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of 156 554 422 578 156 554 558 627 201

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Mbuti

156 554 558 627 201 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekiongo, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, 156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al- 627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby 621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis- 648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, 554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked 156 627 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to [202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon 554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he 578 • 152

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

554 627 [178] [152] sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically and morally, beyond the forest.

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of 602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special 604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil- 554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké [621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as 602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any- [608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names [614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be- [621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*). [354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such 621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that [354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was, 621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would 578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man 626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with • [152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the 621
frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or 578
in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his 622
fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends [593]
with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between [522]
the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is gen- 578
erally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in 62
his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately 626
involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp [522]
clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rig- 627
orously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

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meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

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224 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of
626 friction).
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There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Matini and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten-
621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par-
221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old
578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came
593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja.
158 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and
221 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing
621 it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young
224 Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some
593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute
621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said
166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being
626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem-
221 bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akani* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kaiele* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*ainena*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akani a mu nduna*), just as it is said to kill the hunt ((*akani a mu mukira*).

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626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152
[537] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[537] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.
[431]

157 7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
461 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
536 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
[261] public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
[261] One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
[261] tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

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someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along wit' what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

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sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[1] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[1] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

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time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's sister for wife and there will be no more noise."

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebupepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebupepé in his own time. Mebupepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the fact that there were far too many young people around who should be married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

578 152 A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [521] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[524] [542] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

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#177 use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes
538 use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their pater-
776 nalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations,
182 and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

538 The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of
439 Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had
[157] stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

539 "I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother.
224 But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted
[251] and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

[186] This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

539 "But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to
776 escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- 114
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon 776
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the
761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74
[594] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti
[778] refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[829] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevè.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa, bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

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[P. 276-A]

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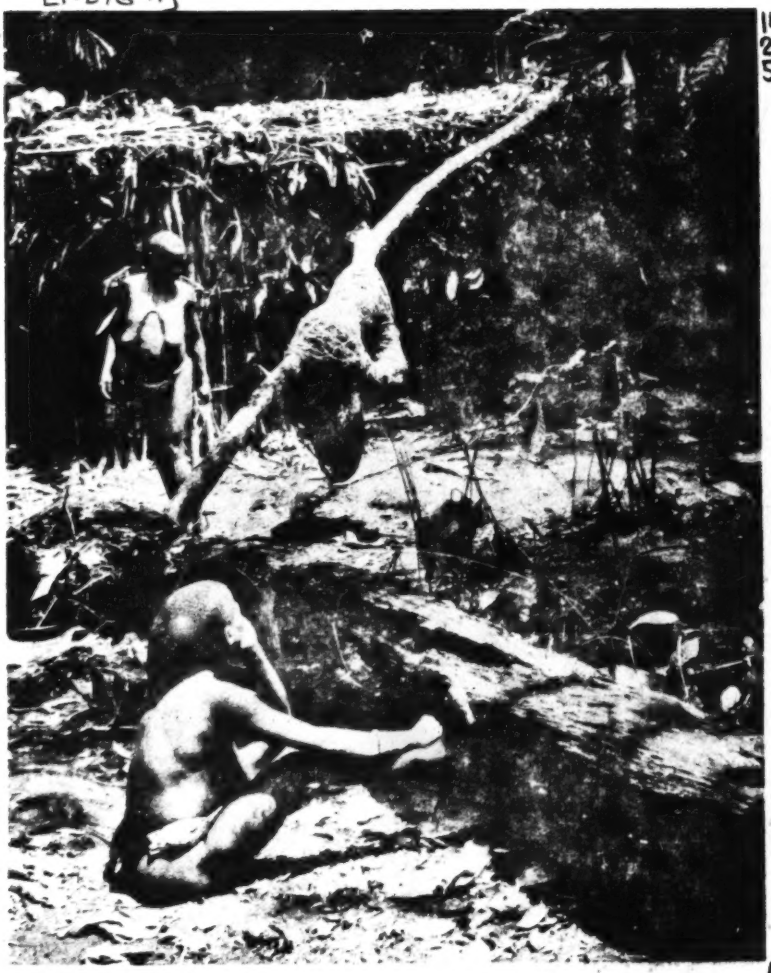

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

[578]
[593]
[152]

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncomfortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing, feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death, just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is disputed, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Agerronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
[184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
522 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Ageronga were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

763 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be
761 a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest."
[765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred
[555] the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up
[829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said.
[186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we
[768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's
[152] house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they
[828] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [152]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

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5

The Crime of Cephu, the Bad Hunter

765 533 EVERY NIGHT the men gathered to sing the songs of the molimo, and every morning the youths awakened the camp with their shouts and yells. This went on week after week, yet the daily life of the hunting group continued as though nothing particularly unusual was [152] happening. The men were more sleepy in the mornings, and sometimes tempers were short, but never for long. The necessities of hunting and gathering for a living did not allow it.

512 As soon as the camp was light and there was no further danger of the molimo's making an appearance, the women emerged from their huts and went down to the river to bathe and to collect water

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
• 152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

224 This dance[1] was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
578 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
152 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
[965] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

[1] [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, *"Nyama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!"* (Animal there! Animal there! Come at once, *you*, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekianga and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masisi spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu did so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hat. He looked peaceful and contented.

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224 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of
765 how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how every-
578 one wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing,
156 lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his
765 business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair
578 incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply.
156 He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help
593 and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense,
[602] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only
[621] the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the
156 fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill
152 himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat
224 from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu
224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu,
578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped
156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight.

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention.

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned

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684 their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all
835 manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over
[152] and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to
835 live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what
627 he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the
[153] forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

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instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tearlessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed. 593 578 276 152

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was positively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he 593 578 152 [141] [536]

was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four 685
hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to 159
his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine 627
and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly [752]
because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It 578
blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very 578
involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a 583
sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, 593
as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had 595
just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since 578
Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not 853
to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they 607
could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health. [583]

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end.
They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night.
It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
• 152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village.

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake.

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

883 would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and
179 buy themselves beer."
52
[273] "And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who
52 was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself
[152] up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo
[765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been.
533 The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it
[535] with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by 765
the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering 533
from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, [136]
and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them [152]
with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two 765
trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh 534
and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had 177
to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers. The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations 177
among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown. 881 832 574

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted. [152]

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry. [411]

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere. 881 832 372 574

881 533 *were* women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires. 881 885 533 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 885 157 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 533 415 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya. 881 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. 152 302 She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing

herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes. 881 152 302

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it. 881 881 885 182

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov- 881 885 224

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it 581
did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a [832]
confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo,
Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a
relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People [836]
pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo,
but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different.
Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart
on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see 584
rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation,
and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of 581
terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where 593
Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge 152
dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

693 152 bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry [581] Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that [836] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 521 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, 583 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was 584 not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 584 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

C 881 P 881 177 the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mambasa.

C 881 P 881 177 157 The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masisi, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sansiwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sansiwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *boloko* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

C 881 P 881 177 152 302 C 292 302 301 Sansiwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sansiwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sansiwake was left outside.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sansiwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

me and finally brought us down to a swampy region, dark and dank. 114
A stream flowed through the middle, fed by innumerable tiny rivulets from the hills all around. We picked our way across, balancing on fallen tree trunks and jumping from log to log. As we began to climb a steep hill on the far side I heard the telltale sound of bark cloth being pounded into shape, the cheerful shouting of women as they called to each other while they finished the building of their huts, and an occasional outburst of song, sung for no other reason than that this was the honey season, the season to be happy, the season to rejoice. Kenge gave a loud whoop of pleasure and darted [152] •
among the trees like a young antelope, leaping and bounding out of sight. When I reached the clearing he was already sitting down, his face buried in a sticky mongongo leaf dripping with rich brown honey. He looked up and laughed.

The camp was called Apa Toangbe, the *toangbe* being a special 361
kind of honey tree. It was built halfway up a fairly high hill, on a [192]
patch of ground that was not quite level. Masisi's house was at the highest point of the tiny clearing, with Asofalinda to one side and Maipe's mother to the other. Masamba had built a house that virtually joined onto that of Masisi. Mine was halfway up the slope on the other side, facing across to Maipe. It was all ready when we arrived, the only one completely finished. Masisi proudly led me to it and inspected it with me. He had built the bed himself, carefully [352]
refraining from turning the ends of the branches up sharply as Pygmies seem to think should be done, so that the bed becomes the shape of a hammock without any of its back-saving resilience.

It was not thirty feet from one side of the camp to the other, and 000
the forest closed in a protective wall all around us. Kenge and I set off to see what the surrounding country was like, and soon we were far beyond the sounds of any voices other than our own. Everywhere we went we saw mushrooms and nuts and berries, and we collected

pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself 824 524 almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what 734 strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why 734 Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better 481 with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. 123 "What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most [152] truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

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sense, and she must not refuse. Did she want her child to die like other cripples who had been unable to fend for themselves?

Reluctantly she agreed, but Lizabeti, as soon as I reached for her, burst into tears and dragged herself back into the farthest corner of her mother's hut. Masisi started to go in after her again, but Kenge called to him to leave her alone, and handed his crutches and those we had made for Lizabeti to the eagerly waiting children. Soon it was the most popular game in the camp. Even Masisi and Maipe tried "walking on one leg." I saw Lizabeti's tear-stained face peering from the door of her hut to watch.

The next morning Asofalinda came over to me and said that Lizabeti wanted to try this new game, but if she fell once she would never be allowed to try again. Not a soul left the camp that morning; they all wanted to see what would happen. Between us Kenge and I lifted the girl, who was bravely trying not to cry, and put the crutches under her arms. We showed her how to hold them with her hands at the sides, and how to take the weight off her good leg and swing it backward and forward. The greatest difficulty was getting her to trust that leg enough to move her crutches on in front of her. But little by little, moving one crutch at a time, she got more confidence. I went in front to catch her if she fell, and Kenge held her lightly around the waist from behind. Lizabeti began to walk. Kenge let go, and then, as she realized that Kenge was not even holding her, that she was actually walking upright, like the other children she had watched from the ground all her life, her face became contorted with fear and she stumbled. Kenge caught her just in time. He swung her high into the air with a triumphant shout to drown her wails of terror, and all the children joined in, laughing and chanting their congratulations.

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We had almost completed a circle of the camp, and I looked over to see if Asofalinda had noticed Lizabeti start to fall. I was just in time to see her bury her face in her hands, her whole body shaking as she

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

[P.271-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
789 adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case. [761] There is no common explanation of death or [754] illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man [154] invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The 538 nearest approach to standard mythological 776 rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

554 121 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 561 [562] Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 [648] There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 156 522 626 627 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analyst]

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

157 particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no in-
[595] terest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*).
554 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his
156 penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and
593 was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He
554 had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember
555 him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was
157 among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed,
[224] four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the
[648] hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However,
156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or
152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him
554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of
604 children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the
596 same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Although this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and disloyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he

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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
622 and morally, beyond the forest.
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In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with
[152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp* and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[621] [156] *The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

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hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Ageronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

156 usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and [522] they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the [626] more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

[551] The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could 156 remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive 177 Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy 888 plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

[551] Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relation- [608] ship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. 156 It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

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About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with 578 the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

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156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [154] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to 578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp [583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

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The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest.

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

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dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534
533 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
825 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again, and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The
[858] children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
• 156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, looking in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from another fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground.

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

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825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and
578 assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and
• 186 complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I
123 had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

224 This dance[1] was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
578 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
152 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
[965] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

1, [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

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for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, *"Nyama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!"* (Animal there! Animal there! Come at once, *you*, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekianga and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masisi spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu did so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hat. He looked peaceful and contented. [281]

224 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of
765 how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how every-
578 one wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing,
156 lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his
765 business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair
578 incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply.
156 He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help
593 and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense,
[602] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only
[621] the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the
156 fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill
152 himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat
224 from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu
224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu,
578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped
156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

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he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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The Giver of the Law

CEPHU HAD COMMITTED what is probably one of the most heinous crimes in Pygmy eyes, and one that rarely occurs. Yet the case was settled simply and effectively, without any evident legal system being brought into force. It cannot be said that Cephu went unpunished, because for those few hours when nobody would speak to him he must have suffered the equivalent of as many days solitary confinement for anyone else. To have been refused a chair by a mere youth, not even one of the great hunters; to have been laughed at by women and children; to have been ignored by men—none of these things would be quickly forgotten. Without any formal process of

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; [858] everyone took part in everything. Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

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There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

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Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children. P 881 88- 177

Far from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples. C 563 P 177

The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his figst real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima. P 881 885

During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sansiwake—Aberi the ugly, Aberi who was so often the laughingstock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sansiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor. C 563 P 156 177

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could 000

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 156 177 753 754 C 754

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

P 177 754 C 563 754

The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

P 177 159 754 C 563 754

It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Arab traders ivory became a most precious
[237] commodity, and the Pygmies were doubly in-
[439] couraged to kill elephants. For the Pygmies themselves, a slain elephant was a source of great satisfaction, providing them with meat ample enough to obviate the necessity of hunting for several days.

[157] The killing of the animal was, and still is, a matter that inspired the normally audacious Mbuti with some caution. Putnam says that elephant hunting is a specialist occupation; not every Pygmy is brave enough, and the tech-
[171] nique itself takes great skill. The villagers use spear-falls and elephant pits (dug so as to trap

[P. 206-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." According to Putnam, the Mbuti re- [157] spect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"

[P. 228-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 228-C]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [157]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of
any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 536 177 157 811

[p. 232-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
179 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
• 157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, 361
which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but 621
instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), 613
Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's 593
young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, 595
despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did [881]
Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities 361
brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was 157 •
an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, 554
or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters 578
concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert 621
the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, [122]
as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is re- 621
quired. In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
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ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 12
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 621
others will lead immediately to ridicule. 554

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438]
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

554 156 522 626 627

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

554 522 156 [626]

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

554 156 157 [555] [626] [595] [593] [626] 156 554 842

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

554 156 157 595

156
157 particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no in-
[595] terest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*).
554 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his
156 penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and
593 was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He
554 had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember
555 him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was
157 among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed,
[224] four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the
[648] hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However,
156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or
152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him
554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of
604 children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the
596 same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

626 621 578 222 152 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

[533] [534] [431] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

157 461 536 [261] [789] 7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 461 626 578 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [765] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 • 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[a] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[658] [157] [142] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[a] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *esumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

*177 use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes
538 use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their pater-
776 nalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations,
186 and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

538 The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of
439 Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had
• [157] stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

539 "I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother.
221 But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted
[251] and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

[186] This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

539 "But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to
776 escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
• 157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the
761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74
[594] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
621 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Ageronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765 534
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765 when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534 123 for old men to talk about these things. 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888 outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322] talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411] Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115 him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157] shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 156 626 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [858] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them- [522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, 593
insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious 578
issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and 593
ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest 578
brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been 554
brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed 157
that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, [164]
which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside 578
his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him 607
the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly 276
from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a 576
visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

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The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know 621 that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But 578 the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he 626 does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his 593 friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group 584 will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they 626 are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that 157 they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a 181 husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, 621 no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, 829 "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great pro- 778 vider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

512 224 [202] go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories [157] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he 439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he 177 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

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881 figure was lost. She was particularly proud of her breasts, which
832 were certainly the largest in that part of the forest, and she showed them off to advantage, when dancing, by adopting an unusually springy gait. As her breasts bounced up and down the eyes of all the bachelors followed their movement with pleasure. Everyone agreed that Akidinimba's elima would be a lively one.

881 But Masyalibo's niece was in no hurry, so for the first few days she remained in the hut of her cousin, Kondabate, and there were no particular signs of activity visible from the outside.

Then we heard that Kidaya had also been blessed with the blood,
[157] and she went to join Akidinimba. Kidaya was a niece of Ekianga, and she was more modest than the really shameless Akidinimba. Kidaya was handsome rather than pretty, and she had a reputation for being able to beat up even the strongest youths if their advances were not welcome to her. So the elima promised to be exciting as well as lively.

The two girls each chose their personal assistants and called in all their young friends to join them in the hut of Kondabate and her husband, Ausu. Kondabate built on a special extension to accommodate them. This was in Apa Kadiketu, and not long afterward the elima was moved to the village, where it took over Ekianga's house. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, went with them to be "father of the elima," to make sure that they were protected and properly cared for. Asofalinda, Kidaya's aunt, went as "mother of the elima," to look after the personal needs of the girls, to see that they got the right food, and generally to act as chaperone. Mambunia was a bachelor, and Asofalinda a widow.

When we arrived at the village for the close of the molimo festival, the elima was well under way. The girls had already learned most of their songs, and they were now at the stage where they were taking a more active, even an aggressive interest in the eligible bachelors of the neighborhood. In the evenings, when they assembled

881 533 *were* women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires.
881 885 533 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 885 157 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 533 415 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya.
881 152 302 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing

the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mambasa.

The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masisi, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sansiwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sansiwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *boloko* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

Sansiwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sansiwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sansiwake was left outside.

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
• 157 **Evening talking time.**—The pygmies seem to be a little less talkative
571
[P.333-B]

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are about on a level with white men. There
517 is little chance for extensive conversa-
521 tions during the daytime while out
571 hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some people are quiet, others are noisier.
[157] Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]

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PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

192 776

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, [761] 776 828 [772] 776 828 159 534 [535] [765]

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomsu* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

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but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually nonexistent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
• 159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

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Mbuti

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadikeru. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

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Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

P 177 754 C 563 754

The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

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It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was

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nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

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Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 177 169 754 763 C 563 754 the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."

Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

P 177 754 C 563 754 If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said nothing.

P 177 764 C 563 761 764 [754] Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiating. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother. *We* do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

[P. 161-A]
162 slight excess of females in the composition of the population. He gives the following figures, evidently from a population of 411 adults.

	Children Per Cent	Adults Per Cent	Total Per Cent
Male	48.0	48.9	48.4
Female	52.0	51.1	51.6

[165] Infant mortality (32.7 per cent)
Average age 27–30
9 widowers among 201 men
9 widows among 210 women
14 polygamous families (3.1 per cent)

• 16 Demographic data for the Sua net hunters is
[114] not available. Putnam kept detailed medical records for all members of the band for a decade, but many of these have been lost in the course of shipment to the United States, and the few that are available do not provide a
[184] representative picture. From such data as are available, there does not seem, however, to be any significant difference between the two groups.

Schebesta (1934) estimates the total population of the Ituri Mbuti to be more than 35,000, 161 in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies inhabited the forest for a distance of seven days' [621] march from east to west, and six days from north to south; and that there were 40 chiefs, each with from 40 to 200 followers, a few with as many as 500. There is no official count that can be drawn on, but Schebesta and Putnam both traveled extensively through the entire Ituri area, and the closeness of their estimates favors the acceptance of their figures as fair approximations. Lloyd's reference is interesting in that it gives some indication of what an individual Pygmy considers to be the extent of the Mbuti and their territory.

Reviewing his interpretation of demographic 163 data collected on his first two visits to the 165 Congo, as set out in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," Schebesta (1952, 50–53) later says that among the Efe archers the average number of children born to each woman is three, of which two survive. He also finds that there is a 162

[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty 114 121 elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups [224] that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

621 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 177 [161]
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [174]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [177]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Schebesta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three [411]
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or subtribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only certain units are the nuclear family and the economic association of a number of such families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe*." He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie*," the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

[191] [619] [614] 621 602 [594] [614]

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,

162 [P.160-B]

[P.160-C]

among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps.

621 162. 621 628

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided.

621 224 423

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

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[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

[P. 161-A]
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[NET HUNTERS]

621 group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by
361 Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20
and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man,
[592] his wife or wives, and a few children, so the
[62] total number of Pygmies to an average camp is

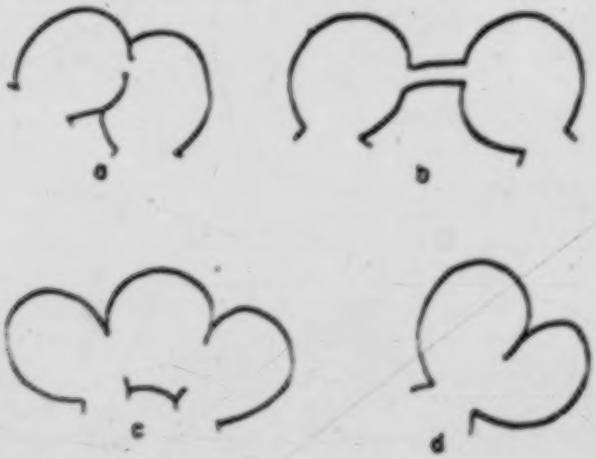

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 194-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.194-C]
about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bachelor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 476 [593] Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 476 561 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 739 821 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 5

613 LINEAGES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPOSITION OF
621 THE EPULU NET-HUNTING BAND DURING 1957–1958, NOT
162 INCLUDING VISITORS STAYING LESS THAN THE
DURATION OF ONE CAMP

		married		*unmarried*
Bambaka		14	13	15
Bandohwa		1	—	3
Bi		—	2	4
Bokele	(1)	2	3	4
	(2)	9	5	11
	(3)	—	1	—
Bolima		2	—	—
Bomasua		3	8	8
Bongwana		2	5	5
Bucla		1	1	—
Bwango		2	1	3
Meki		—	2	2
Molomba		—	2	1
Ngamo		5	—	7
Pasima		—	1	—
Pokama		1	—	4
Pokbaya		2	2	5
Poté		—	1	—
Poteba		3	2	5
Potola		1	2	—
Poya		2	—	5
Pucmi	(1)	5	4	7
	(2)	6	3	12
Pukema		—	2	2
Puma		1	2	4
Pumasa		—	1	—
Pusa		—	2	5
Pusei		—	1	1
Titi		—	—	1
Ungbuem		3	—	7
Totals:		65	66	121

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1966) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Individual members mentioned in text by name are indicated on Table 4. 613 621 162

To get some idea of the extent of mobility from band to band, the figures in Table 5 (total) should be compared with figures that could be reasonably expected to apply to an average-sized camp of this band; *i.e.*, of 17 huts, each containing a married couple and three or four unmarried children.

Any one such "average" camp would be composed of little more than a quarter of all those who, at one time or another during the year, would be band members.

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

592 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[P. 335-A]

621 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages,
592 to a camp, with from twenty to forty
162 active adult males.

621 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live
361 in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since
[514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 When they have decided where to
361 move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure.
[482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 When they have hit upon a suitable
621 spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[p. 335-B]

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in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies in- [621]
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[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

2: Turnbull E-8 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different
114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par-
123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time
[164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of
[165] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I
123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation;
648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au-
#177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con-
[192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881 act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
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931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
• [164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 156-C]

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[164]

19. In one of Cephu's camps, Abeni talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive. 593 578

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin. 593 578 554 157 [164]

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke. 578 609 276 576

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sansiwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

THE WORLD BEYOND

Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clearings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers? 648 199 361

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans were being cooked for lunch.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill outside the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 648 199 361 147 164

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impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

[829]

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165 still lived. The pygmy resistance to
164 wound infections is incredibly great, although they will die like flies from pneumonia.

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372 burning. Pygmies are unusually restless during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire.
[216] Here he will often light up his pipe and take a deep puff of tobacco, apparently to get the maximum effect of the nico-

[P. 341-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Schebesta (1934) estimates the total population of the Ituri Mbuti to be more than 35,000, in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies inhabited the forest for a distance of seven days' march from east to west, and six days from north to south; and that there were 40 chiefs, each with from 40 to 200 followers, a few with as many as 500. There is no official count that can be drawn on, but Schebesta and Putnam both traveled extensively through the entire Ituri area, and the closeness of their estimates favors the acceptance of their figures as fair approximations. Lloyd's reference is interesting in that it gives some indication of what an individual Pygmy considers to be the extent of the Mbuti and their territory.

Reviewing his interpretation of demographic data collected on his first two visits to the Congo, as set out in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," Schebesta (1952, 50–53) later says that among the Efe archers the average number of children born to each woman is three, of which two survive. He also finds that there is a

[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

[P. 161-A]

162 slight excess of females in the composition of the population. He gives the following figures, evidently from a population of 411 adults.

	Children Per Cent	Adults Per Cent	Total Per Cent
Male	48.0	48.9	48.4
Female	52.0	51.1	51.6

[165] Infant mortality (32.7 per cent)
Average age 27-30
9 widowers among 201 men
9 widows among 210 women
14 polygamous families (3.1 per cent)

16. Demographic data for the Sua net hunters is
[114] not available. Putnam kept detailed medical records for all members of the band for a decade, but many of these have been lost in the course of shipment to the United States, and the few that are available do not provide a
[184] representative picture. From such data as are available, there does not seem, however, to be any significant difference between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

[164] [184] [168] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [061] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

• 165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[P. 222-B]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti have effective medicines against poisonous snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *tebo* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to produce abortions. For ailments that they are unable to cure and that are foreign to them, some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

[NET HUNTERS]

1. A Pygmy who had been visiting another band returned to his own camp and reported that a cousin of his had died. A wailing, suddenly started, was taken up, mostly by women but also by men and children, all over the camp. It lasted for 10 minutes and was repeated several times during the evening for five minutes at a time. Everyone went to sleep as usual; there was a final wail on waking the next morning. 763

2. A newborn infant (son of one of the most important hunters in the band) died at night. Only its father and mother wailed. Early in the morning the parents dug a pit in the house and buried the baby, wrapped in a small mat, with no ceremony. The next morning the couple dismantled the house and, using the same material, rebuilt it on the other side of the clearing. That night the father danced as usual. 763 764

3. An old Mbuti woman died while visiting the village. She was the mother of three of the male members of the band. Most of her relatives were with her when she died, and they wailed. When the news was received back in the hunting camp, such of her relatives as remained there wailed. Only one of them, one of the great hunters of the band, left to attend the burial. 763

4. There was an epidemic in a hunting camp, 763 731 165.

[P.222-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.223-A]

763 and two people died. After burial and wailing,
731 camp was broken. On the march to another site a
165 woman who had not contracted the illness died, although she was not "ready to die." Within two weeks a woman gored by a buffalo (an extremely rare occurrence) died from her wounds. Following this last event, there was a consultation, and it was suggested that the band should disperse as there was some strong influence at work.[1] However, the dispersal did not take place.

763 5. A very well-liked hunter died while in the
[754] village. There was some talk that a half-paralyzed Pygmy, also a member of the band, had put a curse on him; but this in no way impaired the friendship between the accused and the children of the deceased. When the Pygmy was dying, his son wanted to take him back to the forest but was persuaded to let him die in the village in peace. His family and friends were present; those in the hut wailed occasionally, those outside were busy cooking. When he died the wailing broke out anew, and relatives started coming into the village from the forest. His villager patron could not come, so he sent his brother, the headman of a village a few

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time [164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, • [165] caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; 648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- *177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lullabies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [533] [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but between the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is seldom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as elsewhere, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

757 For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

755 177 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The greatest single cause of mortality in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

[P. 340-B]

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165 Another occasional cause of death is burning. Pygmies are unusually rest-
372 less during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire.
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[P. 341-A]

165 372 [276] tine in the least possible time. Sometimes this puff knocks him out; he faints, and falls forward into the fire. Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 [764] [273] When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen bury him near the camp. They get bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.

[P.341-B]

563 582 There is no reliable detailed information as to population movement, though the general opinion is that the population has remained static [166] for some time; nor are there data on the frequency of intermarriage between Mbuti and villagers. Jadin (1936) and Costermans (1937) confirm Schebesta's (1952, 47) opinion that miscegenation is a one-way movement. A village male may take a Pygmy wife, in which case the children will be brought up in the village, but a Pygmy male will never take a villager wife. This holds equally among archers and net hunters (Putnam, 1948, 325). Information for the Aka is, as usual, conflicting and unreliable. Schweinfurth (1874) asserts that there is intermarriage between the Aka and the Mangbetu; Burrows (1898) claims that there is no such intermarriage.

Information as to the attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward miscegenation is also lacking. Schebesta says that certain northern tribes of villagers aver horror at the idea of intermarriage, but that in spite of this it takes place and is nowhere unknown. Both the Lese and the [144] Bira tribes, with which the archers and net hunters are most in contact, are considerably modified physically owing to the frequency of miscegenation (Schebesta, 1952; Geluwe, 1956), [P.161-B]

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p. 220- D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the 123
year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning fes- 114
tivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when 764
in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much 765
respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even [184]
among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migra- 114
tions, living in every camp it established during the course of some 166.
fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it; on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts 114
of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion [126]
was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others 123
to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 121 648 There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist between two peoples in a context such as this. Apart from one of symbiosis, implying interdependence, there could be political subjugation, such as existed, say, between the Tussi and the Hutu. But that is plainly not the case here. The villagers themselves admit their inability to exert physical force to bend the Mbuti to their will, for the Mbuti always have the ultimate escape of flight to the sanctuary of the forest. The villagers are completely unequipped to pursue the Mbuti into the forest, and never attempt it. They are incapable of even finding the Mbuti if the hunters wish not to be found. And, as we have seen, there is no effective political mechanism for maintaining any kind of political relationship, let alone one of superordination/subordination.

C 563 121 P *177 121 Another possible relationship would be one of assimilation, such as occurred among the Ganda of East Africa, where two different peoples merged, as did their two different economies. At the present there is no question of actual assimilation, but the existence of linguistic and institutional similarities certainly indicates an interchange of ideas, at least. But it is, at the moment, an interchange of outward forms only, and not of the accompanying systems and structure. And while a great deal of intimacy is expressed, in action as in word, between the two groups, there is also a great deal of expressed opposition, and sometimes hostility.

C 563 121 P *177 582 121 The intermarriage between Mbuti girls and village men and the attempted absorption of the Mbuti into the village kinship system may be considered as steps toward assimilation, but if so they are very tentative and preliminary steps, and as such need not concern us here. Indeed we shall find that there are other indications of the reverse process, of separation. There is no question of physical separation in the sense of the expulsion of one group by the other, but a perfectly valid alternative relationship left to us for consideration is one of ideological separation accompanied by a mutually accepted territorial separation—a form of indigenous apartheid.

P • 166 *177 182 This in fact seems to be the case, for in common conversation, as in action, both groups distinguish the village and the village people from the forest and the forest people. The Mbuti effectively are the only group to cross the territorial boundaries, and the ideological boundaries remain inviolate on both sides. When the Mbuti cross into the village world they leave the forest behind them, and with it they leave their forest social system. Forest values cannot be so easily left

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628 site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assumption that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to express and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[3]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[3] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-A]
THE FOREST WORLD

361
137
342

17. A forest camp (a corner of apa Lelo) is far removed from the dust and dirt and heat of the village. When the Mbuti tire of the village, they can escape to the forest and build a camp such as this in a matter of a few hours.

[166]

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the
621 economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is
628 determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to
224 move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it
166 temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself
131 is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence
131 the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING
224 BANDS

131 It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 57 12
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 621
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 554
others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438]
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinate to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

224 626 [821] 152 [166] [648] ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of friction).

There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 621 221 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 593 152 291 621 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 593 621 166 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 626 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem- [221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
• 166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

*177 754 [182] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife, from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

Since I had been with them before, the group had changed slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122 •
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [152]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it?

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in

[P. 254- D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
• 17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-
439 hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic exis-
B21] tence and the loose structure of band composition, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band. 000 582 621

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of 583 [171] [439]

[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage. [613]

[P. 180-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1
Mombu FO31
Lese

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] P M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

[ARCHERS]

628 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
628 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages. Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in
[171] any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[114] [1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and confusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship constitution of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and as descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[P. 185-B]

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 17
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a
religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to 776
a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of 177
Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager
notions of the demon of the forest (for the vil-
lager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans [114]
(1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take ac-
count of the essential difference between Toré
and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among
the central archers (above) but chose to ignore.

Schebesta believes that, though different 776
groups of archers give precedence to one name 82
or another, there is only one God of the Under- [184]
growth, and he is universally associated with
fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow
(which frequently brings death), dreams, as
well as with the good life of the hunter. The [825]
chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers,
in rapport with the sky and the moon, the
storm and lightning.

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, 776
whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The [171]
Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar
sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called
toré mo-ichu. They make their presence known
by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portend-
ing death, the other auguring good.

Cult Practices 776

A number of practices are associated with the 782
[p. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P.190-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.191-A]

776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
192 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[177] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[775] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[776] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a division of labor between Pygmy and village groups, the two together forming a larger economic entity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very productive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time occupation.

[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Arab traders ivory became a most precious
[237] commodity, and the Pygmies were doubly in-
[439] couraged to kill elephants. For the Pygmies themselves, a slain elephant was a source of great satisfaction, providing them with meat ample enough to obviate the necessity of hunting for several days.

[157] The killing of the animal was, and still is, a matter that inspired the normally audacious Mbuti with some caution. Putnam says that elephant hunting is a specialist occupation; not every Pygmy is brave enough, and the tech-
• [171] nique itself takes great skill. The villagers use spear-falls and elephant pits (dug so as to trap

[P. 206-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

the elephant's forefeet and head only), but this method of hunting is foreign to the Mbuti. Travelers such as Parke (1891) who observed spear-falls and pits almost certainly saw those made by villagers, not Pygmies. Casati (1891), Lloyd (1899), Geil (1905), Christy (1924), and others mention the fact that Pygmies are able to kill elephants with their bows and arrows, a technical ability strongly denied by Schebesta, Putnam, and the Pygmies themselves. Schweinfurth (1874, 65–66, 70) was told by a villager informant that the northern Mbuti are able to kill an elephant either with bow and arrow or by thrusting a spear into its belly. The latter

224 [171]

[P. 206-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 [853]

A woman who has given birth is not allowed to leave her hut until game has fallen into her husband's net. If the camp is moved before this happens, she is hidden in the bush and taken separately to the new camp where she is kept hidden until her new hut is built for her by relatives (not stated which relatives). The husband himself may not join the hunt but sends his net with another member of the group.

The father keeps the arrow that cut the umbilical cord, and the cord itself, until the child is old enough to throw them both away into the forest.

If no animal falls into the husband's net (the rule is extended usually to include some close relative's net) for some weeks, the mother and infant may be brought out of seclusion by the giving of a feast to her relatives. The baby is then shaved with an arrowpoint, bathed, rubbed with oil and red *nkula* paste, and bands [851]

[1] Note that this took place in a village, where such supernatural explanations are always sought by villagers. It is doubtful that the same explanation would have been given in the forest context. [877 871]

[P. 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do not participate fully in the proceedings of the [575] *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and [304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkumbi* 177 serves merely to give status in villager society. 17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation [554] into the religious associations of their own men and women; the *molimo* and *elima*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[p. 219 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

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[535]
[575]
[71]

FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 536 177 157 811

[P 232-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 235-A]

534 that a Pygmy would think of carrying with him, as it is light, portable, and most easily concealed from the villagers from whom he probably stole it. There is no record that the net hunters make any instruments other than the flute and the resonant sticks, and possibly a special musical bow which is made just as is their hunting bow but larger and with a larger section of vine as the "string." Ordinary hunting bows are sometimes used as musical bows.

533 From the material on net hunters it seems that music is virtually exclusively vocal and that, apart from lullabies and some play songs, song involves chorus rather than solo work. Men and women join in song; sometimes they merely double each other's parts (as in the "secular" songs); at other times each takes different and complementary parts (*elima* songs). Certain *elima* songs and all *molimo* songs are sung only by adult women and men, respectively.

533 171 Merriam (1953), in an examination of music from the Congo and Rwanda, writes that Congo music has four main characteristics: (1) lack of emphasis on percussion; (2) variety of instruments and styles; (3) heavy Arabic influence; and (4) considerable change currently in process.

[NET HUNTERS]

531 This account of music among the villagers in
• 171 theIturi Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each
533 one of these four points. Though the music of
171 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifi-
184 cally considered, it appears from all the known material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to theIturi or even the
533 Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme
534 percussive effects are obtained by resonant
184 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted,
[177] there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776 close the forest to them, until they make the 782 propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are expected to make offerings to Kalisia from their [778] food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this purpose (*ende kela*). The hunters may less ceremoniously throw offerings of food into the forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right mind would fail to make these propitiatory sacrifices: "*à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira*" (Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Schebesta does not always identify his source of 114 information. However, from a number of admissions such as that noted above, we must [124] assume that his informants were frequently villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied on the question-and-answer technique among both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933, 171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776 forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171] villagers, who regard him in no way as benevolent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity Songe (the moon), with its own remote world, as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

two manifestations of the same spiritual being 761
and that both this being and the *molimo* are in 776
some way connected with death. The former
causes death (whether in some or all cases is not
known), but the latter seems to be different in
that it appears only the day following death
and can restore normality to the community in
crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis.
The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo* [782]
"animal" in times of crisis and brings it physi-
cally into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's
notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings
of food, which is consumed by members of the
molimo, and by dance and song.

No information is given as to any belief in 761
the origin of death, or of any human failings 784
that might cause it other than violation of the
molimo by a woman or of the *elima* by a man.
Infringement of rules of exogamy and other
taboos may or may not cause death; individual
opinion among the net hunters varies consider-
ably on such matters.

According to local informants, the only vil- 776
lagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, 171
Ndaka, and Bali.

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but 821
not necessarily of death. When lightning comes
at night, campfires may be covered so that the [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esamba* for *lusumba*.

[P 238-0]

[P. 256-A]

as yet assumed village values in name only, and only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

This interpretation of the function of the *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an outward symbol of the association of two neighboring peoples that, for one reason or another, come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 776 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] [554] [171] [181]

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

plained. But there is a feeling, and I cannot say 533
that it is more than that, that song has power. 538
The song may have no words; it may be a mix- 789
ture of meaningless sounds; but plainly it is esthetically satisfying to the Mbuti. These wordless songs are among the most powerful. When the father killed the bird, he killed the song, and he dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever. In real life, also, song is powerful. Membership in the religious associations of the women and the men gives the Pygmy the right to take part in the singing of songs peculiar to those associations. In fact, it imposes a duty to do so. The songs are distinguished not by their content but by their musical style and the technique of performance. It is the *sound*, rather than the word content, that matters. These songs are sung, in their most powerful form, only on occasions of the greatest distress, such as sickness or death of one of the great hunters, or failure in the chase. These are departures from normality. It has been my contention from an analysis of the function of music among the Mbuti that song is believed to restore that normality.

As well as several more obvious differences 538
from villager values, such as emphasis by the 171 •
[p. 271-D] 181

[p. 272-A]
538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
• 171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.
538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 272-87]

cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

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The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

538 778 771 171

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For additional information on the question of Villager influence on the Mbuti, and Villager/Mbuti cultural differences, see also Congo-Kinshasa FO1, categories 101, 241, 105, 628, 361.]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal relationship with the forest, but a very different one. The forest surrounds them on all sides, but they do not live in it or by it, only despite it. Their initial act is one of destruction, the cutting down of the forest to make way for village and plantation which in turn are destroyed in the final act. The hostility is mutual, as the villagers see it. They have to fight not only the forest itself, but also the creatures that live in it. Elephants, leopards, baboons and Mbuti, all are a menace to life and livelihood. A whole plantation can be destroyed in a few hours by even a modest sprinkling of elephants. The excessive and sometimes erratic rainfall can cause hunger for a whole season. Baboons and Mbuti come in the night and steal the ripening fruit. Leopards prey on the few scrawny goats and chickens the villagers manage to raise.

As for the Mbuti, so for the villagers is the forest an entity to be reckoned with, upon which life and death depend; it is also an entity that is natural and supernatural. But instead of acceding to the natural, the villagers with their superior technology combat it; and instead of respecting the supernatural in the sense that the Mbuti respect it, the villagers oppose it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate. They people the forest with evil spirits, and they fill their lives with magic, witchcraft and a belief in sorcery.

The forest achieves the establishment of two virtually irreconcilable systems of values. It further determines, for both Mbuti and villagers, a certain degree of nomadism, and it tends to fragment large populations into small, relatively isolated bands or villages. For the Mbuti the forest merely indicates natural boundaries, such as valleys, ridges, rivers, caves and so forth, within which a band can conveniently roam at will throughout the years, economically self-sufficient. Within that nomadic framework there is an enormous sense of permanence and of territory. But for the villagers the forest announces, at the end of every three years or so, that the village must pack up and move, it does not much matter where. The move will inevitably bring the village into renewed conflict with the forest, and may well bring it into conflict with a neighboring village which has also been forced to move. In spite of the vast size of the forest and its small population, the villagers are unwilling to go off entirely on their own. At the present time they move up and down the long road that connects Stanleyville with Irumu, or Wamba with Nia-Nia and Mambasa. Formerly it seems that villages were similarly stretched out along recognized trails, and seldom moved away from them. On any given trail, or road, the number of suitable sites for a semi-permanent village is limited, but fric-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they
152 should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death
765 at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not
[783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an-
[594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby
462 female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their
[171] women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[171]

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

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Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

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[561]

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

DISPUTE	Number Recorded	Number of Decisions or Judgments made	Instances of Positive Action
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- [114]
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon [176]
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.282]

CHAPTER 16

Principles of Organization (2)

THE VILLAGE CONTEXT

* 177 The principles of organization that have begun to emerge with
• 171 reference to the forest world of the Mbuti only become fully com-
121 prehensible when we relate them to the village world. Gluckman (1960) gave some general but highly pertinent indications of a somewhat similar situation involving a dichotomy in the lives of Africans in North Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In that situation the conflict, or rather the opposition, was between the ancestral land and the town. The land represented subsistence to some extent, but primarily security; the town was a place to raid for money. While Gluckman did not see any "detribalization" involved, he pointed out that the African is tribalized, in towns and in rural areas, in two different ways, tribal attachments in urban areas having to work within a setting of urban associations: "Hence the African in rural areas and in town is two different men; for the social situation of tribal home and of urban employment determine his actions and associations, within the major politico-economic system covering both areas" (1960, p. 11).

Gluckman refers to the consequent social and mental conflict, and sees "considerable resolution of this conflict through the separation
* 177 of the spheres of activities" (1960, p. 11). In assessing the Forest/
121 Village relationship we see a similar situation, with the village being
182 regarded as a place to raid, creating numerous social and mental conflicts which again are largely resolved by separation in what I have called a system of indigenous apartheid. There is more to it than that, however. We cannot suppose, however complete the barrier, that the Mbuti live an utterly schizophrenic existence; even within the opposition there must be order. Nor can we suppose that the order comes from a mere dilution of forest values when the Mbuti come to the village; it is rather, as Gluckman says, that the same values have to work within a setting of urban (village) associations.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

224 get one cut of one animal, another cut of another, depending on what part they played in the capture of each. In any case, even if there is only one animal, everyone will get something to eat. This does not mean that all families eat equally well, however; some have more than others, some better cuts. There is both a reward for special luck and prowess, and a charitable mechanism for those who have shown neither. Sometimes the net hunters catch an okapi; in this case there is enough meat to feed the camp for a week, and everyone eats and eats well.

The meat is cut up by the man who killed the animal, or anyone who knows the rules. In any case there are always arguments. The man who makes a [626] *mistake* is cried down; they all know [571] the rules, or think that they know them. Government, as far as distribution of spoils is concerned, is by argument and common consent without specific leadership in any individual—the typical pygmy way of making decisions and ordering events.

In the case of the hunter who catches his animal all alone, without help of any kind, the carcass belongs to him alone. Theoretically, he and his family could [626] eat it all up if he wished, but there is little chance that this would happen; he would not dare face public opinion. He would be labeled a mean man and [439] would suffer for it in the end. It may happen however that he is behind in his gifts to his Negro host. In this case he will take the carcass uncut into the village, to avoid trouble from that quarter, and the other pygmies will not hold this against him, provided that there is other food to eat.

• [171] The division of spoils after an elephant hunt follows the same principle as it does among the Indians of Tierra del Fuego or Lower California when a whale washes ashore—regardless of who may be responsible there is a

[P 333-A]

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pyg-
571 mies seem to be a little less talkative
[P.333-B]

825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation.

262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain

[P. 338-A]

262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 703 The animals of the forest, which symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting; flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

716 [M] Both pygmies and Negroes believe in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

[P. 338-B]

.172 Archeological sources tell us nothing concerning the origin or history of the African Pygmies. Putnam reports that neolithic axheads are frequently found throughout the Ituri, often revealed when a tree is split by lightning. The [B21] Mbuti, however, do not appear to recognize their origin or use, and refer to them as "turds of lightning" (Patrick Putnam, 1948, 339). Haene (1949) reports the finding of round stones with holes, which might have been currency, in the Ituri Forest, and appeals for engineers and others concerned in exploitation of the forest to be made aware of the possibility of such finds. Soors (1950a, 59), commenting on this appeal, writes that he met an engineer who, in the course of excavation in the Rega Forest, had found a large flat stone bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Asked what had become of it, the engineer replied: "*Nous l'avons cassée en mille morceaux—nous ne tenons pas d'être dérangés dans nos traveaux par des amateurs d'antiquités.*"

174 175 Recorded history is, of course, nil, so any reliable historical reconstruction is ruled out for the moment and must remain so until there is much more physiological, demographic, or archeological evidence. Even the date and direction of migrations among the various village tribes are uncertain, though a considerable amount of research has been done in this direction (Moeller, 1934, 1936). We have 174 merely traditions of origin and history, and even this material is scanty and unenlightening.

[P. 162-B]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 241-0]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which 172 they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *sitana*." [192] The word *sitana* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

789 **Weather magic.**—One class of 821 weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta [2] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[113] [2] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933, p. 243.

[P.339-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [765]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 825
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, "... there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

Congo-Kinshasa Fol

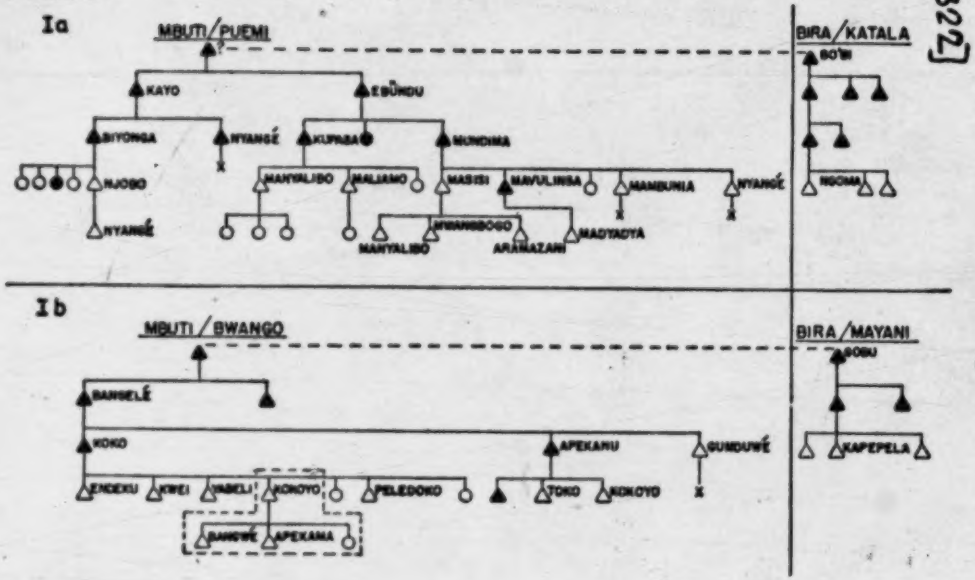
[P.322]

P 177* 608 511 173 • 173 C 171 608 511 563 173

Table 1a
Mbuti/Puemi: *All living members make regular prestations to Ngoma, their hereditary* kpara, *though he is permanently absent from the area. Njobo and Ngoma independently declared that Kayo's father allied with Ngoma's great-grandfather, Bo'bi. His offspring have been inherited by the senior member of Bo'bi's lineage since, and still recognize reciprocal obligations.*

Table 1b
Mbuti/Bwango: *All but Kokoyo and family, who hunt with the Epulu band, still hunt in the territory around Kapapela's village, moving, when he does, as a unit. They all claim to have been inherited from Gobu.*

TABLE I



Both Ngoma and Kapapela are renowned for their affection for "their" Mbuti.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

Z 186 563 581 ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

P 581 The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

P Z 186 266 291 173

. . . .

Z 563 881 In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

P 881 177 881

Z P 561 The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among
177 them much longer. For some thousands of years
175 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside
[174] influence. In historic times various village tribes invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering
177 economy. What emerges from a study of this
182 [P.147 B]

[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into 114
three linguistic groups is another result of his 197
preoccupation with the problem of the sepa- 101
rateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture 114
is the purest, being least affected by contact 197
with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it [194]. must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.162-A]

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

174 Here again we are in a highly speculative field with very little data to work on. The present distribution of the African Pygmies and
[175] Pygmoids tells us little. Early sources, reports of nineteenth-century travelers (Schweinfurth, 1874), tradition, and current distribution all seem to combine to indicate that the northeast Congo has at all times been inhabited by Pygmies who spread out through the entire forest area of equatorial Africa. Both Schebesta and Putnam subscribe to this view, but others, such as Kerken (1944), state that the Pygmies and Pygmoids of the equatorial forest are *not* the ancient inhabitants of that area. This school of thought prefers to regard the Pygmies as a degeneration of the basic Negro race, a view contradicted by contemporary physical anthropologists and geneticists (Jadin, 1936; Gusinde, 1948; Schebesta, 1938).

172 Archeological sources tell us nothing concerning the origin or history of the African Pygmies. Putnam reports that neolithic axheads are frequently found throughout the Ituri, often revealed when a tree is split by lightning. The [B21] Mbuti, however, do not appear to recognize their origin or use, and refer to them as "turds of lightning" (Patrick Putnam, 1948, 339). Haene (1949) reports the finding of round stones with holes, which might have been currency, in the Ituri Forest, and appeals for engineers and others concerned in exploitation of the forest to be made aware of the possibility of such finds. Soors (1950a, 59), commenting on this appeal, writes that he met an engineer who, in the course of excavation in the Rega Forest, had found a large flat stone bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Asked what had become of it, the engineer replied: "*Nous l'avons cassée en mille morceaus—nous ne tenons pas d'être dérangés dans nos traveaux par des amateurs d'antiquités.*"

•174 175 Recorded history is, of course, nil, so any reliable historical reconstruction is ruled out for the moment and must remain so until there is much more physiological, demographic, or archeological evidence. Even the date and direction of migrations among the various village tribes are uncertain, though a considerable amount of research has been done in this direction (Moeller, 1934, 1936). We have 174 merely traditions of origin and history, and even this material is scanty and unenlightening.

[P. 162-B]

[P. 162-C]

For one thing it is often difficult to tell whether 174 •
a particular legend is of villager or Pygmy origin. Even from the remoter groups of Pygmoids in the central Congo, legends of origin among both villager and Pygmy agree that the Pygmies are the original "people of the forest." Verner (1902) refers to legends from the Wissman Falls area, told by both peoples, that give a purely practical account of how the Pygmies were driven before villager tribes invading their country, and how some retreated farther into the forest and others were captured and brought with their captors. Torday (1925b) gives a Luba legend attributing the origin of the Pygmies to Woto, Father of the Luba, who brought them out from the trees of the forest by singing. Torday (1925b) also mentions an interesting [648]
custom on the accession of a Luba king, the ceremonial for which requires the Pygmies of the kingdom to come to the capital to act as bodyguard for the new king.

bodyguard for the new king. Such isolated 174 •
references indicate a long-established associa- 177
tion between the two peoples, and that the 571
original nature of the association was a military one. Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Ward (1910), Schweinfurth (1874), and others, write of the employment of the Pygmies by the villagers as spies, scouts, mercenary soldiers, and guides. Putnam in his earlier notes mentions frequently coming across references among the older Pygmies to this relationship, which of course came to an end when the Belgian authorities stopped intertribal warfare.

Legends from the Epulu area (Turnbull, 174
1959) show scant interest in the questions of origin and history, but that here also both Pygmy and villager agree that the Pygmy is the original inhabitant of the forest and is, to a certain extent, feared and respected as such by the villager. No legends from this area of the Ituri or from any other so far reported (Schebesta, 1936b, 340; Joset, 1948, 25–56, 137–157) show that the Pygmies or villagers have any concept of the Pygmies' originating elsewhere than in this northeast corner of the Congo, nor do they reveal any doubt in the minds of these people that the Pygmies were the original inhabitants of that forest.

Socio-cultural change has been taking place 178
ever since the first villager invasions, several hundred years ago, but most rapidly in the past half century. The progress of this change can be

[P. 162-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]
alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of inter-village warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] • [178] 648 184 177 571

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

niques do not affect the basic structural unity. The fact that the 101
Mbuti fall into different linguistic groups is no more than accidental, 197
and is of recent historic origin. The linguistic division is that propounded by Schebesta (1938, pp. 24–26). In effect he uses the terms Aka, Efe and Sua to refer to those pygmies who were in territories invaded and settled by the Ngbetu/Zande, the Lesé, and the Forest Bira respectively; these pygmies apparently adopted the languages of the newcomers to their respective areas and they have maintained some kind of relationship with their Negro neighbors ever since.

The question of language is by no means settled yet, and it may be 197
that either KiLesé or KiBira may in fact prove to be a language of 174
pygmy origin adopted by the Negro invaders. At the moment there is no significant evidence available to this effect, and given a situation where small isolated hunting bands (of an absolute maximum of thirty nuclear families and a possible minimum of three) are brought sharply into contact with larger, more permanent, technologically more advanced peoples with a tribal system, we can only assume the likelihood that the pygmies adopted the languages of the newcomers, losing most of their own.

In this case the linguistic division suggested by Schebesta most 197
certainly only refers to a post-contact situation and does not neces- 114
sarily point to any indigenous difference between these three groups of Ituri hunters and gatherers. The fact that, very approximately, the linguistic boundaries also correspond to the boundaries between pygmy hunters who emphasize the spear, the bow and arrow, and the net may be no more than a mark of acculturation with the three distinct Negro groups; on the other hand it may point to some earlier distinction, but in any case is of much more significance in any contemporary study of social structure.

In dismissing the linguistic differences as any indication of internal 197
differentiation it is worth pointing out that any pygmy from any area 101
in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken. This is one small pointer toward an earlier linguistic unity among all Ituri pygmies, as is the fact that they all seem to recognize themselves by the term Mbuti. One hears this term far more frequently than any other when pygmies are distinguishing themselves from villagers, in all parts of the forest. Even in distinguishing them-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-KinShasta FO1

ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]

Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends. They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans. It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups. In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always pat-
[611] rilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band com-
613 position be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is com-
184 parable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
[224] groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
621 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
613 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
174 attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
62 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage [621] membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for
[141] belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

175 114 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twenties to study them.

114 144 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later 174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 533 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 177 In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 177
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [161]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [174]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Sche- [177]
besta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three [411]
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among them much longer. For some thousands of years 177 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside •175 influence. In historic times various village tribes [174] invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering 177 economy. What emerges from a study of this 182 [p.147 B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

SOURCE MATERIAL

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

114 175 177 ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING THINGS about a survey of ancient and early sources concerning the African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from the time these people first entered the recorded scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge of them decreased steadily until the late nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact. They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta, 1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth [101] Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of representatives of conquered nations, among which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the northernmost Pygmies are still known today. Yet, until the turn of the present century, the modern Western world believed the Pygmy to be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing Pygmies along the Nile.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 Herodotus (1866, vol. 2, sect. 32) in the fifth
• 115 century B.C. reports an expedition of Nasamo-
177 nians to discover the source of the Nile. They cross a vast desert and, while resting at an oasis, are captured by diminutive men, "under the middle height."

Homer (1864, vol. 3, 3–7) introduces an element of myth when he talks of fighting between the cranes and the "Pygmaean race" to the south, but Aristotle (1910, vol. 8, sect. 2) sees fit, for some reason, to assert quite categorically that Pygmies do in fact live in the land "from which flows the Nile"; he adds that they live in caves.

An isolated reference in the sixth century comes from the Emperor Justinian's ambassador who, on his way to Ethiopia, on an island off the east African coast, came across a tribe of Pygmies speaking an unknown language (unknown even to local inhabitants). That is about the last reference to Pygmies as human beings for some 10 centuries. In the fourteenth century the cartographer who drew up the Hereford Mappa Mundi still placed the Pygmies near the

[P. 149-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.149-C]

source of the Nile, although in his secondary role as theologian he depicted them as monsters, with their faces in their breasts or their heads below their shoulders. He labels them as troglodytes.

Battel (1625, vol. 2, 983) refers to the existence of a nation of dwarfs and places them in the land of the Yobbi, north of the Sette River. He calls them "Dongo," and it is in this area where Du Chaillu (1867, 1890) discovered the "Obongo" Pygmies in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other seventeenth-century reports by Portuguese explorers describe what seem to be relatively pure Pygmy races who apparently brought ivory down to the west coast traders. Unfortunately, these explorers had vivid imaginations and interspersed their descriptions with most unlikely information, such as the power of these little people to become invisible, the only explanation they could

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

find for how the Pygmies could kill elephant. In this way belief in the existence of real Pygmy races in Africa was only further discredited; so much so that an anatomist named Tyson obtained a skeleton of one of these fabulous beings and, after careful examination, wrote a treatise (Tyson, 1699) showing that it was quite clear that "Pygmies" were, in fact, not human beings but apes. He had good grounds for this assertion, because the skeleton he examined, and which survived until recently at the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, England, was that of a chimpanzee. He rounds off his discourse in the following general terms: "The most diligent enquiries of late into all parts of the inhabited world could never discover any such puny diminutive race of mankind." His explanation of the "fables" was that travelers had mistaken apes for men (Windle, 1894).

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth there seems to have been a complete silence. Then follows a succession of explorers, travelers, administrators, and anthropologists who finally established the fact that Pygmies did exist and were, indeed, human. But that, and their approximate distribution, is about all they do tell us. Well into the twentieth century we get fanciful adventurers seriously observing

[p. 149-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 150-A]

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.
177 The material provided by these nineteenth-
114 century explorers is valuable, however, for an
175 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
101 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley (1879, 1890), made little more than passing reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally acknowledged as being the first to establish beyond a doubt that there was indeed a race of such people in central Africa and to give us some real information about them, particularly concerning the association of the Aka (northernmost) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to throw in some of the many "red herrings" that have distracted even the most recent anthropologists from a strictly scientific study of the people, leading them into the speculative realms of origin, connection between Pygmies and the Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of originality of Pygmy culture.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Others, such as Casati (1891), Le Roy (1897), Burrows (1898), Johnston (1884, 1902, 1903, 1905, 1908), David (1904a, 1904b), Hutereau (1924), Powell-Cotton (1907), and Czekanowski (1922), to mention only a very few, give further details that are of interest but cover such a wide area as to make it impossible to gather any but the most superficial notion of a generalized "African Pygmy." When these sources provide us with factual observations, the facts are often not untainted with imagination. When they go beyond facts, additional "red herrings" are cast up, such as the silent trade between Pygmies and villagers, the lawlessness of Pygmy society, the Pygmies' complete lack of religion, and their ferocity and cannibalism. To add fuel to the fire, equally imaginative interpretations show them as having reciprocal and open trade relationships with the villagers, as living an ordered life according to their "natural instincts" for law and order, as following a monotheistic mystical religion, and as living a gentle and peaceful existence. According to this material, the "Pygmies" do have their own language and they do not, their way of life is totally different from that of their villager neighbors and it is a direct copy of villager life, they live in the heart of the forest and they live on the edge of the villages. These are just some of the contradictions that make it

114 101 .175 181

[P. 150-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.150-C]

impossible to form any single coherent picture. 114 101

When Schmidt wrote "Die Stellung der Pygmäen-völker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschen" in 1910, all these contradictions were his source material. Pygmies existed, but they still had tails and were flying about from treetop to treetop, or else they were crawling on their bellies like snakes to enter their diminutive houses. Quatrefages (1887) and Le Roy (1897) had, at the end of the nineteenth century, attempted to draw together what was known about Pygmies all over the world, but Schmidt's study is the first work of real importance. He confines himself mostly to the African Pygmies and Bushmen and pursues two lines of thought: first, the relationship of both to Asiatic Pygmies; and second, the place of the Pygmy, both racially and anthropologically, in the evolution of the human race. Was the Pygmy the original inhabitant of the equatorial forests of Africa, or was he a degeneration of present Bantu stock—a throwback? These "red herrings" are still being diligently pursued, while the Pygmies and their social structure have gone unstudied by any anthropologist except with reference to these problems.

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tan-
[141] ganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly
[144] "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence
[184] it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb
131 at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.162-A]

ORIGIN AND HISTORY

174 Here again we are in a highly speculative field with very little data to work on. The present distribution of the African Pygmies and
• [175] Pygmoids tells us little. Early sources, reports of nineteenth-century travelers (Schweinfurth, 1874), tradition, and current distribution all seem to combine to indicate that the northeast Congo has at all times been inhabited by Pygmies who spread out through the entire forest area of equatorial Africa. Both Schebesta and Putnam subscribe to this view, but others, such as Kerken (1944), state that the Pygmies and Pygmoids of the equatorial forest are *not* the ancient inhabitants of that area. This school of thought prefers to regard the Pygmies as a degeneration of the basic Negro race, a view contradicted by contemporary physical anthropologists and geneticists (Jadin, 1936; Gusinde, 1948; Schebesta, 1938).

172 Archeological sources tell us nothing concerning the origin or history of the African Pygmies. Putnam reports that neolithic axheads are frequently found throughout the Ituri, often revealed when a tree is split by lightning. The [B21] Mbuti, however, do not appear to recognize their origin or use, and refer to them as "turds of lightning" (Patrick Putnam, 1948, 339). Haene (1949) reports the finding of round stones with holes, which might have been currency, in the Ituri Forest, and appeals for engineers and others concerned in exploitation of the forest to be made aware of the possibility of such finds. Soors (1950a, 59), commenting on this appeal, writes that he met an engineer who, in the course of excavation in the Rega Forest, had found a large flat stone bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Asked what had become of it, the engineer replied: "*Nous l'avons cassée en mille morceaux—nous ne tenons pas d'être dérangés dans nos traveaux par des amateurs d'antiquités.*"

174 Recorded history is, of course, nil, so any re-
175 liable historical reconstruction is ruled out for the moment and must remain so until there is much more physiological, demographic, or archeological evidence. Even the date and direction of migrations among the various village tribes are uncertain, though a considerable amount of research has been done in this direction (Moeller, 1934, 1936). We have
174 merely traditions of origin and history, and even this material is scanty and unenlightening.

[P. 162-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1

The World of the Forest

IN THE NORTHEAST CORNER of the Belgian Congo, almost exactly in the middle of the map of Africa, . . . lies the Ituri Forest, a vast expanse of dense, damp and inhospitable-looking darkness. Here is *the heart of Stanley's Dark Continent, the country he loved* and hated, the scene of his ill-fated expedition to relieve Emin Pasha, an expedition costing hundreds of lives and imposing almost unbearable hardships on the survivors, who trekked across the great forest not once, but three times, losing more lives each time through fighting, sickness and desertion.

Anyone who has stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

The earliest recorded reference to them is not Homer's famous 175 • lines about the battle between the Pygmies and the cranes, as one might think, but a record of an expedition sent from Egypt in the Fourth Dynasty, some twenty-five hundred years before the Christian era, to discover the source of the Nile. In the tomb of the Pharaoh Nefrikare is preserved the report of his commander, Herkouf, who entered a great forest to the west of the Mountains of the Moon and discovered there a people of the trees, a tiny people who sing and dance to their god, a dance such as had never been seen before. Nefrikare sent a reply ordering Herkouf to bring one of these Dancers of God back with him, giving explicit instructions as to how he should be treated and cared for so that no harm would come to him. Unfortunately that is where the story ends, though later records show that the Egyptians had become relatively familiar with the Pygmies, who were evidently living, al those thousands of years back, just where they are living today, and leading much the same kind of life, characterized, as it still is, by dancing and singing to their god.

When Homer refers to the Pygmies, in describing a battle between Greek and Trojan forces in the *Iliad*, he may well be relying on information from Egyptian sources, but the element of myth is already creeping in.

> *When by their sev'ral chiefs the troops were rang'd,*
> *With noise and clamour, as a flight of birds,*
> *The men of Troy advanc'd; as when the cranes,*
> *Flying the wintry storms, send forth on high*
> *Their dissonant clamours, while o'er th'ocean stream*
> *They steer their course, and on their pinions bear*
> *Battle and death to the Pygmaean race.**

* Homer, *Iliad* (tr. Derby), iii, 1-7.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

175 By Aristotle's time the Western world was evidently still more inclined to treat the Pygmies as legend, because Aristotle himself has to state categorically that their existence is no fable, as some men believe, but the truth, and that they live in the land "from which flows the Nile." *

Mosaics in Pompeii show that, whether the Pygmies were believed to be fable or not, the makers of the mosaics in fact knew just how they lived, even the kinds of huts they built in the forest. But from then until the turn of the present century, our knowledge of the Pygmies decreased to the point where they were thought of as mythical creatures, semi-human, flying about in tree tops, dangling by their tails, and with the power of making themselves invisible. The cartographer who drew the thirteenth-century Mappa Mundi, preserved in Hereford Cathedral, England, located the Pygmies accurately enough, but his representations show them as subhuman monsters.

Evidently there was still some question as to their reality up to the seventeenth century, because the English anatomist Edward Tyson felt obliged to publish a treatise on "The Anatomy of a Pygmie compared with that of a Monkey, an Ape, and a Man." He had obtained from Africa the necessary skeletons, on which he based his conclusion that the so-called "pygmie" was, quite definitely, not human. The "pygmie" skeleton was preserved until recently in a London museum, and it was easy to see how Tyson arrived at so firm a conclusion. The skeleton was that of a chimpanzee.

Portuguese explorers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were responsible for many of the more extravagant accounts. It may well be that they actually did see Pygmies near the west coast of Africa, or they may have seen chimpanzees and mistaken them for Pygmies. But it is curious that they should have thought of the Pygmies as being able to make themselves invisible, and also as having the power, small as they were, to kill elephants.

[113] * Aristotle, *Historia Animalium* (tr. D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson), vii, 2.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ing the power, small as they were, to kill elephants. The Pygmies 000
today still kill elephants single-handed, armed only with a short- 224
handled spear. And they blend so well with the forest foliage that
you can pass right by without seeing them. As for their having tails, 291
it is easy enough to see how this story came into being, if the Pyg- [175]
mies seen by the Portuguese dressed as they do today, as is more
than likely. The loincloth they wear is made of the bark of a tree,
softened and hammered out until it is a long slender cloth, tucked
between the legs and over a belt, front and back. The women particularly like to have a long piece of cloth so that it hangs down behind, almost to the ground. They say it looks well when dancing.

Some of the accounts of nineteenth-century travelers in the Congo 175
are no less fanciful, and it was George Schweinfurth who first made known to the world, in his book *The Heart of Africa*, that Pygmies not only existed but were human. He was following in the path of the Italian explorer Miani, who a few years earlier had reached the Ituri but had died before he could return. One of the most curious of little-known stories about the Pygmies is that Miani actually sent two of them back to Italy, to the Geographic Association, which had sponsored his trip. The president of the association, Count Miniscalchi of Verona, took the two boys and educated them. Contemporary newspaper reports describe them as strolling the boulevards, arm in arm with their Italian friends, chatting in Italian. One of them even learned to play the piano. From the present Count Miniscalchi I learned that both Pygmies eventually returned to Africa, where one died and the other became a saddler in the Ethiopian army. He last heard from the latter, who must then have been an old man, just before the outbreak of World War II.

Stanley describes his meetings with the Pygmies in the Ituri, but 175
without telling us much about them, and indeed little was known 114
beyond the actual fact of their existence until a White Father, the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

175 114 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twenties to study them.

114 144 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later 174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 533 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 187 In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

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Mbuti

121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among them much longer. For some thousands of years •177 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside 175 influence. In historic times various village tribes [174] invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering 177 economy. What emerges from a study of this 182 [p.147 B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.147-C]

particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 • 182

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gusinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1934, 1954). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

SOURCE MATERIAL

[P.149-A]

HISTORICAL SOURCES

114 175 177 ONE OF THE MOST STRIKING THINGS about a survey of ancient and early sources concerning the African Pygmies is the way it shows how, from the time these people first entered the recorded scene, in Egypt of the Sixth Dynasty, our knowledge of them decreased steadily until the late nineteenth century. To the ancient Egyptians the existence of Pygmies was a matter of fact. They are referred to as "Dancers of God" and as dwellers in the "land of trees" (Schebesta, 1933, 17; 1952, 11); they are placed on the southern borders of Sudan. A tomb of the Sixth [101] Dynasty at Beni Hassan bears a painting of representatives of conquered nations, among which is a perfectly recognizable likeness of a Pygmy, designated Aka—a name by which the northernmost Pygmies are still known today. Yet, until the turn of the present century, the modern Western world believed the Pygmy to be a myth. From Beni Hassan the scene shifts to the Pompeian parietal paintings which depict typical Pygmy scenes, with a forest camp of beehive-shaped huts, and also a scene showing Pygmies along the Nile.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114
115
117

Herodotus (1866, vol. 2, sect. 32) in the fifth century B.C. reports an expedition of Nasamonians to discover the source of the Nile. They cross a vast desert and, while resting at an oasis, are captured by diminutive men, "under the middle height."

Homer (1864, vol. 3, 3–7) introduces an element of myth when he talks of fighting between the cranes and the "Pygmaean race" to the south, but Aristotle (1910, vol. 8, sect. 2) sees fit, for some reason, to assert quite categorically that Pygmies do in fact live in the land "from which flows the Nile"; he adds that they live in caves.

An isolated reference in the sixth century comes from the Emperor Justinian's ambassador who, on his way to Ethiopia, on an island off the east African coast, came across a tribe of Pygmies speaking an unknown language (unknown even to local inhabitants). That is about the last reference to Pygmies as human beings for some 10 centuries. In the fourteenth century the cartographer who drew up the Hereford Mappa Mundi still placed the Pygmies near the

[P. 149-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.149-C]

source of the Nile, although in his secondary role as theologian he depicted them as monsters, with their faces in their breasts or their heads below their shoulders. He labels them as troglodytes. 114 175 177.

Battel (1625, vol. 2, 983) refers to the existence of a nation of dwarfs and places them in the land of the Yobbi, north of the Sette River. He calls them "Dongo," and it is in this area where Du Chaillu (1867, 1890) discovered the "Obongo" Pygmies in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Other seventeenth-century reports by Portuguese explorers describe what seem to be relatively pure Pygmy races who apparently brought ivory down to the west coast traders. Unfortunately, these explorers had vivid imaginations and interspersed their descriptions with most unlikely information, such as the power of these little people to become invisible, the only explanation they could

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hnd for how the Pygmies could kill elephant. In this way belief in the existence of real Pygmy races in Africa was only further discredited; so much so that an anatomist named Tyson obtained a skeleton of one of these fabulous beings and, after careful examination, wrote a treatise (Tyson, 1699) showing that it was quite clear that "Pygmies" were, in fact, not human beings but apes. He had good grounds for this assertion, because the skeleton he examined, and which survived until recently at the British Museum (Natural History) in South Kensington, England, was that of a chimpanzee. He rounds off his discourse in the following general terms: "The most diligent enquiries of late into all parts of the inhabited world could never discover any such puny diminutive race of mankind." His explanation of the "fables" was that travelers had mistaken apes for men (Windle, 1894).

From the seventeenth century to the nineteenth there seems to have been a complete silence. Then follows a succession of explorers, travelers, administrators, and anthropologists who finally established the fact that Pygmies did exist and were, indeed, human. But that, and their approximate distribution, is about all they do tell us. Well into the twentieth century we get fanciful adventurers seriously observing

[P 149-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 150-A]

114 apes swinging about in the treetops and de-
175 scribing them as Pygmies.
.177 The material provided by these nineteenth-
century explorers is valuable, however, for an
114 understanding of contemporary writings. Some
175 of them, such as Speke (1864) and Stanley
101 (1879, 1890), made little more than passing
reference to the "dwarfs," as they were usually
called. Schweinfurth (1874) is generally ac-
knowledged as being the first to establish be-
yond a doubt that there was indeed a race of
such people in central Africa and to give us some
real information about them, particularly con-
cerning the association of the Aka (northern-
most) Pygmies, as mercenary soldiers, with the
Mangbetu tribe. He was also among the first to
throw in some of the many "red herrings" that
have distracted even the most recent anthro-
pologists from a strictly scientific study of the
people, leading them into the speculative realm
of origin, connection between Pygmies and the
Bushmen of South Africa, and degree of origi-
nality of Pygmy culture.

[p.155-C]
stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into 114
three linguistic groups is another result of his 197
preoccupation with the problem of the sepa- 101
rateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture 114
is the purest, being least affected by contact 177.
with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and [194]
anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

1. [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D
--Analyst]

With regard to their "purity," it is difficult to say much, particularly as it seems more satisfactory to study them for what they are without reference to their supposed origin. They stand to the villager, however, in the general, apparent client-patron relationship found among most Mbuti throughout the Ituri, though this varies in detail from one area to another. It would seem that they are a great deal less closely attached to their village patrons than the archers described by Schebesta, and spend far less time in the vicinity of the village. At the same time they themselves, and the villagers, report other bands whose association with village settlements is still less regular. The material to hand, however, does reveal some new facts concerning this relationship, and, although interpretation of these facts can be made only with regard to this particular band (the disadvantage of such a small-scale study), at least it is more certain for that specific instance and may indicate similar possibilities elsewhere.

101

101
177

[P.158-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bodyguard for the new king. Such isolated 174
references indicate a long-established associa- 177
tion between the two peoples, and that the 571
original nature of the association was a military one. Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Ward (1910), Schweinfurth (1874), and others, write of the employment of the Pygmies by the villagers as spies, scouts, mercenary soldiers, and guides. Putnam in his earlier notes mentions frequently coming across references among the older Pygmies to this relationship, which of course came to an end when the Belgian authorities stopped intertribal warfare.

Legends from the Epulu area (Turnbull, 174
1959) show scant interest in the questions of origin and history, but that here also both Pygmy and villager agree that the Pygmy is the original inhabitant of the forest and is, to a certain extent, feared and respected as such by the villager. No legends from this area of the Ituri or from any other so far reported (Schebesta, 1936b, 340; Joset, 1948, 25–56, 137–157) show that the Pygmies or villagers have any concept of the Pygmies' originating elsewhere than in this northeast corner of the Congo, nor do they reveal any doubt in the minds of these people that the Pygmies were the original inhabitants of that forest.

Socio-cultural change has been taking place 178
ever since the first villager invasions, several hundred years ago, but most rapidly in the past half century. The progress of this change can be

[P. 162-D]

[P. 163-A]

178 studied both from the material available and by further field work and should make an interesting contribution to the study of acculturation and plural society problems. This change, still taking place, is likely to increase in depth and speed as the Ituri Forest is further exploited by a central government. The Pygmies have con- [177] stantly been thrown into closer contact with the villagers, and both have been brought into more immediate contact with the European. As the Pygmy becomes more and more economically dependent on these alien groups, the last remnants of his earlier social system will become modified and finally disappear. Up to the moment of Congo independence, the Mbuti were not subject to taxation, a fact that did not meet with their uncritical approval. The "pros and

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177].
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [77] 411 [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter. 352 417 251

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers. 415 412 177 [439] 412 177 [439]

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177.
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]
301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
•177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1966 FO4 Pygmies FO4 ●
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-A]

BP 411 284

FIG. 10. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a–b. Spear, of village origin and villager hafted; probably Bira. c. Spear, hafted by Mbuti. All blades for spears come from the villagers, though Mbuti frequently rehaft spear, ax, and adze blades, to suit their needs.

BP 411 [484]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.175-D]

BB 412

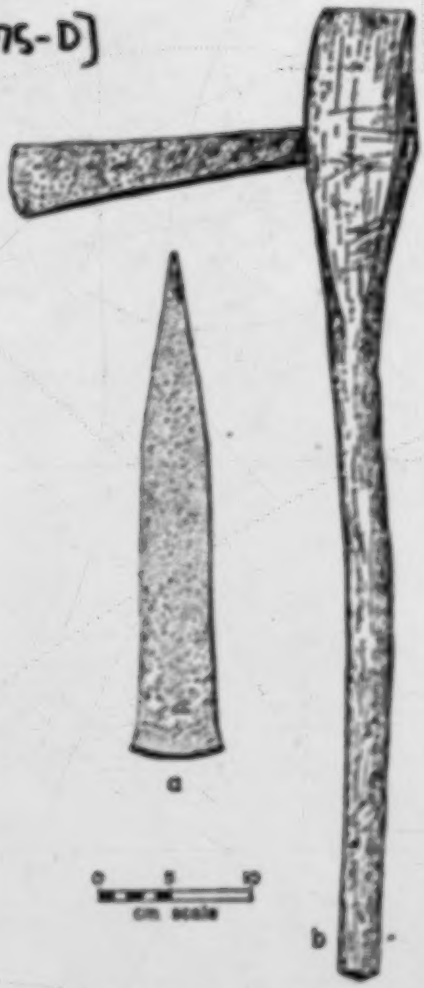

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

BB [179] [271] [431] •

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-A]

262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the
439 alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a
•177 day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty
22 of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by many of the earlier travelers, some of whom • 177 referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite [114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the trading is carried out. He says that there is, [613] however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each [621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant [613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[p. 176-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

NP 881 179

Initiation

Schebesta (1948, 467 ff.; 1952, 265 ff.) gives no information concerning the initiation of girls among the archers. He does, however, describe at some length the initiation, accompanied by circumcision, of boys, according to the villager rite known as *nkumbi*. His earlier account, in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," is, by his own admission, drawn largely from Mbuti and villager informants throughout the forest. He was able to have only fleeting glimpses ("*flüchtigen Einblicke*"; Schebesta, 1948, 475) of parts of *nkumbi* festivals among the Ngwana, Byeru, Bali, and forest Bira, but his observations, he says, confirmed what he had been told. In 1949 he had an opportunity to see more of a single *nkumbi*, details of which he records (Schebesta, 1952), but this was among net-hunting Mbuti. Consequently, we lack precise information concerning the *nkumbi* among archers. Opinion among different groups of Mbuti varies as to the origin of the custom; some claim to have practiced it before the villagers, some say that they have adopted it only recently. There are

[P 179-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 179-C]

even Mbuti groups in which apparently it is practiced among themselves but without circumcision.

The *nkumbi* takes place approximately every six years, says Schebesta, and each initiation has a specific name, usually connected with some outstanding incident connected with that particular occasion. It is inaugurated on the decision of the village lineage head who invites the Mbuti to take part. An essential feature of the *nkumbi* throughout the Ituri is this joint participation of Mbuti and villager.

The *nkumbi* (Efe: *leku*) takes place in a special camp in the forest, some distance from the village. A large conical hut is built (Schebesta, 1948, here follows a description of a southern Lese initiation), on one side of which is the raised sleeping place of the initiates (Efe: *bemu*), and on the other, the fireplace and quarters of the elders who will guard and teach the boys. All the arrangements are in the hands of the villager lineage head (*avitiri*).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *kari* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *segbe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *kari* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nkumbi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *kari* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

[P. 179-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P, 180-A]

society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and the secret society) among the south Lese, namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager element of initiation associated with circumcision and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element of initiation into the men's secret society (*ferí*).

Marriage

Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult to determine which is the stronger, the interests of the hunting band or the interests and mutual affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 581 Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [836] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [834] [177] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[839] [838] [1] Masturbation (*ai afawi*), homosexuality (*ai hepa*), and adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians (*dere hepa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[p. 180-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-A]

583 the forest, pay a dog, five spears, and five arrows. Schebesta also cites the third possibility: a youth lives with his wife's band for some years, "pays" for his wife by his service to that band, then returns with her to his own band. If the payment or service proves to be insufficient, the girl's lineage claims the children, which otherwise belong to the father's band. Marriage by capture is unknown, and there are no indications that this practice ever existed.

583 585 [179] Nuptial ceremony is lacking among most Mbuti, but Schebesta says that in imitation of the Lese the southern archers practice a form of double ceremony in which the two bands formally meet and exchange their daughters. Normally, however, the archers seem to have, if anything, little ceremony. A youth, having secured the agreement of his betrothed, takes her back to his camp, with or without the permission of her band. There she lives with his mother, who teaches her the customs of the camp. Shortly afterward members of her band arrive. They demand their side of the bargain, either a bride in exchange or a gift of arrows,

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objections to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to polygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment. 595 [177] [582]

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band. 587 587 589

Relations between husband and wife and their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride. 593

[ARCHERS]

Widowhood

589 In any hunting band one may find divorced men and women between two states of marriage, and also widows and widowers who have had no chance to remarry. Widows, as mentioned, may remain in their late husbands' bands with their children or return to their own band. Aged widowers, no longer able to provide for a woman by hunting, remain single, as do the infirm, and both are provided for by their relatives.

589 177 Mbuti girls who have married villagers return sooner or later to their parental band; almost certainly when they are no longer fertile and cease to be of interest to their villager husbands. [587] If still young they may take a Pygmy husband; if too old to remarry, they live the life of a widow. These "widows" do their own cooking and receive frequent visits in the forest from their children who otherwise remain in the village. Sometimes one or another of the children will remain with her in the forest.[1]

[1] Such a practice is contrary to what I was told among all Mbuti groups, namely, that such children are never accepted in the forest as Mbuti and may make only short visits, like other villagers.

[P 182-8]

182 (D)

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[1]

P 764

P [265] [535] [114]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *kare* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

P 543 177 •

P 543 [608]

[1] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P. 182 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Mombu FO81
Lese

[ARCHERS]

[P-183-A]

P M 764 177

nent among the many archers who had hastened to attend the funeral took charge. He measured the corpse with his stick and drew the outline of the grave on the ground. His son, assisted by others, opened a grave, using pointed sticks, a hatchet, and a bush knife, and cleared the loosened earth with their hands. The crying of the women became louder, calling "*Afael*" (father). A few women sat nearby, singing dirges. Not only the relatives mourned, but all present. With the help of the Lese *kard*, the floor of the grave was covered with sticks, then leaves. The womenfolk hurried to the edge of the grave as the corpse, decorated only with an arm ring, was brought through a hole in the side of the hut and placed in the grave. The wailing reached its climax; the wife, children, and even the eldest grown son, threw themselves on the ground as the men began to fill in the grave. One man had to hold the eldest daughter to prevent her from throwing herself into the grave. The earth was stamped down, and the mourners moved away, women and children and some of the young men crying. One daughter remained near the grave as the house was pulled down to cover it (after the household goods had been removed).

P [152] P M [308] P [152]

Shortly after the burial some men went off hunting. By three o'clock the entire camp was deserted, and a new one had been built by evening.

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P 521 528 513 H 182 161

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

kari relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *tori*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) P Z [178] writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z 575 881 • 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the P 575 fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

[P. 184-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

None of the foregoing material is much concerned with leadership, and, indeed, it has been scarcely necessary to mention it. Some of the early sources, such as Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Geil (1905), and Lang (1919) assert the existence of hereditary chieftainship; others (Johnston, 1902, 1904; Christy, 1924) deny this just as emphatically. Stuhlmann (1894), referring to bands of Mbuti living near the Manyema, states that the leader of each band is the ablest hunter and that he controls the wanderings of his band. Whether or not he has any other jurisdiction is not known. 622 114

Schebesta flatly denies the existence of hereditary chieftainship anywhere among the Mbuti, except among those most acculturated. He also denies the existence of charismatic 622 [77]

[1] Antelope cries are imitated in this way.

[P 184-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system."

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *kard* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a
religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore. 776 177 [114]

Schebesta believes that, though different groups of archers give precedence to one name or another, there is only one God of the Undergrowth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning. 776 82 [184] [125]

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good. 776 [171]

Cult Practices

776 782

A number of practices are associated with the

[P. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as "*Mugul dab a iyel*" ("*Mugul* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in- [224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to [769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the 782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *salia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190 - B]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P. 190-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-A]

776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
192 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[177] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[775] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[776] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

[ARCHERS]

775 761 [774] The soul, the word for which designates the pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital force mentioned, *megbe*, changes into the totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

774 828 Dreams are events that actually befall the soul during sleep, according to the archers. While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and wander at will. In this way God and the dead can manifest themselves during sleep.

775 [777] The northern archers think of a realm for the souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves, and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the dead and their god are, like the God of the Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of properly Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult [769] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one of the vital principles takes the form of a star, living with the celestial divinity, remote from the Mbuti world.

[P. 191-B]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

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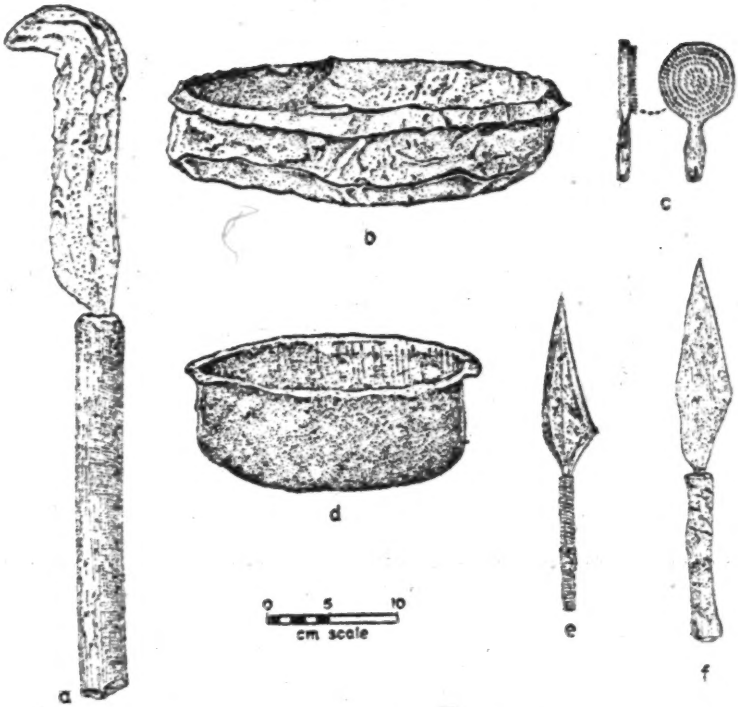

FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

P
[177]
[439]

[P.196-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtapo-
sition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

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285

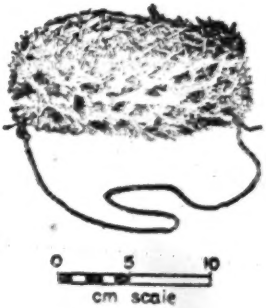

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 285 847 824 312 524

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 304 386 822 291 301 177

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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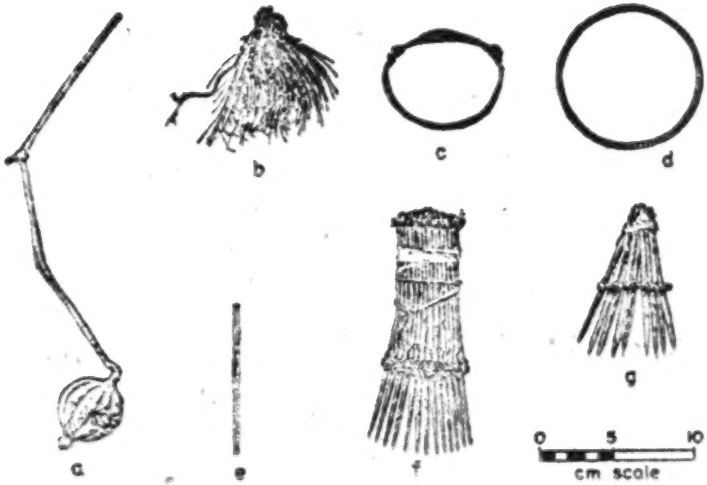

FIG. 30. Personal adornment. a. *Kangay* (gardenia) seed, used by women for extraction of a black dye for painting the body, also for painting designs on barkcloth; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Hair decoration, *mongele* antelope hair; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. c–d. Bracelets; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. f. Comb, *kisanoa;* Bira villagers, Central Ituri. g. Comb, *kisanoa;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. As everywhere among the Mbuti, metal objects are of villager origin. Many of the wooden objects of personal adornment are made in imitation of villager artifacts (compare f and g).

P
[179]
[P. 200-c]

[NET. HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177.
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.
[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the [825] sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

Trade

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by • 177 Putnam on the present dependency of the net [184] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent val- [571] ues other than mutual satisfaction. But the villager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.

[p. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]
alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of inter-village warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] 648 184 177 571

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[p. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84 CONCEPTION AND CHILDBIRTH

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also.

845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and

[179] Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-C]

nose with leaves (Pygmy),[1] making slight cuts 845
on the stomach, arms, and knees and rubbing [177]
in herbal medicines (villager), and rubbing the stomach with cold water (both Pygmy and villager). While these activities were going on, children were playing about and running in and out of the hut where the pregnant woman was kept. Finally, the woman in labor, who, though in great pain, had never uttered a word of complaint was made to sit on a log, while one woman sat behind her and held her up, and another in front massaged the infant out. During the whole period of labor the woman's father and her husband were with her constantly. It [843]
was agreed that her difficulties resulted from her having broken a food taboo and eaten the flesh of an anteater.[1]

Another aid used by the Pygmy woman dur- 844
ing childbirth is described by Anne Putnam (1954, 165). The girl in labor is given one end of a liana to hold; the other end is tied to a tree. Each time the pains start, the girl pulls on the liana as her friends massage her stomach.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 853]

A woman who has given birth is not allowed to leave her hut until game has fallen into her husband's net. If the camp is moved before this happens, she is hidden in the bush and taken separately to the new camp where she is kept hidden until her new hut is built for her by relatives (not stated which relatives). The husband himself may not join the hunt but sends his net with another member of the group.

The father keeps the arrow that cut the umbilical cord, and the cord itself, until the child is old enough to throw them both away into the forest.

If no animal falls into the husband's net (the rule is extended usually to include some close relative's net) for some weeks, the mother and infant may be brought out of seclusion by the giving of a feast to her relatives. The baby is then shaved with an arrowpoint, bathed, rubbed with oil and red *nkula* paste, and bands [851]

[1] Note that this took place in a village, where such supernatural explanations are always sought by villagers. It is doubtful that the same explanation would have been given in the forest context. [72] [71]

[P 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[966] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions
[1m] are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] [750]

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 881 177 P Z [535]

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

[P 217-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.218-A]

B
411
751
881
P
881
177
751

FIG. 46. Initiation whip, *mbeka*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were made to move about continually by the villager instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present at all times, frequently comforted their sons, apparently to the annoyance of the villagers. There was, however, no question of the savagery implied by Schebesta. During the following two months the boys were strictly disciplined. There was a process of physical training that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only one of the major purposes of the *nkumbi*, namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti fathers, however, obviously had different ideas as to how far this discipline should be carried and criticized the villagers when they carried it too far. Further, when there were no villagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite openly and showed by their speech and their behavior that they had no respect for the taboos associated with the festival. It seemed quite evident that they consciously underwent the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious significance, but because it gave them status in villager society, in which any uncircumcised youth is a laughing stock. The important thing, then, was the circumcision, for this specific purpose.

P Z 881 177 •
P Z 881 881 177
P Z [571]
P 881 829 177
Z 881 177

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do
[575] not participate fully in the proceedings of the *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and
[304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the ***nkumbi***
190 serves merely to give status in villager society.
17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation
[554] into the religious associations of their own men and women; the ***molimo*** and ***elima***, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

532

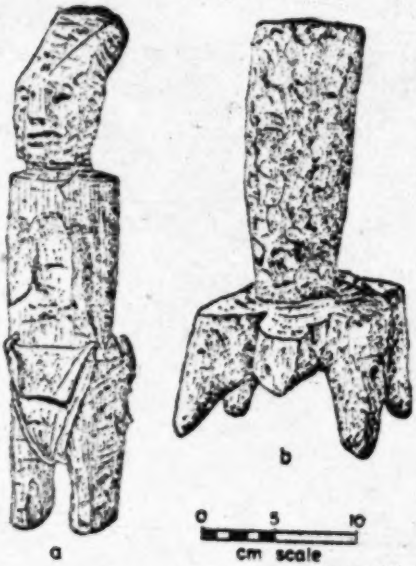

FIG. 49. Wood carvings, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Carving of standing male. b. Carving of tree. Such carving is done by the Mbuti extremely rarely and only in direct imitation of the villager carvers.

[NM]

[p. 220-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p. 220- D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
581 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

Z 585 388 628 563 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and P 172 585 Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). Further, P [533] [535] even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 571 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P 221-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives. P 593

Divorce

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost certainly involves the village patrons, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride. P 586 P Z [177] [571] • Z [563]

[P 221-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger.
It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed
by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous
snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and
diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd
gummed to one end) is administered, with the
use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro*
bark for the former complaint, and *tebvo* liana
for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [755] [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch
doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their
efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's
account for the archers, cited examples of wail-
ing. The following instances taken from the
notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

[NET HUNTERS]

764 miles away. There was some suggestion that the Mbuti should be buried in the village of his patron, but the eldest son refused and said that the forest was his father's "earth," and this was where he should be buried.

The grave was dug by Mbuti and villagers, about 4 feet deep, with half of it 1½ feet deeper. The body was placed in the deep section, on its side, facing north, covered with sticks and phrynium leaves. Then everyone threw in earth and filled the grave. The women at the funeral became hysterical at this point, falling to the ground and beating themselves. The dead man's second wife tried to throw herself into the grave on top of the body. When the grave was filled, everyone sat down and talked and smoked. The youngest son of the deceased had been playing around quite happily all the time. After smoking, villagers and Mbuti all washed their hands and feet in a nearby stream.

152 Both Patrick and Anne Putnam claim that there is, among the Epulu Mbuti, formal and controlled wailing, also wailing as a manifestation of genuine grief among both men and women. Men and women will weep apart during

[177] [1] Suggestions of this kind are sometimes made by the Mbuti in their village context, in imitation of the villagers. They by no means necessarily indicate Mbuti belief.

[P 223-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 223 - C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 476 36 578 621 [P.229-A]

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571 P Z [428]

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

Z [628]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, in some form, is not lacking among the villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumbi* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P. 229-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.229-C]

lage for any length of time, as when the villager needs help in the cutting of new plantations, then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly awaited by the villagers. P Z 535 177 571 •

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, when there is a case of poaching by one band within the territory of another, instead of one lineage head or "elder" consulting the other (the process described by Schebesta for the archers), the bands probably just inform the villagers involved and leave it to them to settle. P 628 648 Z 648

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, there is no question of any one Mbuti representing his lineage or band; such of the more important hunters as are available, and usually a number of the younger men and even older boys, come in a body to argue their case together. The villager is always at a slight disadvantage. While the Mbuti can easily move and find another village patron, it is not so easy for a villager to find more Mbuti. P 648 Z 648 563

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 177 571 574 Z 563 571

Legal System

There are no data available on property law, and there is no clear distinction between collective and private property, as far as can be learned from the material that is available. Most items of personal possession, except used barkcloth, change hands at some time or another, temporarily or permanently, with or without any immediate exchange. There is certainly no scale of values by which any item of property may be assessed in relation to another. The question of whether personal goods, such as cooking utensils for the women or weapons and hunting nets for the men, are P 421 P 422

[P 229-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who 759
called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an 177
incision in the chief's knee from which he with- 171
drew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation.

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge 752
of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known.

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, 128
speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A 536
word of warning, however, should be offered. 177
Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. 157
Their great ability in the art is equally well 811
confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true

[P 232-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
179 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 197

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

531 191 This account of music among the villagers in the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each one of these four points. Though the music of the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifically considered, it appears from all the known material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme percussive effects are obtained by resonant sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted, there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

533 191 184

533 534 184

[MM]

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *toré* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]
[P-236-A]

P
789
177
824
B
789
824

FIG. 53. a–b. Fetish sticks, *amati a oni ganza*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. "The tortoise saw the circumcision" is the name of the stick, but neither villagers nor Mbuti can give a coherent explanation of either the stick or its name. The villagers use it for protection against theft; the Mbuti net hunters on rare occasions may idly place it in the ground near a *molimo* hearth as an indication of spiritual presence.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

789 177 824 theft, but among the Mbuti is used as indication of spiritual presence during the *molimo* festival.

For this section we follow the same outline as 128 that for the archers, but a fuller account of the net-hunters' magico-religious complex is given in the final section (pp. 248–259). It is excluded from the present survey because the lack of [P. 236-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 754 266 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 754 177 This belief seems associated with death and with people who are near to that particular crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 114 [184] The Putnam material does not support any theory of a celestial God such as that described by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

[P. 243-A]

190 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently.
[177] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[128] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[144] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

ENVIRONMENT

P 182 184 The importance of environment in this particular study cannot be overestimated. The forest environment throughout the Ituri is much the same, so it cannot be held responsible for such differences as we may find between one Mbuti group and another. Such differences seem more likely to be due to the human environment, that is to say, varying degrees of Pygmy association with different villager tribes.

P 182 The forest environment is important, however, in favoring the specific way of life followed by the nomadic hunting-and-gathering Mbuti communities. That it certainly does not compel Z [182] this mode of existence is witnessed by the very different and equally successful adjustment made to it by the other major group of forest P 182 inhabitants—the villagers. But by enabling the • 177 Mbuti to continue their nomadic way with comparative ease and to their almost entire satisfaction, the forest enables them to preserve their independence in the face of technologically superior and politically more organized villager opposition. By virtue of their particular response to the forest, the Mbuti retain their individuality socially, economically, politically, and intellectually.

P Z 182 The environmental factor sharply divides the forest people (Mbuti) from the non-forest people (villagers)—the true forest hunting-and-

[P 243-B]

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initia- 177
tion of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between
Pygmy and villager initiates among the net
hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers,
probably because of his insistence (1952, 281)
on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an ini-
tiation into the religious association of *toré* for
both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is con-
tradicted by my own experience among the net
hunters. In any case, if there is a difference be-
tween the two groups over the significance of
nkumbi initiation (and it may well be only a dif-
ference of interpretation rather than of fact), it
does not seem directly related to any difference
in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 296
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more
directly with prevailing differences in villager
custom rather than with any inherent differ-
ences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the
nature and function of the closed associations,
are more properly the subject of discussion of
the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the
difference between net hunters and archers,
which is our main concern here.

Schebesta (1950, 13) insists that there is a 184
cultural unity among the Ituri Mbuti, which 114
he believes is clearly visible in their magico-religious system. He may well be right. Probably he is, but his method of comparing terminological usage among a number of different Mbuti bands as though he were dealing with self-evident facts, while relying frequently on casual information, does little to support his theories. When dealing with cult practices, he is more concerned with the origin of a particular practice than with its sociological significance. He accepts statements and even legends at their face value and builds his elaborate theories on this flimsy foundation.

In trying to draw any useful comparison be- 184
tween the material on the archers and that for 12
the net hunters, we are constantly confronted with the question of origin. Is this or that custom or ritual of villager origin? If so, how far [177] •
has it been adapted and what significance has it? The latter question is more important for the social anthropologist than the former and is precisely the question we must ask. We are concerned not with the origin of any particular ritual but rather with its significance and its relationship to other practices in a system of related institutions. Thus when we deal with religious 000
[P. 248-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 **Thus when we deal with religious**
• 179 (or any other) institution common to both villager and Pygmy, we necessarily deal with the relationship between these two people. Unless we understand this relationship we cannot possibly understand the institution. We can understand the relationship only by observing something more fundamental than the origin of a particular practice in a specific group, let alone the more obvious facts concerning the trade relationship. As indicated in the present survey, even the *nkumbi* initiation cannot be taken at its face value as far as the Mbuti are concerned.

No aspect of Mbuti life brings the people into more effective contact with their villager neighbors than the field of magic and religion. It seems that this is the field therefore in which we should attempt to understand the systems of values underlying the relationship between these two people.

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THE MBUTI-VILLAGER RELATIONSHIP

121 -177 439 [128] In the preceding sections we dealt with the survey briefly, mainly in order to test the validity of our classification of the Mbuti into net hunters and archers. We deliberately avoided, as far as possible, reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship, although in the final section on religious life it became particularly obvious that this relationship could not be ignored. In Mbuti society a number of institutions in one way or another are associated with or appear to be identical with villager institutions, and we must understand this connection. The only alternative is to assume that the relationship between the two peoples is one of straightforward symbiosis based on an exchange of meat for plantation products and that, in the course of this symbiosis, certain customs have been adopted and are practiced either separately or jointly. This often-drawn picture represents only the outward appearance of the facts. When one tries to understand it as part of a coherent system, however, it can be done only by creating a hypothetical Mbuti social system that is in fact a hodgepodge culled from all over the Ituri area, from which any offending portions are plucked with the excuse that they are of villager origin.

121 177 We must determine, then, the underlying facts, as opposed to the mere outward appearance: the extent to which various institutions have been adopted by the Mbuti; how far their underlying values have also been adopted, or

[A 249-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P 249-C]

how far only the outward form of the custom has been taken over and the values rejected. The most we can do is to clear the ground for such a study. We do so with reference only to the Epulu net hunters (unless otherwise stated), as our information is fullest here. 121 177

In the first place, what are the major points of contact between these two poeple? They may be listed as follows:

Material culture
Trade
Magical practice
Dance and festivity
Intermarriage
Ceremonial attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death

Material Culture

The adoption by the Mbuti of various villager items of material culture or technological skill has only one significance for us, which is the extent to which it places the Mbuti in a dependent position. This is difficult to estimate. It is difficult to visualize the Mbuti without metal and hard, though quite possible, to visualize them without plantains. But, even among the net hunters, luxuries tend to become necessities, and we must admit of the trend, if not the accomplished fact, toward economic dependency on the villagers. 177 439 [178]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Trade

The bare facts only are known. The Mbuti supply the villagers with meat and with certain forest products, such as roofing leaves or lianas, in return for plantation products. The villager invariably tries to enforce some service as well, with varying degrees of success. Either extreme can be found: cases in which the relationship is formal and binding in fact as well as theory, and those in which the theory is held only by the villagers and does not correspond to the fact, i.e., the Pygmy maintains his side of the trade relationship only so long as it suits him. In my experience the latter is the situation far more often than otherwise.

Then again we must emphasize that trade is not necessary on either side. The villagers could perfectly well hunt if they had to, and the Pygmies could equally well gather all their vegetable needs from the forest. Further, contrary to Schebesta's (1952, 112) assertion, the Mbuti are perfectly capable of cultivating, given a

[P 249-D]

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clear space. Some of the net hunters in the Epulu area have tried, and with success, but quickly lose interest and revert to their old nomadic ways.

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The fact that there is no attempt to equate the supply of meat and the supply of plantains is also significant. Either side gives what it feels like giving, except that the Mbuti believe themselves free to take what they want if it is not given. There is also the Bira custom mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) of giving the first fruits to the Pygmies. The Mbuti seem to have control of this situation. The villagers have no means of preventing the Mbuti from returning to the depths of the forest whenever they wish. When the Pygmy hunting camp is some distance from the village, the villagers may send in to ask for meat, or the chief may even come himself.

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Sometimes the villagers try to gain control of the situation by supplying nets and claiming the appropriate share of a net owner. The Mbuti accept the nets, but see to it that only such game falls into them as they think fit. They eventually contest the ownership of the net, claiming to have added to it themselves and thrown away the damaged, village portion.

At most, it seems possible to regard the trade relationship only as one of mutual convenience. By itself, it is far too unformalized and unstable to provide the basis for the remarkably close relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Magical Practice

P 177 789 It might be observed that the Pygmies have adopted a number of villager magical practices; certainly some individuals give the appearance of having done so. But we cannot accept this as significant, nor can we relate these practices to other practices in Pygmy society until we understand, for instance, the significance of the old Pygmy who blew his magic whistle vigorously at the sky to prevent rain and who, when it poured, simply shrugged his shoulders and P [829] retreated to the shelter of his hut. This incident may seem trivial, but there are many such incidents that indicate a lack of faith in the efficacy of such magical practices as the Pygmies attempt.

P 224 177 789 Also to be considered, and more important because it brings villager and Pygmy together more directly, is the reported resort to villager witch doctors to improve the hunting. Sche- 789 177 563 [791] [P 250-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. There is no evidence of such a practice among the net hunters, but they may call in a villager for the purpose. But here we should consider Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying the villagers with meat for some time, yet has been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as his excuse the fact that the hunting has been poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as one can judge from casual conversation among themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti have little faith in it. Further, they have their own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song may or may not be accompanied by a dance re-enacting a successful hunt, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

P 224 177 789 Z 789 563 177 P [439] P 224 789 533

l: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

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Dance and Festivity

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

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Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

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[P. 250-D]

[P. 251-A]

ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held only during the *nkumbi*.

Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band is visiting a village, it may come down to the main meeting place in the evening and dance. The villagers expect it and regard it as one of their forms of entertainment, though they say they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

When the two groups meet on both festive and ordinary occasions they keep apart from each other. There is no leisure activity in which they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti camp beside the village, on the edge of the plantation where the forest begins. This physical disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

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Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

[P.251-D]

P [P.252-A]
583 local villager custom. The latter ceremony is
585 conducted entirely by the villagers and at their
179 expense. On these occasions the villager takes
Z the leading part and carries out his own ritual,
563 but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his
585 own indigenous way of recognizing the event.
The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy
adds to his own.

P With initiation the situation may seem to be
177 different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the
881 villager custom of initiation accompanied by
575 circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend
Z the same initiation schools which are always
563 run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation
881 is nothing if not entry into a very definite indig-
575 enous system of values, yet here we have the
Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordi-
nate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Sche-
besta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or
villager, into membership of the Lese *toré* asso-
ciation (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent,
the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

[p. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association. 114 186 881 [554] (177).

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the *nkumbi* or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the *nkumbi* to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

In the 1954 *nkumbi* there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the *nkumbi* should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *ganza* (members of the *nkumbi*) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P. 252-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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lagers when it suited them to do so. In the dispute over the visit of the *ganza* to the forest hunting camp, the villagers were quite unable to enforce their will or even to enforce the compromise they finally effected with the Mbuti. The villagers themselves made no major decisions concerning the arrangement or carrying out of the *nkumbi* without at least discussing the matter with the Pygmy fathers. No difference was observable in the preparations or the ceremony that could be attributed to the fact that Mbuti only were being initiated.

The account given shows not only the extent to which the villagers were unable to control the *ganza*, but also the thoroughness with which they attempted to dominate the initiation. Despite the fact that the *ganza* were entirely Pygmy, for the villagers the *nkumbi* was nonetheless sacred. They were interested in the *nkumbi* itself rather than in the individuals participating. Whether or not the villagers thought that by initiating the Mbuti they were subjecting them to tribal and supernatural authority is uncertain, though Schebesta (1952, 278; 1948, chap. 7) so suggests. The evidence considered here suggests that the villagers not only lacked control over the Pygmy *ganza*, but were not particularly rigorous in maintaining it, except in so far as any desecration of the initiation camp or the *nkumbi* itself was concerned. It seems that the villager was primarily interested in the *nkumbi* as a tribal festival; if any subordination of the Pygmies took place, it was incidental.

• 177 186 881 Similarly any subordination on the part of the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant, though they lost no opportunity for maintaining their individuality when their feelings clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the latter, they had no interest in the *nkumbi* as such. This lack of interest was manifest from the outset, when the village was in a state of festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony, and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack of interest was frequently manifest as total disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such touch and food taboos as were imposed by villager custom, and the general burlesquing among the *ganza* as described in the account, there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti band—notably the women and children. The [850] young children in their forest camp found a new game to play. They were the *ganza*, imitating all

[P 253-B]

[p. 253-c]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, including some of the ordeals. They not only knew the initiation songs, but were taught them by their mothers, who even more than their uninitiated male children were supposed to be in complete ignorance of such matters. 177 186 881 [857]

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the instructors did not come with them, and the *ganza* had only occasional visits from one villager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting camp. There were no ordeals during this time, no singing except when visited by the solitary villager, and no other form of instruction by the Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to be, for both children and the adult members of the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors of the initiation school. 177 881 [527]

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, they could scarcely avoid respecting the physical discipline imposed by the various ordeals they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic 177 861 881

of conversation. Both by their conversation and their behavior they showed that they were well aware of the benefit of this training for the children. The older men talked of ordeals that their "fathers" had experienced (apparently without reference to any villager *nkumbi*) in order to make them into men and hunters (both terms were used). They were always critical of any sign of excessive harshness on the part of the villager instructors and protected their children from it. But, on the other hand, the fathers showed no sympathy for a boy who could not endure the normal rigors of camp life and accept the routine ordeals without complaint, and it will be remembered that the boy who became ill himself insisted on returning to his place among the other boys before he had completely recovered (Turnbull, 1957). 177 86 881

It is, at the moment, an open question whether the Mbuti respect the physical discipline of the *nkumbi* because of its effect on the boys, or because of the status it gives their children in the eyes of the villagers, under normal circumstances equating the Mbuti (at least in terms of manliness) with their fellow villager initiates. The fact that no ordeals were practiced in the forest camp is perhaps an indication that the Mbuti do not lay very much stress on the physical and mental training aspect of the *nkumbi*. These are, in any case, benefits that [554]

[p. 253 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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they could quite well achieve in their own way. Such practical benefits as there may be do not demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

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This hiatus becomes even more evident when we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*, as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus not only between two ways of living but between two ways of thinking, and it shows that we are dealing with two totally different sets of values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To

Z 182 881 776 778 [825] [532] [535] the villager the masked dancers described in the account of the 1954 *nkumbi* (Turnbull, 1957, 193) represent the *ngosa* bird, indicating the presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the bullroarer represents supernatural power. The various taboos applied to the *ganza* express village subordination to that power which is sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from staying in the camp over night even though it meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further scope for getting out of control. The *nkumbi* places the villager initiates in a definite relationship to the supernatural. It is closely con-

Z [769] nected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

P 177 881 776 778 829 The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no ancestor cult. To them the masked dancers were the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bullroarer was a piece of wood whirled around on the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird" and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti, were neither "real" nor did they represent any reality. They were empty and rather ineffective theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by conversation among the ganza at night and in their constant burlesque.

[P. 254-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it?

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in

[P. 254- D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-
439 hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic exis-
B21] tence and the loose structure of band composition, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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If we look at the situation in reverse, the fact that the Mbuti simultaneously participate in the *nkumbi* and reject its significance indicates the instability of their relationship with the villagers. The villagers would undoubtedly like to assert their superiority but are unable to maintain effective control over the nomadic Mbuti, either as individuals or in bands, during the *nkumbi* or at any other time. The *nkumbi*, however, does at least place the villagers in an overt position of dominance. On the other hand, the Mbuti would like to be completely free from subordination to the villagers, yet they find it as necessary to submit to initiation in villager society as the villagers find it necessary to accept them as candidates. The *nkumbi* undoubtedly gives the villagers an opportunity to drive the first blow in asserting their superiority over the Mbuti, but at the same time it gives the Pygmy status, as well as economic benefits, in any village throughout the region. It also strengthens his own identity as a Pygmy by enabling him to reject the villager system of values in mimetic burlesque. The 1954 *nkumbi* shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

[P 255-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 255-c]

shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling. 000

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well-knit bands, such as may be found among the archers described by Schebesta, may find it possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic relationship with the villagers, but not so an active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind of relationship must be established because of the inevitability of contact. As the smaller, more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies must make the move to fit into the larger, looser group. But there is no question of absorption; the smaller group preserves its identity. The *nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti with an opportunity both for establishing a place in villager society and for asserting their independent set of values by opposition. The antagonism that remains and is even heightened by this opposition is smoothed over to some extent by the secondary mechanism by which the two groups attempt to express their rela-

P 621 648 179 [184] Z [563]

P Z [439]

tionship-mutal trade

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

[P. 256-A]

177 as yet assumed village values in name only, and
18 only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

177 This interpretation of the function of the
18 *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an outward symbol of the association of two neigh-
12 boring peoples that, for one reason or another,
[881] come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

[71] In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

177 We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not
881 be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti
18 who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

177 *nkumbi* offers the Mbuti an opportunity for as-
881 serting their individuality at the same time
18 that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

575 In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also
575 true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at
881 all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

[P 256-B]

The function of these associations[1] is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 776 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] [554] [171] [181]

1, [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

[P. 259-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 259-C]

lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go.

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers.

In the final section we consider some legends collected by Anne Putnam among these same Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*. 128 186 539

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

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In order to understand the Pygmy values more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti rejection of villager values is effectively valid and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by four of the more important hunters belonging to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters [181] [186] [177] • 539 114

[P. 259 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 261-C]

They went off into the Forest together. The one man lived with his wife, but time went by and still they had no children. The other Pygmy saw this and decided that he would go to the main hunting camp. There he found another woman. He lived with her, and in due course a child was born. The Pygmy ran to his friend in the Forest in great joy, and told him the news. His friend immediately left the Forest and also lived with the woman in the hunting camp. They too had a child. And that is how Pygmies began, and how they became so plentiful. 539

Bati

Another legend tells how two brothers fought over an ax.

One was killed, so the other said to his nephews and nieces: "See, I have killed your father. From now on, your family and mine are enemies. We will live apart; you will live over there and I will live here." And they parted forever.

That, a social anthropologist might say, was the beginning of fission and fusion.

But apart from this, and one legend telling how a great dreamer dreamed and was told how the Pygmies should make nets out of *nkuza* vine and hunt with nets, the remainder of legends dealing with the traditional past refer to relationship with the villagers, a subject of much more interest to the Mbuti. 539 177 787

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

There is a particularly nice contrast in the way the villagers tell how the relationship began and the way the Pygmies tell the same story. Here is the villager version:

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In the old days the Pygmies lived in holes in the trees, and nobody ever saw them. But one day a real man and his wife were walking through the forest and heard a strange sound. It was very loud and noisy. "What is this strange noise?" said the man to his wife, who replied, "I have no idea." "Well," said the man, "we will have to find that noise and see what it is. I'll go home and think what we should do." So he went home and thought, and he prepared a trap. He baited it with a banana, so that when the animal or whatever was making the noise grabbed the banana, an arrow would come down and pierce it.

The next morning the man and his wife set out with the trap and fixed it at the entrance to the hole in the tree from where the noise was coming. Then they went off a little way and waited to see what would happen. In a little while one of the Pygmies came to the mouth of the hole and saw the banana. He said to himself, "What is this?" Finally, his curiosity got the better of him and he made a grab for the banana. But as he touched it, the trap came down, and his hand was pierced by the arrow. He let

[P. 261-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.262-A]

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out an awful scream. The man and his wife came rushing to the trap and seized him. They released him. The wife said, "What is this?" They stared at him and examined him carefully, and the wife admired his barkcloth. They took him back to their home and gave him lots of good things to eat.

One day the Pygmy said, "I have many relations in that hole." So the man fixed his trap and went back to the hole and put down his trap with a banana as bait. In a little while a hand came out of the hole and reached for the banana. The trap fell and the arrow pierced the flesh and the Pygmy let out an awful scream. The man and his wife rushed to the trap and took the Pygmy home. The first Pygmy saw them coming and shouted for joy, because they had caught his wife.

The next day the man and his wife went back with the trap, but all the other Pygmies refused to be tempted out of their hole, so they waited and waited in vain. The Pygmies in the hole said: "See, the other two grabbed the banana and were taken away. They must have been eaten up."

In the meantime the two Pygmies who lived in the village were having a very good time, and the real people gave them lots and lots of food. In due course they had a child, and then another child. When those children grew up they had children, and their children had children, and that is why there are so many Pygmies in the forest today.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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The Mbuti, as might be imagined, tell it differently.

The Mbuti were out hunting termites because, as you know, termites are good to eat. They built their houses. When night arrived the wives cooked food for their husbands. Then they all went to sleep. But in the middle of the night they heard a cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" "What is that?" said one Pygmy. "It is coming from over there!" cried another, pointing into the Forest. "Yes, it is a great noise coming from the old *liboyo* tree!" shouted a third. "We should go and see what it is!" They took their spears and crept up to the old *liboyo* tree. There they found a large hole in the ground, and they thought they could see faces peering up at them. But it was very dark, and they were afraid to go too close, so they returned to their camp.

"Tomorrow we shall go and see what it is all about," they said. "We shall go and we shall smoke it out of the hole, whatever it is."

The next morning they went back to the *liboyo* tree, carrying bundles of sticks and some fire wrapped up in *mongongo* leaves. They put the fire to the wood and started filling the hole with smoke. Then they heard voices calling out from the hole: "I'm dying, I'm dying! Oh, let me out, Brother, I'm dying!"

The Pygmies stopped the smoke and hurried to

[P. 262- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 262-C]

help whatever it was out of the hole, and out came people—Real People—much bigger than themselves, holding their heads and crying. They were villagers. "Where do you come from?" asked the Pygmies. "We don't know!" answered the Real People. "We fell into the hole by the old *liboyo* tree and then you started filling it with smoke. We should have died if you had not helped us out."

P 539 177 186

Z 539 177

The Pygmies took the Real People with them, back to their termite camp, saying: "Come back with us to our termite camp. Now we shall all live together; there will be no fighting between us. You will be the Real People, truly, truly; you will be the Real People, truly."

Basi

But the Mbuti have their own notions as to the origin of the "Real People." This legend characterizes their attitude to the villager—an attitude they never express in the presence of the villager, finding it more profitable to let the villagers continue to think that even the Mbuti themselves recognize the great superiority of the "Real People."

P 539 186

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must determine both their function and their meaning, to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers. 182 53

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably the major problem that arises from the survey. We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical grounds for the difference between the relationship of the archers to their villager neighbors and that of the more nomadic net hunters to 177 439 177 439 184

[P. 273- D]

[P.274-A]
.177 theirs. There is also evidence, but in regrettably
439 little detail, that certain hunting bands main-
184 tain a client-patron relationship by specializing in elephant hunting, bringing the tusks to the villagers, on whom they rely for all vegetable products and on the edge of whose villages they live in permanent camps.

177 However, no matter how great or little the degree of dependence on the villagers, the Mbuti for whom we have any information all seem to maintain a distinct individuality in opposition to the villagers, despite their apparent adoption of villager institutions and even of [881] villager language. With regard to the adoption of villager customs, the 1954 *nkumbi* shows the degree to which this adoption may be a mere superficial conformity and may indeed conceal a formal rejection of villager values. A very careful study should be made of all such institutions held in common, if not practiced jointly.

177 It is indeed at this level that we seem to find
184 some excuse for referring to the Ituri Mbuti as a single people rather than as consisting of a number of widely scattered, semi-independent

P hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout,
177 this clear opposition between the forest and the
184 outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the
P difference between Schebesta's account of the
[575] archer *toré* association and my own account of
[114] the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P The Mbuti is always conscious of his rela-
829 tionship with the villager and of the subordi-
648 nate position he is forced to accept. It is a major
186 consideration, it seems, that must be taken into
Z account in every aspect of his life when he is in
563 the village (here I refer mainly to the net
[P. 274-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 27 [2]

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and
30 affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift
• 177 from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.

854 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding, fondling, and even nursing the child.

[1]/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P. 286]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/

[P.287-A]

PLATE 31 1/1

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1,/Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 31/

[p.295] /Caption appears on p. 294/

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

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386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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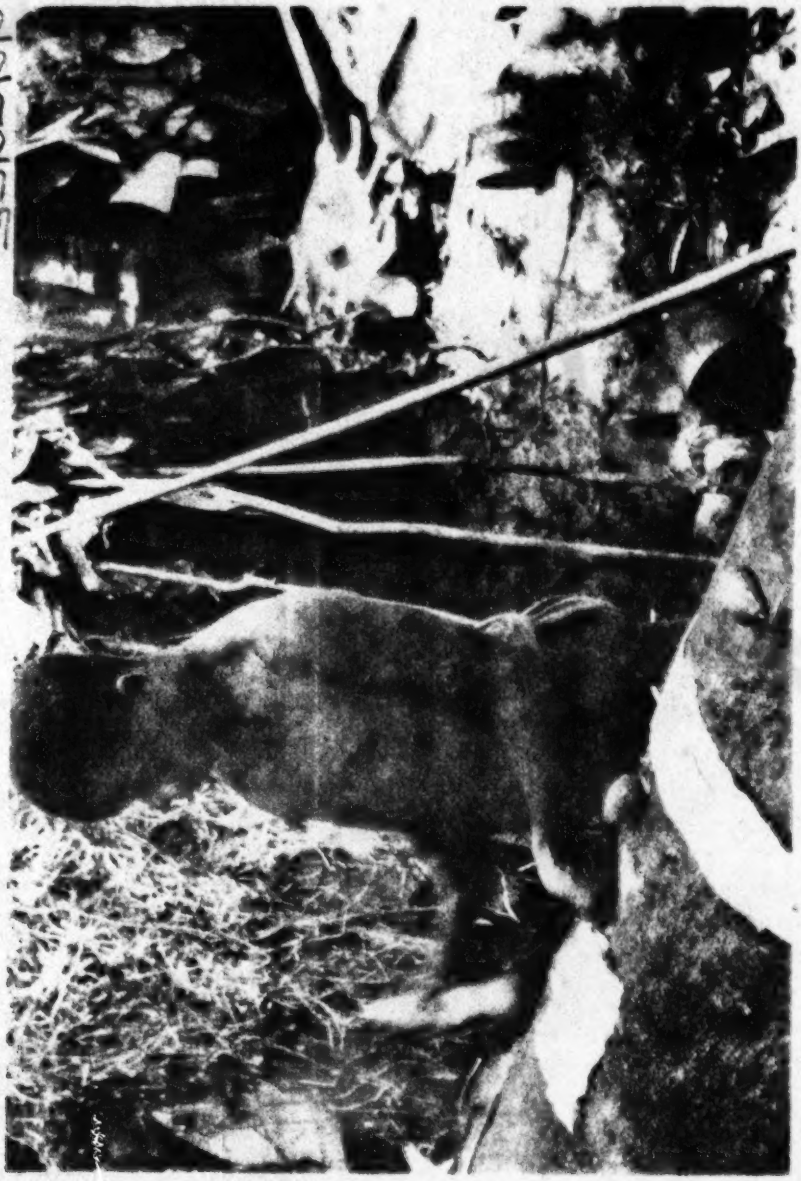

/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P 297-A]

L: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 35 1/A

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

224 a. The kill. When an animal falls into the nets, nearby men and youths run to catch it before it tears itself loose or damages the net. As the men disentangle the trapped animal, a youth stands by with a spear ready to make the kill. Even the smallest antelope, when trapped, can be dangerous. Although the hunt is vital to the food economy of the Mbuti, they take no pleasure in the kill. It is considered a crime to hunt or kill more game than is essential for sustenance.

411 b. The main weapon of the archers, the bow and arrow, is for the net hunters only an incidental means of obtaining food. The net hunters prefer their own poisoned arrows with [177] a fire-hardened tip (as used here) rather than the unpoisoned metal tips supplied and used by the villagers.

1/A, /Plate 35 appears on page 303--Analyst/

[P. 302]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For general information on culture contacts and acculturation processes between the Mbuti bands and the villagers, see the following pages in category 116: 8, 15-17, 22, 27-29, 33-38, 44-54, 56-80, 83-88, 108J, 108K, 109, 128, 143, 145, 150, 156-157, 177-178, 180, 201, 205, 214-215, 225-228, 229-231, 234-239, 243-244, 246, 251, 273, 281-283, 291-292, 294-300, 322-325, 331, 333-338.]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For additional information on Villager/Mbuti relationships in which interpersonal and/or kpara/kare (artificial kin) aspects predominate, see also 608, 571, 578.]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[Author's general discussions of his approach to the problem of Village/Mbuti relationship, in which there is little presentation of specific economic, social or cultural data on the relationship, will be found in category 121.]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For additional information on the question of Villager influence on the Mbuti, and Villager/Mbuti cultural differences, see also Congo-Kinshasa FO1, categories 101, 241, 105, 128, 361.]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[128] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[184] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
105 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is
[181] one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

12 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
• 177 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems. 121 177 • 18

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination. 121 177 *

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightforward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed. 128

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[3] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[3] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into [illegible] assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177] •
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
[illegible] 571
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
761 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person,
152 it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
761 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
763 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not
152 going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is dying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will [illegible] himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by using a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[687] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

P 648 439 121

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

P 621 648 C 563 648 P E [439]

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

C [622] P [622]

P 648 554 622 [177] P [888] [184]

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

175 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twen-
114 ties to study them.

114 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in
144 which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later
174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not
533 ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 In several other ways I felt that [illegible]
177 account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own language, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Schebesta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

114 105 177 initiation camp, I could not accept this point of view at all. Yet it was one shared by others, some of whom had lived in the area for years.

114 177 The explanation was simple enough, and it was not that either one of us was right and the other wrong. Whereas Father Schebesta had always had to work through Negroes, and largely in Negro villages, I had been fortunate in being able to make direct contact with the Pygmies, and in fact had spent most of my time with them away from Negro influence. Other Europeans had also only seen the Pygmies either in Negro villages or on Negro plantations. But I had seen enough of them both in the forest and in the village to know that they were completely different people in the two sets of circumstances. All that we knew of them to date had been based on observations made either in the villages or in the presence of Negroes.

114 Whereas my first visit to the Ituri Forest, in 1951, had been made mainly out of curiosity, I had seen enough to make me want to return to this area for more intensive study. An ideal location was provided by a strange establishment set up on the banks of the Epulu River back in the nineteen-twenties by an American anthropologist, Patrick Putnam.* He had gone there to do his field work but had liked the place and the people so much that he decided to stay. He built himself a huge mud mansion, and gradually a village grew up around him and became known as "Camp Putnam." The Pygmies treated it just as they treated any other Bantu village (the main Bantu villagers nearby were the Babira and BaNdaka, with a few Moslem BaNgwana), and used to visit it to trade their meat for plantation products. This was where I first met them.

* Patrick Putnam first went to the Belgian Congo in 1927 to do field work for Harvard University. Apart from one or two brief return visits to the United States he remained there until his death at the end of 1959. At Camp Putnam he established a dispensary and a leper colony, turning his home into a guest house to help pay the expenses of his hospital work.

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

But on my second visit, in 1954, I vas provided with a real opportunity for studying the relationship between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. The event was the decision of the local Negro chief to hold a tribal nkumbi initiatios festival. This is a festival in which all boys between the ages of about nine and twelve are circumcised, then set apart and kept in an initiation camp where they are taught the secrets of tribal lore, to emerge after two or three months with the privileges and responsibilities of adult status. 114 177 881

The nkumbi is a village custom, but in areas where the practice prevails the Pygmies always send their children to be initiated along with the Negro boys. This has been cted as an example of their dependence on the Negroes and of their lack of an indigenous culture. The Negroes take all the leading roles in the festival, and as no Pygmy belongs to the tribe, none cn become a ritual specialist, so the Pygmy boys always have to depnd on the Negroes for admission to an initiation, and for the subsequent instruction. An uninitiated male, Pygmy or Negro, youn; or old, is considered as a child—half a man at best. 177 881

Only relatives of the boys undergoinginitiation are allowed to live in the camp, though any adult initiatd male can visit the camp during the daytime.

But it so happened that on this ocasion there were no Negro boys of the right age for initiation, so tle only men who could live in the camp and stay there all night wre Pygmies. To go against the custom of allowing just relatives to lve in the camp would have [illegible] with the festival because it has to be held to avoid offending the tribal ancestors. The Negro men would have liked to stay in the camp all night, as normally instruction goes on even then, the boys being allowed to sleep only for short periods. But custom was too strong, and they had to rely on the Pygmy fathers to maintain order in the camp after dark and not allow the children to have too much sleep.

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123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
• 177 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
881 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco, palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested, but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions; on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
[352] the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between us by all the hardships we had shared together as well as by the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
199 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177 •
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time [533]
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551]
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice and [illegible] with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion still

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
• 177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.

Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
[55] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, show-

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

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115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
• 177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[46] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

[551] finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[278] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

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circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

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763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyuliho's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asefalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asefalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabous, and Masisi's eldest son Agenongo were the chief diggers.
• [179] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

Kelemoke, although he was a close relative of the girl's, was in particularly good humor. P 764

Meanwhile the body had been bathed, scented, wrapped in a white cloth, tied up in a mat and placed on a rough wooden bier. This was strictly according to Negro custom. In the forest the Pygmies would have been unable to get the soap and scent and cloth, for one thing, and would not have had the tools to dig an elaborate grave, for another. The bier was brought to the graveyard, which lay behind the village, in a noisy, wailing procession of Pygmies and Negroes. The body was carefully lowered into the grave. Rather grotesquely they made sure which end was which by grasping the head and twisting it under its covering. The body was oriented, laid on its side in a niche that had been cut under one wall of the grave, and held in place with three stones. Sticks were placed at an angle over it, and these were covered with leaves, then with moist earth, so that no soil should fall on the body. Then the grave was filled, some people throwing in a handful of earth, others just standing and watching. The mother and older sister tried to throw themselves into the half-filled grave and had to be dragged away. Cephu was weeping so bitterly that he had to be supported. Among the Negroes there is a strict ruling about funeral protocol—who is allowed to wail and who is not, who is allowed to support the chief mourner, a purely formal gesture, and so on. But this funeral followed no such rules. Whenever it made no difference to them the Pygmies followed the Negro custom, but the moment they wanted to go their own way they did. P 764 177 C 764 192

Before the grave was completely covered the women left. The Negroes directed the operation of guiding the spirit safely away by pouring a bucket of water, first into a hole left in the earth above the head of the corpse, then down the grave and off in the direction of the forest, away from the village. To the Negroes the forest is the place for spirits of the dead; they must be kept away from the village at all costs. P 764 199 C 764 175

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000 village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as
P 764 being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting
• 177 the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be
522 severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be af-
P [201] fected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

C The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of
761 settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no
764 death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was
P not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not
[761] co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and
[177] that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

P Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's
765 little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

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765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
83 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them
[870] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
• 177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect. [761]

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekiangs and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekiangs, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever. 763

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

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763 She looked up at me with eyes that already had a bluish film over them and caught hold of my hand. She said she wanted to die near her son and was glad to be back again. She agreed to take some white man's medicine, and the dispenser from the Station de Chasse was sent for. This was quite a departure, as this family had always resisted more strongly than any the use of modern medicine.

[159] [177]

Ekianga was almost beside himself. Gray-haired Asafalinda, no longer stiff and rough, but full of kindness, tried to comfort her younger brother, but she was too full of grief herself. She knelt on the ground beside her mother and wept. The old lady was the only one who seemed fully in control of herself, though the room was filled with wailing men, women and children. When the dispenser came she flickered to life with a burst of her old flame and slapped feebly at him with a bony hand as he pulled gently at her bark cloth to give her an injection, telling him to mind what he was doing. I felt her wince as the needle went in, but she continued looking up and smiling her old sweet smile. She was among her relatives and her friends, and that was all she wanted; she knew the injection would do no good. She held onto me so tightly that I couldn't leave until she finally dozed off; then when her grasp relaxed I quietly left and went out into the sunlight. Everyone was sitting around morosely, almost angrily. Even the little children, whom I had seen playing contentedly through other funerals, were quiet, holding onto their mothers in a frightened way. Everyone was watching Ekianga's fine wooden door, waiting for the end, waiting for old Balekimino to die for ever.

It was only a matter of hours. She never woke up.

The demonstration of grief that followed was no mere formal expression ordained by custom; it was something very real and disturbing. I have seen death in a Negro village where the atmosphere was one of fear—fear of sorcery, of the power of evil that had been unleashed. Here it was quite different. It was not a feeling of

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village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [52]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[197] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[274] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-
tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit 765 182
to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see.

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they re- 765
appeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded 534
like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it [533] was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with [522] laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp.

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it 765
rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that 534
upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but 123
I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were some- 177
times made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length.

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

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265 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo,
534 which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen
123 from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional ma-
177 terials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] Aum, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer
[533] pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Asua, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night.

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up.

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Asua said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway."

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Asua took the end of the

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some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, rather than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *ampi*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

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512 go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart,
204 [202] bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the
[535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories
[159] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he
439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he
• 199 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

7

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes. 538 439 177

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my [224] [251] 538 439 177 776 [186] [769]

538 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down
538 the trail.
• 199
996 "As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits.
[186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Aadalinda,
199 Ekianga's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village hut was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the
[996] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Nipho's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

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or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group as a whole.

Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting. The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *pawala*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 P 123 177 439 P 123 177 C 832 [576] The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 [513] [372] That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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This way she would preserve her reputation and I mine, and there would be no complications. And so it was.

I grew very fond of Amina, and some time later, when I was in a village and became very ill, she walked ten miles every day to see me, and ten miles back. She brought me refreshing fruits and sweet-smelling plants and flowers, and sat beside my bed without saying a word. Only once, I woke up and found she was sitting on the edge of the bed and holding my hand in hers.

When the Pygmies moved camp, Amina took the opportunity to go back to her father's village. I was never sure whether I was glad, or more than just a little sorry, to see her go. But when I thought about it, I realized that apart from all the other reasons, Amina could never have stayed. No matter how well she was liked by the Pygmies, she was still a villager. She had not been brought up to do the hundred and one little things that a Pygmy woman has to know how to do. She did not even know how to beat on the hunt, let alone which vines to follow to find the delicacies hidden in the ground by their roots. She belonged to another world.

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ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evidently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village. 361

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake. 857 152 883 177 152

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine 883 177 521 273 836

would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kanya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Telesbo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Telesbo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

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ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by 765
the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering 533
from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, (136)
and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them [152]
with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two 765
trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh 534
and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had 177
to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers. The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations 177
among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

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to verify just how much meat there was, accusing them of having eaten it all themselves. But the Pygmies paid no attention. Some made for their own village and dumped their belongings there. I wandered on with the others who went straight to their patrons to whom they presented the meat they had brought with them. Before long they were sitting down in whatever shade they could find, fanning themselves to keep the flies and mosquitoes away, eating heartily from enamel dishes, drinking dirty village water from enamel mugs.

After spending some time, rather like the Pygmies, greeting the various villagers, I returned to the Pygmy village and sat in the shade of my veranda looking down the dismal, double row of tumbledown huts. About half a mile away, in the background, the forest raised its tall dark face against the edge of the plantations, dwarfing the leafy plantain trees that were only three times as tall as men, making them look like blades of grass. Ineffectual blades of grass that had, with the help of village-man, usurped the place of the great primeval forest, but which in a year or two would be choked to a final death as the forest claimed its own. Clouds of dust arose as a small, disconsolate group of children played football with a ball presented to them by some fond villager. The dust got into my nostrils and made me feel suddenly bad-tempered. Kenge, who was trying to cook me a meal, cursed the children and told them to go and play somewhere else. But they had no bopi—no cool, clean streams, no vine swings. So they went off to chase the dogs, goats and chickens of the nearest Negro household.

At the far end of the little village stood Ekianga's house, the only one that was not falling to pieces. It straddled the width of the village, bridging the space between the two not very straight rows of smaller huts. The elima girls made a couple of sorties from the single door, dashing around to the back of the house where they could not be seen. Otherwise all was quiet.

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 433
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was sus-
pected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground,
they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and
imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled
the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it
sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing
as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Sur-
rounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around,
faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men
who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing
in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

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on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village. 765 534

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy barara had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god. 765 761 765 372 778

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 765 594 177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

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P 765 579 177 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women P 881 took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful P [832] young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

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Mbuti

Chase as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

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They brought with them their ancestral beliefs, but the spirits of their ancestors resented being taken away from their rolling, open homelands and forced to live in the forest. In the plains the very ground was sacred to the ancestors who had lived there for generations, but here there could be no such bond. The graves themselves had to be abandoned to the forest sooner or later, as the clans shifted endlessly in the search of fresh soil.

While the only place the villager could call home was the temporary, sun-scorched clearing which he had cut for himself, and in which he would live a few years at the most, to the Pygmy the whole forest was home, and the village an isolated and foreign territory, hostile but ultimately impotent, to be regarded with indifference, amusement, and occasionally with annoyance. The village people were envious of the Pygmies, thoughthey tried to look down on them. They were compelled to respect the Pygmies by the fact of their own belief in the mystical bond between a people and the land of its ancestors. They had no such bond. Just as they were afraid of the spirits of the forest, so they were secretly afraid of the Pygmies, and made them offerings of the first fruits of their plantations, and gave them an important part in the ceremonies for the village dead—the dead who had to be buried in foreign soil that might belong to the village world now, but which would soon belong once again to the forest.

The relationship between the two peoples was a strange one, full of ambivalence and uncertainty. By and large the village was their only common meeting place, for the Negroes disliked going into the forest except when absolutely necessary. The village was the world of the Negro, so he naturally assumed a position of authority and domination in that world. But it was a position without any foundations, for the Pygmy had only to take a few steps to be in his own world.

The Negroes were unable to exercise any physical force to main-

[i.e., the Negro tribes. – Analyst]

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tain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families.

It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while. The Pygmy was able to do for him all the necessary chores that necessitated going into the forest and could bring him game that supplemented an otherwise largely vegetarian diet. And in latter days, with the compulsory maintenance of larger plantations, the Negro found the Pygmy a useful source of additional labor. But for all of this he had to pay, and he was always uncertain how long any one Pygmy or group of Pygmies would stay with him. They were frequently miles away in the heart of the forest, and if the hunting was good no amount of coaxing would bring them back.

For the first week back at Camp Putnam, I found the villagers going out of their way to be generous to "their" Pygmies. The Pygmies wandered about idly, hanging around wherever they found food cooking, occasionally responding to a request to help with some kind of work. The village blacksmith, a man of many parts, adopted Masisi's family, though Masisi himself would have nothing to do with him. He said that Baziani was a trouble-maker, which he was, and that he was after Masisi's daughter, which was also true. But Baziani was wealthy, and Masisi's children spent most of their time in his baraza. They were well fed and looked after, and treated more as friends than anything else. Baziani, in return, made use of them to run errands, usually connected with his virtual monopoly of the local hemp market.

Baziani was genuinely fond of the Pygmies. In the evenings he used to bring out his drums and the Pygmies would gather around and dance. After a while Baziani would relinquish his part as a drummer, acknowledging the superiority of his friends. Then he sat back in his cane chair and watched with a contented smile. He was one of

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the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored, well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his bazza, waiting to do him some small favor.

Masisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time been attached to a noble of the Balbia tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them, or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village. Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent one of his daughters, or his adopted son Madyadya, to help the chief and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself. Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

basket with two legs of antelope as a gift for Kapamba's wife. The camp watched the chief leave with few regrets. They had only allowed him to stay because he had brought a quantity of food with him.

Manyalibo's wife returned two days later with her basket full to overflowing with delicacies from the village. She had told Kapamba that she did not want to stay longer without her husband, so he had no option but to allow her to return.

Manyalibo's son-in-law, Ausu, was even more of a renegade. His "hereditary master" was André, the chief of a powerful Islamic village just beyond Eboyo. André's father, old Effundi Somali, had been a child when Stanley brought his relief expedition through the forest to rescue Emin Pasha. He used to tell stories of the dreadful wars that were fought in those days, and of the trail of destruction that Stanley had left behind him. While the old man was alive André had worked as head cook at Camp Putnam, but now he was chief in his father's place.

Part Bira and part Ngwana, André inherited all the traits of the latter. In his dealings with Europeans he could be charming and helpful; he could also be cunning and crooked. With other villagers he was proud and avaricious, and he had a supreme contempt—which he could disguise whenever it suited him—for the Pygmies.

A few years earlier, when Ausu had been hunting forest pig, a boar had charged him and wounded him badly, ripping his stomach and one leg. André had taken Ausu into his own house and cared for him, nursing him for months until he was well again. This was done under the guise of friendship, and I have heard André tell the story many times to illustrate how enlightened he is. But I have also heard Ausu's comment that André had done no more for him than he would have done for a valuable hunting dog. A Pygmy is not unresponsive to genuine kindness, and Ausu would not have left André soon after recovering if there had been any such kindness in the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

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the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoulders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal, and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading, cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

against him and have him put in jail. As the tribunals are all Negro, with no Pygmy members, even the most obviously distorted charge against a Pygmy is bound to succeed.

Ausu decided that if this was André's attitude he was not going to give him a single franc. On the day of the payment I went with him to the Station de Chasse, saw him get the five hundred francs, and joined the director in advising him to climb over the fence and return through the forest rather than to leave by the main gate. And sure enough, as I left, there was André with half a dozen of his men, waiting. When he saw he had been tricked he went to the paramount chief of the area and had a court order made out for Ausu's immediate arrest and confinement to prison. But Ausu was already back in the forest, and in time even court orders are forgotten. And so with all his show of authority and superiority André was unable to do anything; trying to pursue a Pygmy in the forest was a task no villager would undertake for any amount of pay.

There are those, like André, who really believe that the Pygmies are inferior and are meant to be treated like slaves, but for the most part the villagers are much more sensible and realistic. If they want to have control over their Pygmies, they know it must be based on something other than threats of physical force. But even the most benevolent of them regard the Pygmies much as the Pygmies regard them in turn—as a kind of convenience. I know of only one villager who was almost accepted by the pygmies as one of themselves. That was Kaweki, the fisherman.

Kaweki was a not-so-young bachelor of the BaBira tribe. He claimed to dislike women, saying they made far too much noise and cost far too much money. Most of the time he was in the forest, catching fish in dams and traps, drying them, and sending them down to market with his Pygmy friends. This struck the other villagers as an undignified, not to say an unsafe, procedure. But Kaweki was not one to care about what others thought.

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P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

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so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

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123 it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the
484 majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki
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[515] by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

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It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing
171 was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house,
361 built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with
342 walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut,
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calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into
[353] two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying
[251] rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double
[417] duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the
[354] screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl
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knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister.
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571 Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Fa-
• 177 ther," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak,
758 but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

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P C 123 571 574 beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

P [832] Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

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In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

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In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

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molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—
a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children,
even if he was a villager.

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Elima: the Dance of Life

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WITH THE PYGMIES and the villagers coming into contact, both as individuals and groups, it was inevitable that over the years each should adopt some of the other's customs. The contact between them was sometimes intimate and friendly, as with Kaweki, and sometimes it was formal and hostile, as between André and Ausu. Most frequently its purpose was just a matter of barter, and at all times each regarded the territory of the other as a foreign place.

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When a custom was adopted by one people, they gave it their own particular character and meaning, and frequently changed it so that it was all but unrecognizable, except through the common

use of the original name. Such was the case with the molimo, and such was also the case with the elima. Who borrowed from whom is a difficult question, and perhaps not a very important one. The difference that emerges in the process of borrowing is much easier to see and adds much more to our understanding.

To both peoples the elima is concerned with the arrival of a young girl at the age of maturity, her transition from girlhood to the full flowering of womanhood. This coming of age is marked more dramatically for girls than for boys by the physical changes that take place. Both Pygmies and villagers recognize the significance of the first appearance of menstrual blood, and both celebrate it with a festival which they call "elima." But there the similarity ends.

My friend Amina told me a great deal about the elima among the BaBira, and I learned more from older women in different villages that I lived in from time to time. Everywhere, right through to the very edge of the forest, I found the same story among the villagers. Blood of any kind is a terrible and powerful thing, associated with injury and sickness and death. Menstrual blood is even more terrible because of its mysterious and regular recurrence. Its first appearance is considered by the villagers as a calamity—an evil omen. The girl who is defiled by it for the first time is herself in danger, and even more important she has placed the whole family and clan in danger. She is promptly secluded, and only her mother (and, I suspect, one or two other close and senior female relatives) may see her and care for her. She has to be cleansed and purified, and the clan itself has to be protected, by ritual propitiation, from the evil she has brought upon them. At the best, the unfortunate girl is considered a considerable nuisance and expense.

It is generally assumed that the girl was brought into this condition by some kind of illicit intercourse, and her mother demands of her who is responsible. This is the girl's chance to name the boy of her choice, whether or not she has even so much as spoken to

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

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the first light of dawn flecked the sky with gold. They went down to the banks of a forest stream, where it widened out into a silent pool, and bathed themselves in half-hearted imitation of an elaborate village ritual. Then they oiled their bodies and donned oily new bark cloths and returned to dance in the village. They danced in a tight little circle while the women cooked the food. The villagers came to watch approvingly and to see that the food was properly distributed, for only certain people may eat it. They also made sure that all the leaves which had been used as a sleeping mattress in the elima house were thrown away and the house cleaned thoroughly. In this way they satisfied themselves that no harm would come to "their" Pygmies. The ancestors would be appeased by the feast, and the evil spirit that hovered around the unclean girls would be driven away.

The girls found it all rather tedious and boring, and as soon as they were able they broke off from their dancing and went wandering around the village. Akidinimba was in search of Pumba, who had failed her badly in the final ceremony. The others visited from house to house, in the hopes of gifts and compliments. The older women sat around and enjoyed the food for as long as it lasted; then they broke up and went about their business as though nothing had happened.

The men, for some time, had been talking about where they would build the next hunting camp.

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The Marriage of Kenge

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THE END OF THE ELIMA precipitated a crisis in the village. One of the many ways in which the villagers try to exert control over the Pygmies is by seeing that they are married according to Negro custom. The villager believes this achieves two ends—it subjects the married couple to the same supernatural authority that controls married villagers (the authority of village ancestors), and by careful manipulation and matchmaking it can increase and improve his own stock of Pygmies.

The Pygmies accept this, but in point of fact they consider a village wedding as no more than a formal betrothal at the most, and a

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P 177 585 C 563 585 good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C [881] [584] The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584 The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584 Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Katala, several miles

beyond Eboyo. So she refused to have anything to do with Pumba. 584

Since the prime objective was to get Akidinimba married, once it was plain that Kidaya would not take Pumba, everyone lost interest in her and returned to the problem of her fellow initiate. Circumstance forced the issue, for while all this was going on a close relative of Akidinimba's, a boy named Mulanga, decided to get married to Atete's sister. Nobody saw any harm in this, and so arrangements were pursued and they were duly married. Mulanga was quite non- 585
plused by the ritual, for he had spent most of his life in the forest 177
and knew little of village customs. He was particularly perturbed when at the end of the ceremony his bride was seized by a village woman and led away. He was not quite sure what to do and trotted behind them at a safe distance until he was able to follow his wife into the house that had been set aside for him.

Mulanga's marriage meant that he was obliged to provide a sister 583
for his bride's brother, Atete, to marry. Villagers will compensate 584
families for the loss of a daughter by the payment of money or goods, but the Pygmies find it necessary to arrange for an exchange, so that no group is ever depleted of its womenfolk. Akidinimba, who had still not forgotten how she had been jilted and insulted, saw in this situation an opportunity for revenging herself on Kidaya, the unwilling receiver of Pumba's attentions. So she volunteered to marry Atete. Everyone, except Kidaya, was delighted, and Atete and his family agreed. By the time the date for the wedding was set, Akidinimba began to have doubts and thinking of the freedom she was about to lose she wept day and night. But there was no escape. The villagers of Katala had arranged a great feast and this made everyone all the more anxious for the wedding.

Atete, however, heard of some honey far off in the forest, several 585
days' march away, and at the last moment he set off. The villagers protested loudly, but Atete merely said that the wedding could take place any time, but the honey could not wait. As it was only a

marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidinimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Atete. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned.

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Atete was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Atete arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidinimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was telling her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Atete was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidinimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper.

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Atete arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sondu antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often.

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 462 [581] P [601] [561]

P 583 177 186 C 563 583 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

584 177 [836] [571] [439] [186] 584 [583]

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however, sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi, who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

585 He did not seem particularly interested, because after listening to the
• 179 argument for half a minute he yawned and went back into his hut without saying a word to anyone.

We all trekked back to the village, and there, under the watchful eye of the villagers, the wedding began. Masisi had refused to come, saying the Babama villagers were the worst savages of all, so Mambunia came in his place. He supervised as all the wedding gifts were placed on the ground, and he watched as various villagers, each in the hopes of improving his chances of getting some meat from the young couple, came forward and added either money, ax-blades, or small pieces of cloth. There were already several pots, quite a number of arrows, and a few trinkets given to the party at Katala village. The villagers who claimed Maliamo felt that this treasure belonged to them, but Mambunia denied this strongly. He pointed out that in any case, according to their own village custom, the gifts should sleep with the couple that night. Reluctantly the villagers agreed, and Mambunia promptly scooped the gifts up and brought them into the wedding house.

Taphu was supposed to put in an appearance at this point, but he could not be found. It was two hours before he was discovered, asleep, and dragged to the spot where we were all sitting around, eating
585 and drinking and singing. He arrived in his tattered village clothes
292 but was promptly taken inside and made to change into a new cloth, put on a woven straw hat decorated with feathers, and arm himself with a new bow and a sheaf of arrows. Arrayed like this he appeared at the doorway in the late afternoon. Yambabo looked up and actually smiled. Taphu looked very handsome and imposing, if somewhat uninterested, and having made his duty appearance he went back inside and fell asleep again.

585 That night the wedding party stayed at Babama, all sleeping in
179 the wedding house, feasted royally by the villagers. The next day the
[574] rites were completed in a ceremony which consisted largely of the

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formal appearance of Yambabo, standing between two of her sisters, preceded by a still uninterested-looking groom. As villager after villager lectured the bride, Taphu shifted his weight listlessly from one foot to the other, scratched his back with his new arrows, and gazed longingly at some monkeys in the trees nearby. The villagers warned Yambabo that she belonged to them now; she could not call on Kenge whenever she wanted help but would have to come to them. They pointed out which villagers she was expected to help when she and her husband came from the forest, and she was told of all the things they would expect her to do for them. She was finally reminded of the villagers that had contributed gifts for the wedding.

Yambabo and Taphu were led back into the house, and the others resumed their singing and dancing and drinking. Munyunga, the burly villager who had done most of the talking and who claimed to "own" Taphu and Maliamo, said that he wanted to wait a while, according to custom, and then bring Maliamo with a large wedding party to Kenge's village. But to this the Pygmies as one man absolutely refused to agree. There was a great deal of argument, and it was plain that Munyunga was determined to have at least a return feast arranged for him. Normally he would have arranged this with Kenge's "owner," but this was wily old Kapapela, the paramount chief's brother, who had already made it known that he was in complete agreement with Kenge's refusal to have a village wedding, thus saving himself the expense. So Munyunga knew his chances were slim, particularly as Kenge was no longer even at Kapapela's village and refused to go there. He finally agreed to arrange matters with Kapapela later; in the meantime he would bring Maliamo to Kenge with a small party, but he would expect food, drink, and some kind of gift. He suggested a new hat. He agreed to come the next day, so we returned to Camp Putnam well pleased.

Munyunga arrived early the following morning, with Maliamo and an escort of three villagers. He was clearly annoyed by the fact

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that only Moke and Masisi were there to greet him. Everyone else had disappeared, many of them to hunt and others simply because they did not like Munyunga. He was even more upset when Masisi, instead of greeting him first, and then the villagers, went straight to Maliamo and led her away to his hut so that she could put down her bundle and refresh herself. Kenge was nowhere to be found. Moke invited the villagers to sit on my baraza, and they made loud remarks among themselves to the effect that as I was Kenge's new "owner" I should offer them beer. But I wanted to see what Kenge would do on his own, so I did nothing, although I had several containers of palm wine waiting inside the hut.

Kenge was finally found, engrossed in a gambling game behind Ekianga's house. He had hoped that the villagers would become discouraged and leave. But after two hours of patient waiting he emerged and slowly wandered across the clearing toward us. He stopped to look inside several huts on the way, chatting to anyone he could find as though he was completely unaware that the wedding party was waiting for him. He was as slow and as surly as he could be, and when he finally reached the villagers, who by then were not even trying to disguise their anger, he just took each of their hands in turn and then turned his back on them and asked me what I would like to have for lunch.

This was too much for Munyunga, who stood up and shouted that he was going to take Maliamo back with him, that Kenge was a child who did not know how to behave like an adult. This touched Kenge on a very sore spot, for he prided himself on being extremely adult. He motioned Munyunga to sit down again, and said, "You are only villagers—Ebamunyama is a white man. Isn't it right that I should ask him first?" I hastily said that I could wait, and without another word Kenge went away. About half an hour later he returned with two bottles of beer, some dried fish, and a bottle of palm oil. He put these on the ground beside Munyunga, and then wan-

dered out into the middle of the village, where he played with the children. The next thing I knew he had disappeared again, and I was told he had stolen one of the villager's bicycles and gone off down the road to Katala.

The Pygmies were obviously going to have nothing further to do with the villagers, and I felt sorry for Maliamo who had come and sat down beside them in the baraza. Feeling that I was in some way responsible, I asked if it was proper for me to offer them some palm wine. This eased the situation slightly. Munyunga and his friends stayed and drank their beer and palm wine, while Masisi and Moke did their best to pacify them by offering to have a meal cooked. But they said no, all they wanted was to drink. Only two Pygmies came to join them, and then only to see if they would be offered any leftovers. But Munyunga was not parting with a drop, even for Maliamo, who continued to sit uncomplainingly by his side. When the beer and palm wine were all finished, Munyunga still stayed —angry, surly, and very drunk indeed. Occasionally he called for more to drink, or asked where his new hat was, but nobody answered him. The few people that were in the village just went their way as though there were no visitors at all. Moke was fast asleep outside his hut, and Masisi was fashioning a new bow, never so much as glancing at the baraza.

It was beginning to darken when the villagers left, saying that the Pygmies were a lot of animals who didn't know how to behave, and that if Maliamo did not bear Kenge any children it would not be *their* fault.

As soon as the unwelcomed guests had left, the whole atmosphere changed. Pygmies appeared unexpectedly from all directions, crowding around Maliamo to greet her. She went to the little hut that had been given to her and Kenge and began cooking. Kenge appeared, as if by magic, laughing and telling how he had met Mu-

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585 nyunga on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Babama.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambabo's marriage to Taphu, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had [583] given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had 177 treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Ma- 186 sisi said that even if Munyunga *was* a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Mulanga, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*bule*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

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Village Initiations and Magic

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OF ALL THE WAYS in which the villagers attempt to assert some kind of control over the BaMbuti, the one which is the most significant, and which they consider to be the most effective and binding, is that of subjecting Pygmy boys to the village initiation, known as the nkumbi. This is one custom which, at first glance, does not seem to have any counterpart in the forest life of the Pygmies. Most outside observers have assumed that the very fact of the Pygmies' participation in the nkumbi—with the absence of any such rites of their own—is a sign of their dependence on the village. Some go so far as to say that this participation shows that the Pygmies are devoid of

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any culture of their own. If the facts were what they seem to be these observations might hold water, but the real facts are very different.

During my visit to Epulu in 1954, I had the good fortune to stumble quite accidentally upon fresh information, which almost completely reverses the picture. At that time I was present at an nkumbi, which I have already mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, but which merits more detailed description.

Three years had then elapsed since the previous nkumbi, in 1951, and it was time for another. The purpose of the ceremony is not only to fit village boys for adult life, making them full members of the tribe, but also to ensure the continuity between the past, present and future life of the tribe; between the living and the dead. To the villagers the dead, the ancestors, are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so; and only those who are initiated will join the ancestors when they die. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. The dead are, in fact, living—but in another world. Regular initiations are essential to ensure the continued growth of that far-off tribe of ancestors. I have even seen a young boy who had been due to enter the nkumbi but who died just before it took place, circumcised and accorded full initiation rites before burial, just as though he were alive. In this way he was able to go to join his fathers.

In 1954 there was a unique situation. There was only one village boy of the right age for initiation (usually between the ages of eight and twelve in this area), and his father was a Christian who refused to allow the boy to participate. Every pressure was brought on the family, but to no avail. There were eight Pygmy boys of suitable age, and normally there would have been at least as many villagers. They would all have been initiated together but in such a way as to make clear the inferior status of the Pygmies. One of the initial acts is the circumcision of the boys, and a Pygmy boy is sent first "to clean the knife."

the knife." Then follows a village boy, and these two are bound together by an indissoluble bond, the bond of *kare* blood-brotherhood. They are mutually obligated to help and care for each other for the rest of their lives. This of course helps to reinforce practical and economic links between the two people, as a Pygmy theoretically would be unable to refuse meat to his kare and the kare could not refuse any demand for plantains, manioc or rice.

But this year the villagers were faced with the alternative of having no initiation at all, or having one for Pygmy boys alone. As the initiation of a Pygmy gives him only partial rights, since he is not a full member of the tribe, a Pygmy initiate can never take a leading part in the nkumbi; all the cutting and all the formal teaching, and certainly all the ritual acts, can be performed only by a qualified villager. So it meant that the villagers would have to go through all the work and expense purely for the Pygmies. There could be no question of not holding the nkumbi, as this would offend the ancestors. And in any case the villagers decided it was worth while as it helped to assert their authority over the Pygmies. I heard speculative talk more than once about how an initiated Pygmy, when he dies, goes to serve the tribal ancestors just as he served the villagers during his life.

The *makata* sticks were cut and brought out. These are a series of sticks used only at the time of the nkumbi; each one is cut to a different length and tuned to a definite pitch. Some eight or nine men, each with a stick under his left arm, tapping it with a shorter stick held in the right hand, dance around the village playing a complicated but tuneful rhythm, the different notes overlapping and combining. Villagers from the surrounding area congregated at Epulu, some of them from as far as fifty miles away, and dancing and feasting went on for over a week. During that time the boys were collected together, and last-minute appeals were made for young Yusefu, the Christian boy, to be allowed to join. His father settled

the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mambasa.

The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masisi, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sansiwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sansiwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *boloko* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

Sansiwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sansiwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sansiwake was left outside.

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VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sansiwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

not allowed to sleep in the camp at night. Only the "fathers," that being understood to mean the real fathers and the older brothers of the boys, were allowed to sleep in the "place of the nkumbi." That meant, in this case, only Pygmies. The BaMbuti had different notions. Recognizing that I was anxious to be with them right through the whole period of seclusion, they invited me to join them. After all, they said, I was really the father of all the eight boys. In this way I became one of the *baganza,* the people of the initiation. [123]

The invitation was not intended as a deliberate slight to the villagers; the Pygmies merely thought it would be fun, particularly as they were sure that I would keep them supplied with tobacco and palm wine and other luxuries. From their point of view no harm was being done. From the villagers' point of view, however, this breach of custom was likely to bring disaster not only on me but also on the rest of the baganza. Beyond issuing the gravest warnings, they made no attempt to discourage me and soon came to accept my presence.

So from the first day to the last I was with the nkumbi, day and night; and at night, when all the villagers had left, I learned what the nkumbi really means to the people of the forest. The moment their instructors were gone, and only Pygmies were left, the boys leaped from the bed where they were supposed to be sleeping and joined their fathers around the fire, eating forbidden foods in forbidden company and in a forbidden manner, using their fingers. One boy jumped onto a log and swung his arms around in imitation of someone swinging a bull-roarer, which of course he should never have seen. Others played their favorite game of punch ball with the sacred banana. A shower of rain was an invitation to run outside and wash off all the dirt that had accumulated during the day. The villagers not only forbade the candidates to get wet, even by washing, but they smeared them constantly with white clay, from head to foot, as a sign of their death as children. To the naturally clean Pygmies this was intolerable, and the boys were encouraged by their fathers to

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P 881 177 take the first opportunity to wash it off. When the villagers questioned them in the morning, the boys invariably replied that they had been so cold during the night that they had huddled close together, and the clay had been rubbed off in this way. In fact, the men provided blankets for the boys, keeping themselves warm by lying close to the fires. Kenge and I slept at one end of the shelter, half underneath the log bed; most of the other adults slept outside.

C 881 563 P 881 177 Both the boys and their fathers enjoyed the chance to make fun, in a friendly way, of the villagers, but that was not their sole reason for deliberately breaking all the taboos. They behaved as they did because to them the restrictions were not only meaningless but belonged to a hostile world. The villagers hoped that the nkumbi would place the Pygmies directly under the supernatural authority of the village tribal ancestors; the Pygmies naturally took good care that nothing of the sort should happen, proving it to themselves by this conscious flaunting of custom.

C 881 769 The villagers believed that the initiate, Pygmy or otherwise, is everlastingly bound thereafter by all the laws of the tribe, sacred and secular. He is put into direct relationship with the supernatural, whose representatives on earth are the villagers themselves. If any Pygmy initiate offends a villager, therefore, he is also offending the supernatural—the ancestors—and will be duly punished by them. C [753] [752] The villagers live in such fear of the supernatural, with its power to bring down on an offender the curses of leprosy, yaws, dysentery and other diseases or to cause him to be injured by a falling tree, that they cannot conceive of any initiate's daring to offend the ancestors. That is why they believe that the nkumbi gives them ultimate control over their ever-troublesome servants who refuse to behave as servants should.

C 881 563 P 881 177 It is not quite so obvious why the Pygmies subject themselves to what they plainly consider an unnecessarily brutal ritual. The trials of the nkumbi candidate only begin with the actual circumcision. Dur-

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

During the succeeding months—usually two or three now instead of the former six or even twelve—the boys are subjected to one form of mild torture after another. The torture is sometimes mental rather than physical. For instance, one boy, whose father refused point blank to have anything to do with what he called "an empty, savage custom" but allowed his son to enter, was made to ridicule his father almost every daylight hour. The gentle little Sansiwake, who insisted on getting up from the hard wooden bed to rejoin his companions long before he was completely well, was made to pretend that he was big and strong, carrying heavy loads and imitating the performance of acts degrading to any Pygmy, but particularly so to this sensitive child. Each boy was put through some torture of this nature.

The physical ordeals sometimes start out as games but develop into cruel tests of physical endurance. A crouching dance that might be fun for a few minutes becomes agony after half an hour. A mild switching on the underside of the arm with light sticks is of no concern until, after several days, the skin becomes raw. And then the villagers notch the sticks so that they fold over and pinch the skin sharply, often drawing blood. When the boys have become used to being beaten with leafy branches, thorny bushes are substituted.

To the Pygmies this all seems harsh and unnecessary, and as far as their own children are concerned they keep a strict watch over them to see that the villagers do not go to the length that they sometimes do with village children, even if this brings them into some contempt. But to the villager this toughening-up process is essential and does not come naturally in the course of village life. The child has to be fitted for adult life, and this is what the nkumbi sets out to achieve. In a few months a boy becomes a man, tough and strong, physically and mentally. The process is not a pleasant one, but it is the only way in which, under tribal conditions, the goal can be achieved.

The Pygmy can understand and appreciate this, but the very nature of his own nomadic hunting and gathering existence provides

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C
881 all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin
563 climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles de-
866 velop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games.
861 P Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and
881 imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open
177 inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest
866 clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction
861 which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

P The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the
881 nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject
885 its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change
177 in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

P There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi
881 means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate
882 lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence to-
177 ward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

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and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children.

Far from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples.

The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his first real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima.

During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sansiwake—Aberi the ugly, Aberi who was so often the laughing-stock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sansiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor.

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could

P 156 177 753 754 C 754

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

P 177 754 C 563 754

The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

P 177 159 754 C 563 754

It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was

nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

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P 177 159 754 763 the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."

Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given C 563 754 him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

P 177 754 If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the C 563 754 villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said nothing.

P 177 764 Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiating. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women C 563 761 764 [754] had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother. *We* do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

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C 574 P 115 123 this was not the point, and he finally just rolled over in his blanket, muttering that sometimes he thought Europeans were as crazy as villagers.

For the next few days we visited Kachui's plantations and talked with such Pygmies as we found there. But it was impossible to shake off the chief's sons, who stuck to us like leeches. As a result I could get no response at all; everything that the Pygmies said was said to impress the villagers. The only useful information was obtained by Kenge, who got into the habit of slipping away while I was "holding court," as he called it, and talking to his fellow Pygmies well out of earshot.

C 563 P 179 184 One thing was plain, however, and that was that no matter how powerful Kachui was—and it was certainly within his power to have any Pygmies put in jail and flogged—he was no match for the people of the forest. Kenge learned that the main group had been away for over six months and had no intention of returning yet. They were a long way off and came close to the village only when they wanted to raid the plantations. Even while we were there Kachui's sons tried to find out where the rest of the Pygmies were, but everyone protested complete ignorance.

C 648 186 622 563 123 P 123 C 492 A few days at Bafwakoa were more than enough. With Kachui lying in wait the Pygmies were not likely to tell us where their companions were, and even if they did Kachui was not likely to let us out of sight. He became un-co-operative when I asked to look at the tribunal records, for which I had official permission. He was forced into admitting that he did not consider the Pygmies real people, and therefore they had no right to have cases tried in the tribunal. He said that any complaints by the villagers against Pygmies were heard by him; he judged them himself and no records were kept. He made it quite plain that the judgment always went in favor of the villager. Kenge then disgraced himself by asking what happened if a Pygmy brought a complaint against a villager. Kachui

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answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of the Ituri River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukamba, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

"How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

THE FOREST PEOPLE

C 563 P 177 184 We did meet some Pygmies, however, and they laughed and told us that no Pygmy would ever come near Isiaka; there were plenty of other villagers who gave them much more in return for their meat, while Isiaka always expected them to work on his plantations for nothing. This, in fact, was the picture we got wherever we C [186] stopped. The villagers throughout the forest complained bitterly about the Pygmies, saying, "They eat us up until we are ready to die"—meaning that the Pygmies take from them but give little in return.

P C 177 439 C 829 It was not until we reached the western limits of the forest and turned north that we really had any luck. Some miles east of Wamba we left the car and followed a track through the forest. At the end of a full day we arrived at a series of old established villages of the Mabudo tribe. These people had a much more realistic attitude toward the Pygmies and consequently got along much better with them. They talked freely and willingly. They said that, after all, the Pygmies had been in the forest long before the Mabudo arrived, so they had the right to live as they wished. If they preferred to stay in the forest and live like animals, that was their concern, but if they wanted to come to the villages and work for the Mabudo, that was fine. At the time of harvest the villagers all gave gifts of the first fruits to the local Pygmies, because, as they said, it was their land. And any time the Pygmies were near a Mabudo village they invariably brought in gifts of meat or honey.

P 123 There were a few Pygmies in one of the villages when we arrived, and after a couple of days they agreed to take us out to one of the hunting camps. Kenge had done some talking to them on the side, assuring them that I was not really like a villager, but just like them, a *"miki nde ndura"*—son of the forest. When he introduced me to them he proudly pointed to the marks on my forehead that proclaimed me an adult. "The villagers call him Mulefu, because he is

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For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on 114
from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the 484
neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted 609
wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been ex- 484
tremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me 609
so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which 123
they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from 186
behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard 826
joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it [825]
lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and 609
taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience 177
beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups [114]
of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, moviemakers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

it had a railway, which aroused his deepest curiosity. He could not think why the trains were limited in their movement by the iron rails, and could not turn wherever they wanted to. There was something about this restriction of freedom that bothered him. I took him to see a football match between the workers of a local brewery and those of a large combine store. Just before the match we had been drinking palm wine in a small African bar, and found it much stronger than the wine made in the forest. So Kenge rooted happily for what he called "Men of the Beer," but why people should spend the afternoon kicking a ball back and forth was as puzzling to him as were the captive trains.

We spent only a few days in Paulis, branching out from there along the northern limits of the forest. Then we turned eastward and made our way across and down into Lese country. The BaLese are considered to be arch-sorcerers and witches, and it was with great reluctance that Kenge agreed to stay in the village of Chief Lupao, near Nduye. It was several miles off the road, and by accident or design it was empty when we got there. Fires were still smoldering and smoking, but there was no other sign of life. The chief's baraza, a huge edifice with a thatched roof, stood open in front of his house; the fire had been recently made up, but nobody came out to greet us.

Kenge was getting more and more nervous, and I was on the point of giving in to his repeated requests to leave and find a more hospitable place to stay, when a young man appeared and wandered idly toward us. He stopped some way off and stood there looking at us. This was a completely new situation to me, as in every other village, even where we had been total strangers, we had been almost embarrassed by the hospitality of the people. I waited to see if the man's curiosity would get the better of him, but after a while I gave up and went over to talk to him. Kenge refused to move from the safety of the car, and stood there with his hand on the door, ready to lock himself inside at a moment's notice. For him this was a

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For him this was a foreign world indeed, for these were not only villagers, but villagers who had a name for devouring corpses. C 609 648 574 [266] P 179 648

I made little headway with the young man, who continued to chew on a stick while he avoided giving any direct answers to my queries as to where Chief Lupao was. He questioned me in turn, and when I had assured him that I was not a missionary, or a government agent, or a plantation owner looking for forced labor, he wandered away—still chewing. He called back over his shoulder that he would try and find his father, the chief. Kenge was speechless with indignation because we had not been invited into the baraza or offered water to wash with. He said that even villagers did that much for strangers, however unwelcome. He was more unhappy than ever.

Eventually Lupao's son returned and said that his father would be back soon from his plantation, and we could sit down in the baraza if we wanted to. With that he walked away and once more we were alone. By now it was too late to think of going anywhere else, so we entered the baraza and sat down on a couple of logs near the fire. After an hour a small crowd of old men and children had gathered around and were staring at us silently and speculatively. Any time either of us tried to talk with them they just shook their heads. Kenge was beginning to be more impatient than afraid, and he demanded that someone go and fetch water for us to wash with, asking the bystanders what kind of savages they were to let their guests stay unwashed and unfed. The chief's son looked at Kenge coldly and asked him what tribe he belonged to. Kenge replied without hesitation that he was not of the village, but of the forest—he was a Pygmy. The young man nodded and said, "So I see!" And still no move was made to fetch us any water.

Just then Chief Lupao came out of his house. An extremely surly and untidy old man, he did not try to disguise the fact that he had been sleeping, and not in his plantation. He greeted us in an offhand way and asked what we wanted. I explained that we wanted C 622 574 186

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to go into the forest to visit some of his Pygmies and had come to pay our respects first. He said brusquely that he did not know where any Pygmies were to be found. Then he looked at Kenge and asked him if it was usual for a Pygmy to sit beside a white man.

C 622 574 186 P 17.7 186 829

Kenge countered by asking if it was usual for a big chief to keep a white man waiting while he slept, and to leave him sitting on a log without so much as a glass of water to drink or to wash with. At that the other villagers began joining in, and feeling more than uncomfortable at being made the center of a fight between them and Kenge, I told Lupao that we were very tired, and asked if it would be all right for us to stay the night in his village. Lupao, who by then was engrossed with a steaming bowl of chicken soup, said he supposed so, and indicated with a nod of his head for his son to go and find us a place to sleep.

I made a few more attempts at polite conversation but did not get so much as a look in response. Everyone was silent, staring either at us or up at the smoky roof above us. It had been quite dark for some time, and after waiting to see if the son was going to do anything about sleeping quarters, I got up and said loudly to Kenge that I was going to sleep in the car and asked if he was going to do the same. He replied that he would sleep outside to guard me from the thieves and murderers that made up the entire population of the village. This was putting it a little more strongly than I had intended, and we had now given real cause for offense. As we left there was a stony silence. Lupao refused to look up and allow me to take my leave of him. I can hardly blame him, but the tradition of hospitality among most African villagers is so strong that one comes to accept it and to expect it, and the behavior of the BaLese was very unusual.

When Lupao saw that we were really leaving in such an unceremonious huff, he called his son, who had remained in the baraza all the time, and sent him running after us to tell us that a house would

be ready soon. Kenge replied that the car was clean, which was a little too subtle for the young man. He returned half an hour later with some food, and this time Kenge was more direct. He lowered the window of the car enough to say, "We people of the forest don't eat excrement!" and then hurriedly wound it up. We passed an uneasy night, and in the first glimmer of morning, without as much as looking for a stream to wash in, we left. Nobody even came to watch us go.

We were so exhausted that we decided to call on the Catholic mission at Nduye and at least get cleaned up. We drove through the little village, and on the outskirts turned onto a steep stone track that wound up the hillside. It climbed erratically past a temporary church, near which rough-hewn stones were being assembled for the building of a more permanent structure, and onto a ledge just wide enough to hold the long, low mission house and a neat terrace in front, where the ground dropped away sharply.

The welcome we got there was very different. A huge, bearded figure in white robes came striding up the hill after us, shouting instructions in KiNgwana to cook another half dozen eggs. To us he said, "You are late for breakfast." And after a second look, "You need hot baths."

Father Longo would not hear of our going anywhere else and insisted that we stay for at least a week, a month if we liked. There was plenty of work we could do and we looked as though we needed to go to church. Then he asked me if we were Catholics. When I replied that I was a not very good Protestant and that Kenge was a practicing heathen, he roared with laughter and said that at least Kenge didn't know what a mistake he had made. His good humor put Kenge immediately at ease, and there was only a momentary flicker of doubt when Father Longo called for his Lese catechist to show Kenge where he could wash, eat and sleep. Shortly afterward I heard him in the distance, telling his new companions in his loudest

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and most boastful voice of what a terrible experience we had been through the night before. Meanwhile, I found myself in the company of the kindest, wisest, and most sincere person I had met in this part of Africa.

After he had seen that I did justice to an enormous breakfast he took me down to look at the new church he was building. Moslems and pagans worked side by side with Christians, breaking rocks on the mountainside, carrying them to the site, squaring them and heaving them into place. All this help was voluntary; Father Longo paid the workers whenever he was able, which was all that was expected. It was done willingly because over the years the people of the surrounding villages had come to know Father Longo for the man he was. He was not concerned simply with adding a lot of names to his roll of converts but primarily with living a life that would be an example that others would want to follow. He made everyone equally welcome at his mission, regardless of religion. Some months later, when the new church was finished, it was consecrated at a service made all the more beautiful by dozens of his Pygmy friends, who came in from the forest carrying gifts of forest fruits and flowers and danced their pagan way up the aisle. They were filled with as much joy and devotion as Father Longo himself.

P 114 C 184 609

We came to know the Pygmies in the neighborhood of Nduye well, but in spite of our initial setback with Chief Lupao we still wanted to make some contact with the BaLese. Father Longo suggested that we try the other powerful Lese chief, Nakubai, whose village was a number of miles to the north. We followed his advice, and Nakubai did everything he could to reverse our opinion of his people. He was not only hospitable, but he understood when I said that we wanted to visit his Pygmies without the restraint of having a villager along with us. Whereas Kachui and others had insisted on keeping us under constant surveillance, Nakubai even said that we would probably see far more if we went on our own. As a result we

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491 middle to get a better view of the way the supporting lianas were fastened, he urged me on, saying that it was not natural to be standing there in the middle of the air over a dangerous river.

114 On the far side we came to a camp, and there we found some relatives of the Epulu Pygmies, including one girl who was well known to us both—Makubasi's first wife.

797 We stayed there for the night and then moved on up a trail that 177 led to the Protestant mission of Biasiku. This was headed by an American missionary, the Reverend Charles Bell, and his wife. They had been in the Ituri for about as long as Father Longo and Pat Putnam had. As soon as they heard that we were staying in the camp down by the river they made arrangements for us to stay at the mission, and without knowing that we were on our way Mr. Bell set out on foot to issue the invitation in person. I had a special reason for accepting it; I wanted Kenge to have a fair notion of the way different missions operated. I certainly had no desire to see him converted, but having given him a taste of missions it seemed fair that he should have an all-round picture, and earlier during our trip we had had an unfortunate experience with a different Protestant mission.

At that mission prayers were said in public about five times a day, mention always being made of any converts who might be ill, however slightly. Prayers were also made requesting the Almighty to provide a road into the forest so that the mission could have easier access to the Pygmies, and thanks were offered for a new automobile that had been acquired. All this was perfectly understandable to the villagers, with their own tradition of witchcraft. They merely thought this a particularly powerful form of magic. Kenge was skeptical. "How is their god going to put a road into the forest when the white man can't do it?" he asked.

But one day, while we were there, a wounded Pygmy was brought in. He had been gored while hunting and was groaning with pain.

FOREST HORIZONS

The missionary and I were sitting outside at the time, going through his morning ritual of drinking tea. I went over to see what had happened, and to ask if they wanted any medicine. They said no, but they would like something to make the pain go away until they could prepare their own medicine. All I had was aspirin, but in any case I had more faith in their powers of healing than in mine. Kenge asked in a whisper why the missionary had not come over, but was continuing to sip his tea, keeping his back to us. I did not know, and I said nothing until after the next prayer meeting. As usual, prayers were offered for all those converts who had minor ailments, and for the new road, but not a word was said about the injured Pygmy, lying in a hut not more than ten yards away. Then I did ask, and I was told, "Why should I pray for him? He is not a Christian." The Pygmies were all standing around, and heard, as they were meant to hear. They had little idea of what Christianity was, but from that moment I doubt if any of them thought that it had much to offer them.

At the end of our stay there, the missionary asked Kenge what he thought of the Christian God now that he had been privileged to live in a Christian community. Kenge said with his usual frankness, "It is the biggest falsehood I know." And so I was glad for Kenge to meet other Christians who had a better idea of what their religion stood for, and the Bells were certainly such.

It was while we were with them that Kenge first began to realize that there really was another world, beyond the forest. He had often heard people talk about it, and up at Paulis the forest was thinned almost to mere savannah; but nowhere had he really seen beyond the forest. The mission was built on a high hill, cleared of vegetation so that crops could be planted to supply the mission school and hospital with food. Usually the distant horizons were hazy, and everywhere we looked down only on a sea of trees. Several times I tried to tell Kenge that beyond this lay another world, a world of lakes and mountains and open plains, but he just nodded disbelievingly. He

THE WORLD BEYOND

Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clearings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers? 648 199 361

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans were being cooked for lunch.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill outside the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 648 199 361 147 164

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impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

[829]

361 camp to hear his stories. But none of his stories fascinated the Pyg-
361 mies as much as those of the model Pygmy villages we had passed
• 179 on our way home. He was made to repeat these accounts over and over again, giving every detail. While the younger men and women laughed until they could laugh no more at Kenge's description of the distribution of beans for planting, and how most of them ended up in the cooking pot, the older people were less amused. "But are they actually living in those villages?" they asked. And when Kenge answered that some of them were, the next question was "What if there is no game nearby?" Kenge could only tell them what the administrator had said: "You are welcome to hunt so long as you continue to look after the plantations." Everyone knew that to be impossible. Hunting is a full-time occupation, and it could lead a group away for months on end. It called for the co-operation of men, women and children. Who was to stay to look after the fields?

Other questions brought equally unsatisfactory answers, even so far as the younger people were concerned. There were no trees in the "model" villages—every last one had been cut down, exposing the huts to the full heat of the sun. The Pygmies were to be supplied with free seeds to plant, but they would be expected to produce a definite yield, and they knew that villagers who failed to come up to the mark were fined, and if they were unable to pay their fines they
[312] went to jail. Every village had been placed near a supply of fresh water, tested by the administrator himself (by looking at it—he was horrified when I drank some). But the Pygmies knew that however clean it might be to start with, it would soon be polluted; and in any case there was no guarantee that it would continue throughout the year.

361 Far from being "liberated" from the villagers, the Pygmies felt
829 that in these model plantations they would be in greater danger than
179 ever. In the forest they knew that they were safe, because the forest was theirs, but once out in the open they were subject to all the evil

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy
262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.

222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller
621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it
222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the
177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley
621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest.
[439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan.
621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said,
578 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco
177 and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 621
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 578
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted 177
by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister, Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734]
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda, shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.
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Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P. 323-A]

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 574 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

[P. 323-B]

177 574 [296] may come in every evening. They will leave a couple of old men to stay behind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[297] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home [535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 [361] Sometimes the pygmy camp is as much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 439 571 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Negroes.**—The pygmies consider themselves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it [251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

P 177 439 571 [426]

wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

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Negro attitude toward their pygmies.—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581

The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy woman it is a great rise in the scale of living to marry a Negro as his second or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

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[P.324-B]

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Z 186 563 581 ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

P 581 The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

P Z 186 266 291 173

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Z 563 881 In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

P 171 881

Z P 561 The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

Pygmy Technology

412 197 439 **Basic tools.**—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

[P 326-A]

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
[284] all. He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles
[462] are added. The women use these for many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.
412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

[P. 326-B]

415 Also obtained from the Negroes are
177 the cooking pots that all pygmy wom-
439 en own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have
462 chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman
[824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 This technique is not easy; it is
462 much easier if two women work to-
476 gether, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[A327-A]

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 411 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries two kinds of arrows, the first with iron tips, which he generally uses on the larger, antelope-size, animals, and wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned, and which he uses for monkeys. He rarely shoots a monkey with an iron-tipped arrow, through fear of losing it. Each man makes his own poison as well as his own darts. The [824] plants from which the poison is made are well known, and there is neither [137] ritual nor mystery attached to the process. The vital plant is a strophanthus; they will mix other plants with it, but they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart stimulant. Its action is not immediate. The monkey runs along a bit, grows weaker, and urinates. The pygmies watch for this, for the moment of 224 urinating is the fatal one. If the monkey is out on a limb where there are no other branches, he will fall off; if he is within reach of a lateral branch or one rising upward, he will clutch it, and the hunter will be obliged to climb the tree if he wants the monkey. To do this he uses the technique described under pygmy locomotion. Since the monkeys are usually high in the trees and the pygmies are such poor marksmen, they undoubtedly miss more of them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant hunting involves a technique that is wholly different from either of the above two. The pygmy elephant hunter is a specialist; not every pygmy has the courage to face an elephant and kill it, and not every man the skill. Whether [177] or not pygmies ever killed elephants in the early days, the present form of

[P. 330-A]

Z 237 439 435 177 [567]

ing a double profit. Slavery, therefore, was a by-product of these raids, and not the primary objective, which was to obtain ivory. When the white men came in, they said to the Negroes, "Why deal with these Arab slavers? Sell your ivory to us, and we will leave you alone." Thus, ivory became an important item to the Negroes, and the more they could get of it the better.

P 224 177 439 Z 439 563

The pygmy could never, by himself, kill enough elephants to stop them from trampling his host's gardens. He could, however, kill enough to swell his host's supply of ivory and increase his host's capital. So a pygmy who was an elephant hunter became a special favorite of his Negro host and would get special gifts and favors in return for the ivory.

P 411 Z [325]

The pygmy elephant hunter uses a special spear. Its handle is three to four feet long; its blade is leaf-shaped, of thin iron, about eight inches long and four wide. It is Negro-forged, of soft iron; the pygmy hunter sharpens it on a stone, until it is razor sharp.

P 224

His technique of hunting is daring and simple, and takes as much skill as that of a Spanish matador. He tracks the elephant, which is not difficult, until he knows from the spoor that he is close to it. When he hears the elephant's bowels rumble, he goes along even more quietly, until he sees the elephant through the underbrush. He then approaches the elephant silently, up wind; he jabs his spear as far as he can into the elephant, gashing the belly just behind the ribs; then he pulls it right out again. The elephant at this point usually turns, and the pygmies say that if you as much as wink at this moment you are a dead pygmy.

The man stands stock still, so the elephant can't see him. Then he goes through a sequence of stab and jump and stand still, as many times as he can. Every time the elephant looks

[P. 331-A]

628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

[P. 336-B]

585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

757 For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

755 177 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The greatest single cause of mortality in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

[P. 340-B]

[P.146-C]

The latter problem, that of the relationship 121
between the two neighboring peoples, is of the greatest importance and has been subject to the greatest misunderstanding. It should be emphasized that the opinions cited here, including my own, are opinions and are to be accepted only as such. It should also be realized that the situation is by no means static. Not only has the 121
relationship between the Mbuti and the vil- 178.
lagers been changing even during the years since I have known them, but so, in all probability, has the internal structure of Mbuti society. It is quite possible that such change has long been a characteristic of the area, and it is almost certain that the Mbuti-villager relationship has never been static, which may account for some of the diversity of opinion, and a general historical perspective undoubtedly helps us to evaluate the rather sketchy material at our disposal.

We have, for instance, a steady regression in 114
factual knowledge of the area from the time of our earliest Egyptian sources right up to the beginning of the present century, at the turn of which our ignorance of the African Pygmies was just about complete, even to disbelief in their

bodyguard for the new king. Such isolated 174
references indicate a long-established associa- 177
tion between the two peoples, and that the 571
original nature of the association was a military one. Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Ward (1910), Schweinfurth (1874), and others, write of the employment of the Pygmies by the villagers as spies, scouts, mercenary soldiers, and guides. Putnam in his earlier notes mentions frequently coming across references among the older Pygmies to this relationship, which of course came to an end when the Belgian authorities stopped intertribal warfare.

Legends from the Epulu area (Turnbull, 174
1959) show scant interest in the questions of origin and history, but that here also both Pygmy and villager agree that the Pygmy is the original inhabitant of the forest and is, to a certain extent, feared and respected as such by the villager. No legends from this area of the Ituri or from any other so far reported (Schebesta, 1936b, 340; Joset, 1948, 25–56, 137–157) show that the Pygmies or villagers have any concept of the Pygmies' originating elsewhere than in this northeast corner of the Congo, nor do they reveal any doubt in the minds of these people that the Pygmies were the original inhabitants of that forest.

Socio-cultural change has been taking place 178 •
ever since the first villager invasions, several hundred years ago, but most rapidly in the past half century. The progress of this change can be

[P.162-D]

[P. 163-A]

178 studied both from the material available and by further field work and should make an interesting contribution to the study of acculturation and plural society problems. This change, still taking place, is likely to increase in depth and speed as the Ituri Forest is further exploited by [177] a central government. The Pygmies have constantly been thrown into closer contact with the villagers, and both have been brought into more immediate contact with the European. As the Pygmy becomes more and more economically dependent on these alien groups, the last remnants of his earlier social system will become modified and finally disappear. Up to the moment of Congo independence, the Mbuti were not subject to taxation, a fact that did not meet with their uncritical approval. The "pros and

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 163-87]

cons" were not infrequently discussed around the campfires; the decision, however, was generally in favor of maintaining the *status quo*. 178

PHYSICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

128 14

Physical anthropology is not treated here, partly because it is a highly specialized field and partly because, again, there is not sufficient material. The work of Schebesta (1938), Jadin (1936), and Gusinde (1948) is notable but still has produced no conclusive results other than to point out the undoubted genetic difference between the Mbuti and their village neighbors. [114]

There is no published study of nutrition among the Mbuti, and nothing in the existing anthropological studies from which one can draw any conclusions on this subject. 146 114

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z [178]

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

P 575

[P. 184-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors. P 2 439 177 571 [114] P 2 [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 205-B]

Elephant hunting is important in the Epulu 224
District. Certain bands of Pygmies are specialists. Among the local net-hunting band from which the most detailed information is available, however, four out of 12 or 15 hunters are elephant hunters. Putnam says that the present [178] •
form of elephant hunting is a recent development in answer to the needs of the villagers whose plantations were continually being ravaged by elephants and who encouraged the Pygmies to kill them off. In the early days the [237]
villagers had little use for the tusks, other than [439]
as barkcloth beaters, but with the advent of

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 206-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]
alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of inter-village warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] • 648 184 177 571

[P. 249-C]

how far only the outward form of the custom has been taken over and the values rejected. The most we can do is to clear the ground for such a study. We do so with reference only to the Epulu net hunters (unless otherwise stated), as our information is fullest here. 121 177

In the first place, what are the major points of contact between these two poeple? They may be listed as follows:

Material culture
Trade
Magical practice
Dance and festivity
Intermarriage
Ceremonial attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death

Material Culture

The adoption by the Mbuti of various villager items of material culture or technological skill has only one significance for us, which is the extent to which it places the Mbuti in a dependent position. This is difficult to estimate. It is difficult to visualize the Mbuti without metal and hard, though quite possible, to visualize them without plantains. But, even among the net hunters, luxuries tend to become necessities, and we must admit of the trend, if not the accomplished fact, toward economic dependency on the villagers. 177 439 [178]

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

[P. 259-B]

[P. 16]

CHAPTER 2

Orientation

THE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

101 The Mbuti pygmies form the largest single group of pygmy hunters
144 and gatherers in Africa, and are probably also the purest in both the biological and cultural senses. Throughout the equatorial rain forest other similar groups exist, but while some of them (notably in the Gabon and in the Ubangi area) appear to be comparable with the Mbuti, the majority, like the Twa and the Tswa of the Kivu and central Congo districts (see Map 3) have at one time or another intermarried with Negro tribes of cultivators, losing many of the true pygmy physical characteristics and at the same time losing a great deal of their original hunting and gathering culture.

181 Far more important, from the structural point of view, is the altered relationship between all these pygmoids and the world they live in, for as we shall see, the structure of Mbuti society pivots
*[177] around a powerful forest-oriented system of values. This value system to a large extent overrides economic considerations in determining the relationship between the Mbuti and their village neighbors, whereas among the pygmoids the economic factor appears to be dominant, and the consequent dependency of the pygmoids upon the villagers in other respects is also greater.

*177 This is in no way to say that the structure to be found among the
• 178 Mbuti is representative of an original pygmy hunting and gathering structure; in fact probably far from it, for the repercussions of the invasion of the forest by the village cultivators have been enormous. But the response of the Mbuti, for whatever reason, has been different from that of the Twa and the Tswa and it is of much greater structural interest and significance, incidentally throwing light on the whole process of acculturation. At the same time, however, the peculiar structural development of the Mbuti does enable us to observe a

[1] [see page 318 -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies BD4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

mand that they come to some kind of terms and establish some kind of mechanism for dealing with the threat that each feels.

We have seen how the villagers attempt to deal with the situation by asserting control over the Mbuti through the adoption of the Mbuti into the village social system, thus placing them under the supernatural sanctions of village society. We have also seen that the Mbuti evade such control, though we have not exactly seen how, for at the moment the success of their evasion seems to lie in the rejection of system, in a flux and instability that alone would lead to chaos. In examining the forest society of the Mbuti now, however, we shall see how this flux and apparent instability is in fact a structural factor, and that while the villagers are constantly attempting to absorb the Mbuti into their village social system, the Mbuti have evolved a social system of their own which, while still permitting their traditional hunting and gathering existence, takes this new village factor into consideration and, so to speak, by opposing, ends it. For the Mbuti forest system seems almost expressly designed to run counter to the village system, and, by opposing it at every point of possible structural contact, it makes any structural relationship except one of opposition quite impossible.

Thus in examining the forest system of the Mbuti we have to remember that the same institution may well have a double function; the one of maintaining cohesion with the forest world, the other of maintaining opposition with the world outside. And insofar as the invasion of the village tribes is relatively recent, this is a system that is still evolving. All the more so because the successive waves of the invasion, followed by the advent of the Arab slave traders and finally by the arrival of the Belgians, have all wrought sudden and drastic changes in the nature of village life and on the village settlement pattern. There may indeed be some institutions that are newly evolved and the purpose of which is directed primarily at maintaining the relationship of opposition between forest and village. Others are in the process of adaptation, notably the Mbuti *molimo*, where the forest system of values has its deepest roots and where, consequently, their opposition to village values must be most forcefully expressed. And some institutions appear to be in a state of atrophy.

We are, then, very clearly going to be studying a society in the process of change. The structure that will emerge, involving a disconcerting lack of emphasis on kinship, is not necessarily or even probably characteristic of hunting and gathering societies, and should cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

tainly not be taken as such. It should only be considered as a system 178
that maintains, in its basic respects, a hunting and gathering tradi- 121
tion, while also maintaining, as completely as possible, a physiological and ideological separation from a hostile village system.

[P. 90 is blank]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

10

Elima: the Dance of Life

P C 177

WITH THE PYGMIES and the villagers coming into contact, both as individuals and groups, it was inevitable that over the years each should adopt some of the other's customs. The contact between them was sometimes intimate and friendly, as with Kaweki, and sometimes it was formal and hostile, as between André and Ausu. Most frequently its purpose was just a matter of barter, and at all times each regarded the territory of the other as a foreign place.

P C 177 178

When a custom was adopted by one people, they gave it their own particular character and meaning, and frequently changed it so that it was all but unrecognizable, except through the common

use of the original name. Such was the case with the molimo, and such was also the case with the elima. Who borrowed from whom is a difficult question, and perhaps not a very important one. The difference that emerges in the process of borrowing is much easier to see and adds much more to our understanding.

To both peoples the elima is concerned with the arrival of a young girl at the age of maturity, her transition from girlhood to the full flowering of womanhood. This coming of age is marked more dramatically for girls than for boys by the physical changes that take place. Both Pygmies and villagers recognize the significance of the first appearance of menstrual blood, and both celebrate it with a festival which they call "elima." But there the similarity ends.

My friend Amina told me a great deal about the elima among the BaBira, and I learned more from older women in different villages that I lived in from time to time. Everywhere, right through to the very edge of the forest, I found the same story among the villagers. Blood of any kind is a terrible and powerful thing, associated with injury and sickness and death. Menstrual blood is even more terrible because of its mysterious and regular recurrence. Its first appearance is considered by the villagers as a calamity—an evil omen. The girl who is defiled by it for the first time is herself in danger, and even more important she has placed the whole family and clan in danger. She is promptly secluded, and only her mother (and, I suspect, one or two other close and senior female relatives) may see her and care for her. She has to be cleansed and purified, and the clan itself has to be protected, by ritual propitiation, from the evil she has brought upon them. At the best, the unfortunate girl is considered a considerable nuisance and expense.

It is generally assumed that the girl was brought into this condition by some kind of illicit intercourse, and her mother demands of her who is responsible. This is the girl's chance to name the boy of her choice, whether or not she has even so much as spoken to

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

P 224 [178] elephant hunting is a recent development, the historical growth of which can be easily traced. It is also an important reason for Negro-pygmy relations.

Z 224 The chief reason why the Negro hunts is to kill elephants. The elephants barge about in great herds, destroying the plantations which represent a great deal of labor in clearing the forest and planting the bananas, and which form the Negroes' whole capital, his whole means of livelihood. The elephants burst in, pushing down fences, eating some of the bananas by the bunch and trampling the rest. This dread calamity usually happens on moonless nights when it would be almost certain death to go out and attack the elephants. All the Negro can do is to let the elephants do their worst, and try to kill them later to prevent recurrence.

Z 237 439 435 177 In the old days, when the Negroes had killed an elephant they did not know what to do with the tusks, other than make bark-cloth beaters from a few, and a number of other minor uses. The majority of the tusks were therefore stuck up around the Negroes' clearings as fences. Now when the Arab traders began coming in from Zanzibar, they were interested in commodities which were nonperishable and of concentrated value, and ivory filled these specifications best of all local goods. At first the Arabs bought the ivory from the Negroes for very low prices, since the Negroes were ignorant of its worth. Then when the Negroes began raising the prices to equally ridiculous heights, the Arabs raided them and seized it, and the Negroes began hiding it. Ivory is heavy, and the Arabs had to find bearers to carry it out to the coast. Hence they seized Z [567] men and women and made them carry it, and when they arrived at the coast they sold their bearers as slaves, mak-

[P. 330-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

[P. 256-A]

177 as yet assumed village values in name only, and
• 18 only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

177 This interpretation of the function of the
18 *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an
12 outward symbol of the association of two neigh-
[881] boring peoples that, for one reason or another, come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

[191] In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

177 We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not
881 be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti
18 who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

177 *nkumbi* offers the Mbuti an opportunity for as-
881 serting their individuality at the same time
18 that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

575 In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also
575 true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at
881 all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

[P 256-B]

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

[P. 259-B]

[P. 259-C]

lage often comes to an end. After a few days or 177
weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the 18
drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a 533
subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in
their village camp. They get increasingly mel- [152]
ancholy until one evening, probably a day or
two after they have stopped drum-dancing,
they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and,
despite all protests from the villagers, they pack
their few belongings and return to the forest,
singing loudly as they go.

The evidence considered suggests that there 177
is a dissociation of two sets of values for the 18
Mbuti—those that apply to the village and 121
those that apply to the forest. The two sets of
values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of
culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt
are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand,
characterized by various attempts to formalize
it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand,
it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two
different sets of values. This opposition is an
opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[128] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[184] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
105 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges
[181] that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
171 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
• 18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ferent ways, with totally different values, with only the minimum of contact, and that based on nothing more than territorial propinquity and mutual convenience. In this way each is able to extract some benefit from the presence of the other without sacrificing its integrity, while maintaining a sense of absolute superiority that, however illusory in terms of economics or politics, is thoroughly justified by the opposition of the value systems. 121 177 18

The fact that this opposition does not erupt into open hostility is due largely to the size of the forest, which can easily support the two populations and the two economies. But the moment some element upsets the precarious balance, rendering one economy or the other ineffective, then collision will be inevitable; and insofar as it is the hunting and gathering way of life that is most likely to be affected, the onus of change will be upon the Mbuti, and they are the ones who, because of the intimate relationship they have with their forest environment, are the least fitted for change. The present study will indicate in some measure the extent to which the Mbuti society is capable of assimilation or adaptation, and the extent to which change can come to it only through subordination or extermination. 121 177 *

Considerable space is devoted to setting out a fairly straightforward ethnography of the Mbuti. This is considered essential because of the present paucity of information that can be used for the kind of analysis here envisaged. The details may seem unnecessarily minute at times, and there are certain total blanks, but the picture is given as fully as possible so that the closeness of the reliance of the Mbuti on their environment may be recognized. And insofar as the environment or territory is going to take precedence over political systems, instability over stability, music over sex and death, and mere age over kinship, it is felt that all the available evidence, however slight it may at first seem, is going to be needed. 128

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 B04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti -
Congo-Kinshasa F01

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

114 Others, such as Casati (1891), Le Roy (1897),
101 Burrows (1898), Johnston (1884, 1902, 1903,
175 1905, 1908), David (1904a, 1904b), Hutereau
.181 (1924), Powell-Cotton (1907), and Czekanowski (1922), to mention only a very few, give further details that are of interest but cover such a wide area as to make it impossible to gather any but the most superficial notion of a generalized "African Pygmy." When these sources provide us with factual observations, the facts are often not untainted with imagination. When they go beyond facts, additional "red herrings" are cast up, such as the silent trade between Pygmies and villagers, the lawlessness of Pygmy society, the Pygmies' complete lack of religion, and their ferocity and cannibalism. To add fuel to the fire, equally imaginative interpretations show them as having reciprocal and open trade relationships with the villagers, as living an ordered life according to their "natural instincts" for law and order, as following a monotheistic mystical religion, and as living a gentle and peaceful existence. According to this material, the "Pygmies" do have their own language and they do not, their way of life is totally different from that of their villager neighbors and it is a direct copy of villager life, they live in the heart of the forest and they live on the edge of the villages. These are just some of the contradictions that make it

[P. 150-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.150-C]

impossible to form any single coherent picture. 114 101 181 195

When Schmidt wrote "Die Stellung der Pygmäen-völker in der Entwicklungsgeschichte der Menschen" in 1910, all these contradictions were his source material. Pygmies existed, but they still had tails and were flying about from treetop to treetop, or else they were crawling on their bellies like snakes to enter their diminutive houses. Quatrefages (1887) and Le Roy (1897) had, at the end of the nineteenth century, attempted to draw together what was known about Pygmies all over the world, but Schmidt's study is the first work of real importance. He confines himself mostly to the African Pygmies and Bushmen and pursues two lines of thought: first, the relationship of both to Asiatic Pygmies; and second, the place of the Pygmy, both racially and anthropologically, in the evolution of the human race. Was the Pygmy the original inhabitant of the equatorial forests of Africa, or was he a degeneration of present Bantu stock—a throwback? These "red herrings" are still being diligently pursued, while the Pygmies and their social structure have gone unstudied by any anthropologist except with reference to these problems.

182 114 [15] [181] [184]

trice." Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes that the forest environment induces fear, suspicion, and guile, and limits the intellectual horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 825

Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly."

[P.164-B]

[P. 165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The Mbuti make great use of various species of *Ficus* for the manufacture of barkcloth, and certain vines are used to make string and hunting nets. There are also trees that give a sap
[314] which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another, can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of effective medicines prepared from plants and roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
• 181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no culture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to their remarkable adaptation to the forest environment. The level of their culture may not be high, but, even though primitive and "conservative," it is distinctly a forest culture and distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw material is abundant. The striking thing is the minimal extent to which they utilize this material. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the environment itself which, making minimal de-
000 mands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

221 [p. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 235-C]

latter little is known in detail. Song is sometimes used when legends are told and is frequently mentioned in them. Dance and mime are even more closely connected. 53

The subject matter of Mbuti drama seems to correspond, as might be expected, with our classification of the subject matter of legends, but the former places greater emphasis on events of the day, particularly hunting. In default of detailed and accurate accounts of dramatic art and all attendant circumstances, the only generalization that seems permissible is the evident lack of interest in personal problems and a preoccupation with the maintenance of the relative status of the human (Mbuti), animal (villager), and supernatural worlds. 536 [81]

With reference to specialists in song and dance, as with other art forms, some individuals who have greater skill than others achieve a measure of renown for their skill. A mediocre hunter who is a good singer or dancer or legend teller is a far more important person than a moderate hunter who is none of these things. 555 53

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 243-C]

gathering economy of the former from the adapted forest cultivation of the latter. Perhaps, above all, it distinguishes the values of the forest people from those of the villager invaders from the plains. The Mbuti adapt themselves to their environment; the villagers adapt the environment to their own way of life in so far as they can, compromising when they cannot. It is not difficult to see the possible psychological implications of this attitudinal difference and the profound difference in religious and social values that either rise from it or are strengthened by it. In the opposition between forest values and non-forest values we find the highest degree of opposition between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors.

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P 181 •
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THE SOCIAL UNIT

P 184

At this elementary point in our survey of Mbuti society, we begin to find significant structural differences between one group and another. These differences are not related to linguistic differences. Moreover, we find that, with the possible exception of the archers described by Schebesta, the Mbuti are polyglots.

P 184
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439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[182] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P 245-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 248-C]

and that Toré is applicable as a term for God. 000

As there is confusion, even among the Mbuti, 701
on questions of religious terminology we can do 121
little by pointing to this or that context. We 181
must go a great deal further and try to discover
something of the underlying system of values. In the light of such an inquiry we shall be able to assess better the significance behind the outward differences between the two groups; for instance, differences over the performance of ritual, differences in magical practice, and others. Here we cannot be content with a comparison of outward behavior, for we are dealing with a world of symbolism, and in that symbolic world we can fruitfully compare only the values that underlie the symbols. To do so leads us into the very much wider field of study that is broached in the succeeding and final two sections (pp. 249–272). By attempting to understand something of the Mbuti system of values we may not only hope to understand the significant differences between one type of hunting band and another, but also we may hope to get some idea of the real relationship between both kinds of band and their villager neighbors.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P [P. 254-A]
177
881
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Z
[563]

they could quite well achieve in their own way. Such practical benefits as there may be do not demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

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This hiatus becomes even more evident when we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*, as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus not only between two ways of living but between two ways of thinking, and it shows that we are dealing with two totally different sets of values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it? P 881

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in P Z 177 181 • P Z 17 439

[P. 254-D]

The function of these associations[1] is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

[P. 259-A]

533 any major crisis affecting the community as a
182 whole. But, as well as these religious activities, both major economic activities, hunting and gathering, are also consecrated by special types of song. It is inconceivable that the Mbuti, who accompany every important event in their lives with song, should not consecrate the initiation
533 of their boys in this same way. But for the
881 *nkumbi* they have no music at all. As we have
182 said, in 1954 the *molimo* horn was not heard, and no *molimo* songs were sung. I suggest that other initiations, in which the horn and songs are heard, are in connection with villager institutions to which the village boys are being initiated. The only conclusion we can draw is that for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is not sufficiently significant in their forest life to merit consecration by forest song.

533 This is closely paralleled by the absence of
182 forest music (songs of the *molimo* and *elima*, hunting-and-gathering songs) when the Mbuti
181 are camped on the edge of a village. When they do, the Mbuti themselves behave as different people. In the forest they feel and observe a
[178] certain restraint. Their songs are related to and emphasize their supreme value—the forest. Their daily activities are dominated by the forest and the hunt and the need for close cooperation.

In the final section we consider some legends 128
collected by Anne Putnam among these same 186
Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti 539
attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*.

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

539

In order to understand the Pygmy values [181] •
more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti [186]
rejection of villager values is effectively valid [177]
and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by 539
four of the more important hunters belonging 114
to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters
[P. 259 - D]

[P. 269-C]

only for certain purposes, reveals at once a lack 538
of interest in the past which is in accord with 128
the apparent shortness of memory among these Pygmies, particularly noticeable when an investigator tries to construct some sort of genealogy. For me it heightens my suspicion of such genealogies given by a people who at times are only too willing to please by inventing totally fictitious names. The legends prove singularly unrewarding to anyone seeking some evidence of a [181]
lineage system. If they represent anything, they represent a people who are wholly absorbed in the present. If we accept this evidence, we can look for its consequences in the magico-religious life of the Mbuti as well as in other spheres.

Also with reference to the Mbuti magico-religious system, there is possibly some significance in the tendency to emphasize the natural order of events in the legends relating to social life. The ideal represented in the legend is the normal; consequently, these particular legends seem singularly unimaginative. They read like reports of actual occurrences. A certain amount of cleverness is normal, but an excess of it (when the term becomes best translated as "trickery") is abnormal and leads us, as we have seen, into

538
183

the world of the supernatural. The Pygmy is 538
anxious to preserve the normal, the *status quo.* 183
Although one could hardly determine this with any certainty from the legends alone, they certainly confirm the notion, which is of particular significanec with reference to Mbuti religious thought. We return briefly to this point below.

The second section dealing with social relations also reveals a center of interest on food, 538 181 the importance of the food quest being implied repeatedly. Also emphasized is the importance [476] of cooperation, not only between members of the same family, but between all members of the hunting band. These legends tell us that [577] vice and virtue are scarcely understood as such, that the dominating quality is cleverness, with its converse, stupidity. But, as pointed out, this is a borderline world. Whereas cleverness may be of use to a Pygmy in his normal everyday 538 181 life, it is really a quality associated with his dealings with the animal and supernatural 183 worlds. In fact, one legend, not mentioned, quite distinctly tells us that in everyday life it is not good to be too clever, but better to be normal. An elephant hunter who loses his normality (by failing to accept food offered to him, and failing to join in the conversation) is

[P. 269-D]

[P.270-A]

538 promptly deserted as being unsafe company. So
• 181 we might gather that in daily life normality is
183 the ideal, and, when the supernatural (including animals, regarded as possessed of supernatural powers), is dealt with, cleverness is dominant.

538 From the second section of legends we can
888 finally glean some information from the treatment of old age. Two things emerge: first, old age is associated with extra cleverness, approaching trickery; second, we find Pygmy realism emerging again when old age is accompanied by disability. Either way, old age is a dangerous condition. In this particular band it is perhaps significant that the leaders of the group are not old, but are the active—the "great hunters."

538 Animals, like food, enter into the majority of
825 legends, and in some cases they seem to be regarded merely as animals. But more often the trickery of the animal is emphasized and, consequently, its association with the supernatural. In the third kind of legends, those dealing with the supernatural, we find animals in almost every one.

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
• 181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural
772 (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P. 270-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.270-C]

malevolence) in the forest world of the Pygmy. In his daily life the Pygmy regards the forest as a kind, good, protective home. At the risk of being accused of begging the question, I would like to say that other evidence (song, dance, and the practices of the Mbuti religious associations) also suggests that the Pygmy opposes these two worlds as we would oppose the sacred to the profane. Our understanding of his relationship with the villager tribes that surround him is, I think, considerably increased if we bear this fact in mind and realize its full implications. 538 181 771 772

I deliberately use the term "supernatural" loosely in order to allow the fact to appear that very few of these legends deal with the supernatural as we generally understand the term. Situations that would, to us, be supernatural—such as villagers turning into elephants or even *satani* changing form at will and luring innocent Pygmies to their doom—to the Pygmy are, in a sense, natural. Like the difference between the sphere of magic and that of religion, and in a way corresponding to them, the dividing line is 538 771

plained. But there is a feeling, and I cannot say 533
that it is more than that, that song has power. 538
The song may have no words; it may be a mix- 789
ture of meaningless sounds; but plainly it is esthetically satisfying to the Mbuti. These wordless songs are among the most powerful. When the father killed the bird, he killed the song, and he dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever. In real life, also, song is powerful. Membership in the religious associations of the women and the men gives the Pygmy the right to take part in the singing of songs peculiar to those associations. In fact, it imposes a duty to do so. The songs are distinguished not by their content but by their musical style and the technique of performance. It is the *sound*, rather than the word content, that matters. These songs are sung, in their most powerful form, only on occasions of the greatest distress, such as sickness or death of one of the great hunters, or failure in the chase. These are departures from normality. It has been my contention from an analysis of the function of music among the Mbuti that song is believed to restore that normality.

As well as several more obvious differences 538
from villager values, such as emphasis by the 171
[P. 271-D] 181 •

[p. 272-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
• 181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[078] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

no villager boys present. But even more obvious, and ever manifesting itself, is the difference between the two people in their attitude to the forest. In the legends as told by the Mbuti we see something of the Mbuti attitude to the forest as the provider of all that is good and bad, as the source of the essentially good life of the Mbuti people. The forest is a place to be trusted (witness the *molimo* invocation to the God of the Forest) and loved. The villagers, on the other hand, fear the forest and people it with malevolent spirits. In their fear of the forest, there is necessarily an element of fear of the Mbuti, whom they recognize as its original inhabitants, as forest people. It is perhaps worth mentioning that Possoz (1954, 257) claims that the term "*Batwa*," derived from "*Batoa*," was originally applied by the Bantu-speaking tribes to the Pygmies, denoting that the latter were of older stock, closer to the ancestors and so worthy of veneration. The more recent term "*Batwa*," however, means "those in the course of disappearing." It would be difficult to prove or disprove such etymological deductions, but there is other evidence that the villager inhabitants of the Ituri Forest do not entirely lack respect for the Mbuti. There

P 178 181 Z 176 186 P Z [101] Z [829] Z 186 829

[p. 274-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.275-A]

Z 186 829

is even the formalized manifestation of this respect mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) when the Bira villagers offer first fruits to the Mbuti.

P 186 • 181 Z 181

The Mbuti, on the other hand, when they are in the presence of the villagers, do not openly assert their own attitudes and values but, rather, reinforce those of the villagers, telling stories of the terrible things that can happen in the forest and of the difficult and dangerous life there. The Mbuti regard the villagers as uninitiated foreigners, alien if not actually hostile, to their own forest world. They therefore tolerate, it would appear, the fanciful beliefs of these outsiders, effectively preventing the villagers from entering the forest, either physically or spiritually. The villager is afraid to enter the forest, and his belief in the evil nature of the forest erects an effective spiritual barrier between himself and the Mbuti. The taboos and magical practices that he observes are in accord with his religious beliefs and his system of

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 186 values. To the Pygmy, however, these same practices are meaningless, as they do not conform with his own notions of the forest world. • 181 There is, consequently, a hiatus in the relationship between the two people or rather a hiatus Z 181 between their relative systems of values and their structural relationship. For a proper understanding of the situation we need a great deal more data, the gathering of which should be one of the foremost tasks of any field-work project.

P 121 With reference to such a project, there appear to be two main needs. First, there is a need for detailed studies of representative hunting bands, both archer and net hunter, and of their relationships with their villager neighbors. Second, we need as large a number of such studies as possible for purposes of comparison, not only according to economic technique, but according to other possible systems of classification by structural principles or by degrees of affiliation to different villager tribes. The second need will be fulfilled simply by an extension of the first project. This initial project must necessarily cover not only a single band but other hunting bands with which it is associated through bonds of marriage or for any other reason that may become apparent. At the moment, the single hunting band appears to be the major effective political unit. Such single hunting bands are loosely associated only through

[P 275-8]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[122] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[124] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
105 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges
• [181] that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
177 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 16]

CHAPTER 2

Orientation

THE PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

101 144 The Mbuti pygmies form the largest single group of pygmy hunters and gatherers in Africa, and are probably also the purest in both the biological and cultural senses. Throughout the equatorial rain forest other similar groups exist, but while some of them (notably in the Gabon and in the Ubangi area) appear to be comparable with the Mbuti, the majority, like the Twa and the Tswa of the Kivu and central Congo districts (see Map 3)[1] have at one time or another intermarried with Negro tribes of cultivators, losing many of the true pygmy physical characteristics and at the same time losing a great deal of their original hunting and gathering culture.

• 181 Far more important, from the structural point of view, is the altered relationship between all these pygmoids and the world they live in, for as we shall see, the structure of Mbuti society pivots around a powerful forest-oriented system of values. This value system to a large extent overrides economic considerations in determining the relationship between the Mbuti and their village neighbors, whereas among the pygmoids the economic factor appears to be dominant, and the consequent dependency of the pygmoids upon the villagers in other respects is also greater.

*[179]

*177 178 This is in no way to say that the structure to be found among the Mbuti is representative of an original pygmy hunting and gathering structure; in fact probably far from it, for the repercussions of the invasion of the forest by the village cultivators have been enormous. But the response of the Mbuti, for whatever reason, has been different from that of the Twa and the Tswa and it is of much greater structural interest and significance, incidentally throwing light on the whole process of acculturation. At the same time, however, the peculiar structural development of the Mbuti does enable us to observe a

[1] [see page 318 -- Analym]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1265 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull B-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the economic and political life, and even in the religious life of the Mbuti, who are supremely concerned with the present.

The effective kinship terminology at once reflects the situation, which only becomes confused when any attempt is made to relate the terms to their usage in village society. It distinguishes generations rather than kin, and cuts indiscriminately across actual kinship boundaries. Through its effective organization of the band into age groups, it emphasizes the economic basis of band unity rather than any kinship bonds. The only terms in general usage in the Epulu region, and among the Mbuti bands to the east-west extremes of the Bira-speaking net-hunting territory, are as follows:

Grandparent:	*tata*	for address and reference
Father:	*epa*	for address and reference
Mother:	*ema*	for address and reference
Sibling:	*apua'i* or *moko*	for address and reference

(*apua'i* is used rather than *moko*, though its connotation is one of close friendship)

Child:	*miki*	for address or reference

Except at the parental level, there is generally no sex differentiation. At times it seems that *tatá* is used for grandmother, *tata* for grandfather. Similarly, *amua'i* is a possible variant to denote a female sibling. But as frequently, if not more so, and more consistently, I found *tata* and *apua'i* used for either sex. Differentiation is also made, if necessary, by adding the terms used for boy or girl—*moko* or *kali*, respectively. Thus *miki a moko* is a boy child; *miki a kali* is a girl child. There is also a way of distinguishing the younger from the older: *vomia* is older, *motoa* is younger, but the Mbuti generally only couple these designations to kinship terms in direct imitation of the village usage and only in village contexts.

Bira terminology, with minor dialectal variations, is similar to the above, but with the addition of terms such as *noko* for mother's brother; *kola* for father's sister; *om-epa* and *mot-epa* for the older and younger brother of the father; and *om-ema* and *mot-ema* for the older and younger sister of the mother. The Bira call an older brother *homiomá*, an older sister *alwená*, and a younger brother or sister simply *moto*. The Mbuti normally refer to their father's sister simply as *ema* ("mother"), but if trying to refer to her for the benefit of

same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost ex-
clusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or [829]
a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the
future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

[P.246]

CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

114 771 In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

+177 124 771 Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

771 • 181 822 813 This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [775]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunting in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 181 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo*, [192]
keti, *boru*, *roho*, *satani*. These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

778 535 152 This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The 778 283 erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

771 789 [961] [981] The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. 778 [789] For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa nduru*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

778 THE POWER OF SOUND

822 533 [844] [881] Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami ninana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

533 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or
765 female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more impor-
462 tance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the
821 concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the
765 contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of con-
182 cern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death,
181 but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are
[561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[8]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[8] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [43] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [194] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roko* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, 621
which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of 771
the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The association with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and 778 181 •
earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to 182
create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toenghe* is the camp under the *toenghe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[6] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *nduru*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde nduru ndaru*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[6] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *ebu'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1954) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp is filled with *ekimi*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bald*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *ekimi* and *moto*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it is practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be 177*
supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action 18
and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the 182
ekimbi seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power 224
over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by 188
Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as 184
Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs 177*
into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural oppo- 754
sition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.*

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible sym- 177*
bolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppo- 76
sitions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, 182
unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the 976
Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with 978
which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immoral- 182
ity, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death 761
for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and con- 965
tinuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called 561
that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces 978
those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

* Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, Kilito and KiLesi, let alone of the dozen Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akumi*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akumi* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 90, seq.) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Mobé passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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ing the Mbuti, are not only trying to subject the Mbuti to the authority of village supernatural sanctions but are also trying to assimilate from the Mbuti some of the spiritual power they believe to reside in the forest.

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The ultimate nature of the relationship between the two people cannot be determined until further studies have been made of similar situations from both the Mbuti point of view and, a major need at the moment, from the village point of view. For now, it seems sufficiently clear that the general nature of the relationship is one of opposition, and that Mbuti society, in response to the demands of the situation or by fortuitous chance, meets it with an organization based upon the very antithesis of village organization. Against political centralization it offers complete decentralization and diffusion of authority. Against a sedentary, patrilineal, patrilocal village it matches the nomadic, nonlineal, territorial band. The vertical village kinship system is countered by a horizontal age-level system. Village values are directly opposed by forest values. And within itself Mbuti society uses these same principles, in a state of almost perpetual flux, to maintain a cohesion fully as powerful as that found among the villagers. Instead of looking to the more conventional structural principles for the source of unity of Mbuti society, we have had to look rather to values, and it is in terms of values that the over-all society, of Mbuti and villagers, has its ultimate being and significance.

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[621]
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[181]

182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in re-
turn for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They
know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *tisha* vine from the
many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow
it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[121] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their
honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude
of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they
know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The
exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught
to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people
of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all out-
siders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

• 181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or
hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no
danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for
belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they
[141] average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to
them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are
as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always re-
main outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability
to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are
powerful and tough.

194 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though
it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants
of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great
tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They
were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic
times.

123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
179 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
181 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco, palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested, but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions; on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
152 the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between us by all the discomforts we had shared together as well as by all the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
• 181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
179 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181 •
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was something about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people 181
and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time [533]
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551]
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gouged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4458, Music of the Ituri Forest

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

But, most important, he told me, or rather showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.

"The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[i.e. Moke - molysf]

St Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 156 Kaplow Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he 681 would do the same thing again in a hurry.

• 181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [197] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [821] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent spe- [158] cialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy 627 life there might be one or two men or women who were more promi- nent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each opera- 681 ing as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

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Mbuti

935 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

935 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about themselves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose. [522]

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

593 595 598 606 607 889 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 578 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway. 621 622 578

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass. 626 593 584

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility. 626 157 181

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator. 621 829 778

Sc Turnbull B-5 (1951-1954) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

7

The Play World of the BaMbuti

181 IN THE FOREST life appears to be free and easy, happy-go-lucky, with a certain amount of perpetual disorder as a result. But in fact, beneath all that there *is* order and reason; reaching everywhere is the firm, controlling hand of the forest itself.

If individual responsibility and authority are shunned and dispersed in other aspects of Pygmy life, as in the maintenance of law and order, a similar pattern appears in the upbringing of children. It is no accident that a child calls everyone in the same age group as his parents "father" or "mother"; those still older are called "grandparent." Those of the same age as himself he refers to by a

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

St Turnbull R-5 (1961-1964) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Ituri

or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group as a whole.

Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting. The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *pende*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

N Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

648 361 197 147 124 181 177 361 182

impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

[829]

2x Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

114 or chirp of a cricket tells you that the forest is alive with some presence.

As I splashed my way through the last stream and climbed to the top of the rise above Apa Lelo, the sounds of the forest grew louder. This was a friendly sign, but somehow it made me feel even more lonely. Then I came down into the old camp. The huts were rotted and collapsed, the clearing overgrown. As I roamed about, tracing where huts had been and remembering who had lived there, kicking idly with my feet in the hopes of finding some familiar object, it all began to live again. I wandered down to the Lelo, as calm and placid and beautiful as ever, and I thought of the molimo. As I looked into the waters where the trumpet had once been hidden, it was as if I heard its voice in the distance, gentle but insistent.

• 121 When I had bade my farewell to that very special river and returned to the camp, I saw it as it really was in the timelessness of the forest world—the huts strong and green, the fires burning brightly, and the air heavy with the scent of cooking. Lizabeti was running about with the other children, swinging happily on her crutches. The men helped one another to examine and repair their nets, while the women cooked and gossiped. Masisi was shouting at someone, and Manyalibo was trying to pacify him in his usual gruff, good-natured way. Old Moke sat back in his chair and puffed at his pipe, gazing up at the tree tops so very high above. I heard him murmur once more, "You will see things you have never seen before. . . . You [112] will understand why we are called People of the Forest. . . . When the Forest dies, we shall die." And for the last time I heard the chorus of that great song of praise: "If Darkness *is*, Darkness is Good."

000 The camp and the people disappeared, leaving only a shimmering haze over Apa Lelo, but the song remained, for the song is the soul of the people and the soul of the forest. The molimo trumpet, now

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 The immediate need is for further field studies, for which there is considerable urgency. We have, in the Ituri Forest, a people who are still living one of the earliest forms of life lived by man: hunting and gathering. The extent to which the Mbuti live this life varies from one group to another, but we cannot expect to find a pure hunting and gathering economy among them much longer. For some thousands of years 179 the Pygmy lived this life free from any outside 175 influence. In historic times various village tribes [174] invaded his forest, bringing different cultures and different economies with them. More recently the Pygmies have been in contact with European civilization, which has already driven one major road, and a number of secondary roads, right through the forest. Luckily, no effective attempt was made by the Belgians, until the last two years of their administration, to change the Mbuti way of life, and there is still ample forest to permit a hunting and gathering 177 economy. What emerges from a study of this
182 [P.147 B]

1: Turnbull 8-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.147-C]

particular contact situation is not only the remarkable adaptability of the Mbuti to the changing world around them, but also the superficiality of that adaptability, and their much more profound resistance to any influence that strikes into the heart of their forest world and forest life. This, however, is a matter for another work. 177 182.

Physical anthropology has been entirely excluded from the survey because of its highly specialized nature. A number of such specialists have worked in the Ituri area, however, notably Gueinde (1942, 1948), Jadin (1936, 1938), and Julien (1954, 1956). Schebesta (1938) has also made a physiometrical study among the Mbuti. 114 14 128

The only changes that have been made in the original survey have been minor literary alterations, the addition of a few footnotes or inserted comments, the addition of one or two post-1956 references, and a revision of the terminology used. For "Efe" and "Sua," for instance, we now use the terms "archer" and "net hunter" respectively, and in place of "Negro" we use "villager," thus stressing throughout the significance of the economic rather than the linguistic or racial differential. 128 114 101 128

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1961-1965) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ENVIRONMENT

[P.164-A]

136 Both Schebesta and Putnam agree on the
137 profound importance of the environment,
182 which is the same throughout the Ituri, in determining to a great extent the life and thought of these forest people. In the primary rain forest there is little seasonal change. Different species of fruits, edible fungus, nuts, roots, and vegetables may flourish more abundantly at one time than another, but there is ample food of this kind at all times. The game is not migratory, except within very small areas, and
182 is always plentiful. The combination of warmth and humidity that produces this lush environment, with its plentiful supply of food for the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, also adds directly to their material comfort. In the absence of climatic extremes the Pygmy is little troubled by problems of clothing or shelter. All his basic needs are attended to for him by his environment, a fact that, writes Schebesta (1952, 42) does not favor "cultural evolution," but the hallmark of hunting and gathering communities is in any case one of "*la primitivité conservatrice*."

182 114 [15] [181] [184]

trice." Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes that the forest environment induces fear, suspicion, and guile, and limits the intellectual horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 825

Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." [P.164-8]

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

The environment that so favors a hunting and gathering economy also allows the adapted form of cultivation practiced by the villagers who now live in the forest. These village tribes, generally highly segmented and living in relatively isolated communities, cut large clearings and make plantations, the main products of which are plantains, manioc, peanuts, corn, rice, beans, and various kinds of squash. Plantains seem to be the staple food throughout. But the cutting of large clearings opens these villages to the intense heat of direct sunlight, from which the Mbuti never suffer in the uncut forest. Z 241 361 262 182 P 182

The Ituri is full of all kinds of game, the most important of which for the Mbuti are elephant, various kinds of antelope, forest pig, and monkey. The okapi is also hunted occasionally, though the Pygmies know that to do so is prohibited by game laws. It is in any case a difficult animal to catch and is pursued only if an easy opportunity offers. Danger comes in the form of forest buffalo, leopard, and a number of poisonous snakes such as the Gaboon viper and the horned viper. P 136 P [224]

There is a profusion of wild flowers and or- 000

[P. 164-D]

[P.165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The Mbuti make great use of various species of *Ficus* for the manufacture of barkcloth, and certain vines are used to make string and hunting nets. There are also trees that give a sap
[314] which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another, can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of effective medicines prepared from plants and roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no culture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to their remarkable adaptation to the forest environment. The level of their culture may not be high, but, even though primitive and "conservative," it is distinctly a forest culture and distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw material is abundant. The striking thing is the minimal extent to which they utilize this material. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the environment itself which, making minimal demands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

221 [P. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
12 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

• 182 121 It is also significant in considering the relative systems of values of the Mbuti and the villagers, in so far as it develops certain qualities in the Mbuti that further accentuate their physical difference from their village neighbors. Just as the forest itself stands out in sharp contrast to the plains, so the forest people stand out in contrast to the plains people—even those who have made a notable adaptation to a forest environment such as the Ituri village tribes. The value in emphasizing the importance of environmental considerations lies not in any causal explanation of material culture or social structure offered by such considerations, but in creating an awareness of this very fundamental opposition.

[P. 166-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.166-C]

According to Mbuti opinion the villager is deficient in the senses of sight, smell, hearing, and touch. There is little doubt that the Pygmy is extra-sensitive in these respects, but no scientific investigation has been conducted as yet to determine the exact extent. But if the environment favors a certain type of physical development, it also favors a certain type of emotional development. We must think of the forest not only as a place of abundance, offering a sufficiency of food and shelter, relatively free from danger, but also as a closed world, very unlike the open world of the plains dwellers. Not only has the Pygmy little incentive to develop beyond his diurnal economy, each day taking care of itself, but also he has little to make him think except in terms of the present. 182. [829] [51]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The past and the future pale into insignificance when compared with the moment. To understand this isolated, self-sufficient Pygmy world of the moment is also to understand something about the Mbuti relationship with the villager living in a very different, expansive, and uncertain world of change. 182

It seems worth mentioning the environmental factor also because the Pygmy himself takes it into consideration. His myth and mime, both important mediums of expression of the Mbuti, accentuate the opposition between the forest and the outside world, and between their peoples. They show a constant effort on the part of the Mbuti to effect a satisfactory relationship with the forest world that dominates their lives with such certainty and inevitability. It is not necessary to consider the environment further, but we must go this far in order to begin to understand the people whose society we are studying. 182 778 [538] 182

[P. 166-D]

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z [178]

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

P 575

[P. 184-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

575 796 [533] [534] [574] [292]

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

575 796 533 776 [182]

[NET HUNTERS]

776 the body (p. 238). There is also some confusion
775 among the net-hunter Mbuti between the terms *mungu* and *satani*, which at times appear to be interchangeable. Schebesta (1948, 493) says that the local Bira refer to these forest sprites as "*molimo*," the name they also give to their secret association of men.

776 As with the archers, abnormal conditions of the physical world denote the presence of the chthonic God. At such times the net hunters are careful not to expose themselves to his sight, which would bring death, nor to attract his attention by unseemly behavior. He is a benevolent God but one best kept at a distance. There is no evidence of any connection between God and the lineage through the elder, but each hunting band seems to regard Mungu, while God of all Mbuti everywhere, as being particularly concerned with them.[1]

Cult Practices

788 In so far as ritual is a response to uncertainty
182 or crisis, the net hunters have far less need of it than many other peoples. As we show above, their forest environment provides them with

[1] In view of the extremely loose usage of the term *mungu*, I interpret net-hunter expressed attitudes as indicating a belief in a local deity, not necessarily named Mungu, somehow related to the over-all God.

[P 237-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P-237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788
involves them in any significant change of 182.
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224] hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184] steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

ENVIRONMENT

P 182 184 The importance of environment in this particular study cannot be overestimated. The forest environment throughout the Ituri is much the same, so it cannot be held responsible for such differences as we may find between one Mbuti group and another. Such differences seem more likely to be due to the human environment, that is to say, varying degrees of Pygmy association with different villager tribes.

P 182 The forest environment is important, however, in favoring the specific way of life followed by the nomadic hunting-and-gathering Mbuti communities. That it certainly does not compel Z [182] this mode of existence is witnessed by the very different and equally successful adjustment made to it by the other major group of forest P 182 177 inhabitants—the villagers. But by enabling the Mbuti to continue their nomadic way with comparative ease and to their almost entire satisfaction, the forest enables them to preserve their independence in the face of technologically superior and politically more organized villager opposition. By virtue of their particular response to the forest, the Mbuti retain their individuality socially, economically, politically, and intellectually.

P Z 182 The environmental factor sharply divides the forest people (Mbuti) from the non-forest people (villagers)—the true forest hunting-and-

[P 243-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 243-C]

gathering economy of the former from the adapted forest cultivation of the latter. Perhaps, above all, it distinguishes the values of the forest people from those of the villager invaders from the plains. The Mbuti adapt themselves to their environment; the villagers adapt the environment to their own way of life in so far as they can, compromising when they cannot. It is not difficult to see the possible psychological implications of this attitudinal difference and the profound difference in religious and social values that either rise from it or are strengthened by it. In the opposition between forest values and non-forest values we find the highest degree of opposition between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors.

P 182
P 181 182.

THE SOCIAL UNIT

P 184

At this elementary point in our survey of Mbuti society, we begin to find significant structural differences between one group and another. These differences are not related to linguistic differences. Moreover, we find that, with the possible exception of the archers described by Schebesta, the Mbuti are polyglots.

P 184 197

While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

184 197 184 224 621 182

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

[P. 243-D]

[P.244-A]

184 remain in camp to guard it and perform other
224 duties. When the band falls below seven fami-
621 lies, it can no longer exist. Similarly, when it
• 182 rises above a certain number (between 20 and 30) it becomes too unwieldy to function as a single hunting unit and must, of necessity, split. Under these circumstances a compromise is reached, and very conveniently so, by the hunting from a forest camp by one section of the band, while the other section lives a more or less parasitical life near the village.

184 The composition of the bands of archers and
621 net hunters seems to be similar, though Putnam lays more emphasis on the presence of visiting families. The archers live in considerably smaller bands, some interconnected through kinship ties and also allegedly through common allegiance to a villager lineage. In the larger net-hunting band there may very likely be no single villager attachment.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
4PK as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and
[R 244-B]

A fourth factor might be added: While the net hunt quickly scares animals away from the area around the hunting camp, necessitating frequent changes of site, the archery technique neither depletes the game so quickly nor frightens it away. An archer band can therefore remain confined to a smaller area, near the village, while the net hunters sometimes must wander several days' march away from their patrons. The more nomadic group also has constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is apparently felt by the more settled archers, for plantation products.

Thus at once we can see the possible economic, social, and political implications of the difference in hunting technique and how these implications follow in fact.

Gathering occupies a similar position of social and economic importance in each type of community. It is regarded primarily as the work of women, though, wherever it calls for tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among

[p. 245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with the same meaning. The occasional use of a [613] grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor [614] names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used fre- [103] quently to differentiate one hunting band from [101] another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication [832] would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246- B]

Little can be said of inter-band relationships 628
as there are so few data. Neither type of band 476
has any need to cooperate with neighboring 224
bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occa- 184
sions when there is a particular profusion of
game. Among the archers joint hunting would
be necessary in order to make use of the *begbe*
beating technique. Among net hunters two or
more bands might combine either when the in-
dividual bands fall below economic level or
when a particular profusion of game requires
more nets than are possessed by the single band.
With the net hunters such association could be-
come permanent, whereas with the archers it
would never be necessary as the band is of such
small optimum size.

The difference between the archers and the 184
net hunters in their relationship with the vil- 182
lager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Put- 224
nam, is one of both degree and kind. We have 439
seen that with their less efficient hunting tech-
nique the archers must rely more on vegetable
products, and how, with the women's sphere
limited to gathering, the women have more time
and opportunity for gathering from the villager
plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy
[P 247-D]

[R 248-A]

184 nature of the hunt also makes possible a more
• 182 permanent settlement near the village. The
224 trade relationship among the archers, then, as-
439 sumes greater importance and is more formalized. Schebesta further understands it as being an inter-lineage relationship. Putnam, while acknowledging its importance also for the net hunters, says that it is interfamilial and can be broken by either side. The net-hunting technique makes more game available for trade, so there is less demand by villagers upon the net hunters than by the Lese of the archers. The necessity of a more strictly nomadic life also militates against permanent and continuous attachment between the net-hunting Mbuti and any one villager "master."

128 Of the legal system no more can be added to the section dealing with authority and leadership. There are simply not enough data even for comparison of the concepts of property and ownership between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 881 861 Z [563]

they could quite well achieve in their own way. Such practical benefits as there may be do not demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

P Z 181 182 881

This hiatus becomes even more evident when we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*, as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus not only between two ways of living but between two ways of thinking, and it shows that we are dealing with two totally different sets of values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[P. 256-D]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 796 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] [554] [171] [181]

1, [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

Finally, it is worth taking very brief note of the function of music among the net-hunting Mbuti in so far as it throws light on their participation in the *nkumbi* and village society in general. 533 182

Music in the forest is almost entirely vocal. Drums may be used if within easy reach of the village, from which they are borrowed or stolen. [534] But drums are never used for formal meetings of the *molimo* and *elima*; rhythm is given out by wooden clappers. None of this song can be said to be secular, as it is all related to the forest. The extreme importance attached to song is most plainly seen in its usage for the *molimo* and *elima*. It is mentioned above in the survey how the Mbuti consecrate a marriage ceremony that is performed in the village according to villager custom, by singing the songs of the *elima*, welcoming the bride to the women's religious association in her new home. We also see how the *elima* songs mark the arrival of Mbuti girls at the age of puberty. *Molimo* songs mark

[P 258-D]

[P. 259-A]

533 any major crisis affecting the community as a
182 whole. But, as well as these religious activities, both major economic activities, hunting and gathering, are also consecrated by special types of song. It is inconceivable that the Mbuti, who accompany every important event in their lives with song, should not consecrate the initiation
533 of their boys in this same way. But for the
881 *nkumbi* they have no music at all. As we have
182 said, in 1954 the *molimo* horn was not heard, and no *molimo* songs were sung. I suggest that other initiations, in which the horn and songs are heard, are in connection with villager institutions to which the village boys are being initiated. The only conclusion we can draw is that for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is not sufficiently significant in their forest life to merit consecration by forest song.

533 This is closely paralleled by the absence of
182 forest music (songs of the *molimo* and *elima*, hunting-and-gathering songs) when the Mbuti
181 are camped on the edge of a village. When they do, the Mbuti themselves behave as different people. In the forest they feel and observe a
[198] certain restraint. Their songs are related to and emphasize their supreme value—the forest. Their daily activities are dominated by the forest and the hunt and the need for close cooperation.

1: Turnbull E 4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers.

538 771 [828]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There

538 789 182 • [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

[P 270-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.291-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
• 182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
789 adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case.
[761] There is no common explanation of death or
[754] illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man
[154] invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The
538 nearest approach to standard mythological
776 rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 272-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.273-C]

hunters rather than as Efe, Aka, or Sua—the linguistic division made by Schebesta which does not correspond to any sociological division. It may well emerge that there is a better classification, according to structural principles rather than purely economic differences, but at the moment this cannot be seen.

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101

The survey also reveals a strange contrast between an apparently simple social structure and primitive material culture and a highly developed artistic sense. It seems worth while for the future field worker to pay particular attention to myth and mime, noting all the surrounding circumstances and not only the subject of representation. Similarly music is of obvious social importance and should be fully treated, with special attention to the social context. We might in this way gain some insight into the Mbuti system of values, which not only would be of significance itself but would immeasurably help our understanding of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must 182 •
determine both their function and their mean- 53
ing, to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers.

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably 177
the major problem that arises from the survey. 439
We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical 177
grounds for the difference between the relation- 439
ship of the archers to their villager neighbors 184
and that of the more nomadic net hunters to

[P. 273- D]

2:Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not surprising, then, that the Mbuti recognize their dependence upon the forest and refer to it as "Father" or "Mother" (I have heard both used, it seems without discrimination) because, as they say, it gives them food, warmth, shelter and clothing, just like their parents. What is, perhaps, surprising is that the Mbuti add that the forest also, like their parents, gives them affection. 778

If it has been thought that this stress on the environmental factor is overweighted, the last observation should make it clear why. The forest is more than mere environment to the Mbuti. It is a living, conscious thing, both natural and supernatural, something that has to be depended upon, respected, trusted, obeyed and loved. The love demanded of the Mbuti is no romanticism, and perhaps it might be better included under "respect," but I make the distinction here because the Mbuti make the distinction, and because it is all part of the structural relationship of opposition between the Mbuti and the villagers. 778 182

More of the intimacy of the relationship between the Mbuti and the forest will emerge as we proceed; indeed there is not a single aspect of their lives where it is not evident. Here let us take a quick look at the relationship of the neighboring villagers to the same forest.

In the Ituri the tribal composition is thoroughly confused, a succession of invasions from different directions having taken place over the past four hundred years. From the north came the Mangbetu, pursued later and driven westward by the Zande. At the present day these two large tribes stretch right across the northern edges of the forest, a large proportion of each remaining in relatively open savannah. Also in the north and in the east are the populous Budo and the Mamvu-Lesé. From the southeast came the Bira, a Bantu-speaking plains people who split on reaching the forest, some pressing up by Lake Albert and retaining something of their cattle culture[1], the others turning westward through the middle of the forest, segmenting into a number of isolated villages loosely held together by the principle of patrilineal descent and recognition of a common ancestor manifest in the chiefs and sub-chiefs. In recent years, apparently since the imposition of Belgian authority, the Forest Bira (the Plains Bira do not concern us here, directly) divided into two main chieftainships, with territorial headquarters at Koki and Bahaha. (Map 5 illustrates C 101

[1] There is some uncertainty as to whether the Bira were originally cultivators or pastoralists. Among the present Plains Bira, however, cattle plays an important role and the people themselves claim to have always had cattle. They now practice a mixed economy.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1954-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

P C 121 648 There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist between two peoples in a context such as this. Apart from one of symbiosis, implying interdependence, there could be political subjugation, such as existed, say, between the Tussi and the Hutu. But that is plainly not the case here. The villagers themselves admit their inability to exert physical force to bend the Mbuti to their will, for the Mbuti always have the ultimate escape of flight to the sanctuary of the forest. The villagers are completely unequipped to pursue the Mbuti into the forest, and never attempt it. They are incapable of even finding the Mbuti if the hunters wish not to be found. And, as we have seen, there is no effective political mechanism for maintaining any kind of political relationship, let alone one of superordination/subordination.

C 563 121 P *177 121 Another possible relationship would be one of assimilation, such as occurred among the Ganda of East Africa, where two different peoples merged, as did their two different economies. At the present there is no question of actual assimilation, but the existence of linguistic and institutional similarities certainly indicates an interchange of ideas, at least. But it is, at the moment, an interchange of outward forms only, and not of the accompanying systems and structure. And while a great deal of intimacy is expressed, in action as in word, between the two groups, there is also a great deal of expressed opposition, and sometimes hostility.

C 563 121 P *177 582 121 The intermarriage between Mbuti girls and village men and the attempted absorption of the Mbuti into the village kinship system may be considered as steps toward assimilation, but if so they are very tentative and preliminary steps, and as such need not concern us here. Indeed we shall find that there are other indications of the reverse process, of separation. There is no question of physical separation in the sense of the expulsion of one group by the other, but a perfectly valid alternative relationship left to us for consideration is one of ideological separation accompanied by a mutually accepted territorial separation—a form of indigenous apartheid.

P 166 *177 182 This in fact seems to be the case, for in common conversation, as in action, both groups distinguish the village and the village people from the forest and the forest people. The Mbuti effectively are the only group to cross the territorial boundaries, and the ideological boundaries remain inviolate on both sides. When the Mbuti cross into the village world they leave the forest behind them, and with it they leave their forest social system. Forest values cannot be so easily left

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always patrilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band composition be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is comparable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology, it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602 power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182 security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571 recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[428 with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182 an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611 indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

PUBERTY: THE *ELIMA*

P 881 621 At the next crisis in the life cycle, however, it is the band rather than the nuclear family that takes charge. By early childhood the child has already grown away from its family to some extent, and become more a member of an age group cutting across kinship lines. At puberty the boy or girl may not even be living with kin any more, let alone in the nuclear family. But even if they are, the band takes control of the situation. It is an occasion that concerns the band as such, for adolescence leads into marriage, and marriage will inevitably bring about a significant change in the economic structure of the band. A member of the band may leave it, or a new member may join it, or, if the marriage is within the band, then at least there will still be an additional net, and a change in the hunting and gathering pattern and perhaps in interfamily alliances. The process of fission and P fusion might also be affected by the political implications of the mar- 881 riage. The *elima* is best regarded as a premarital festival. It does not necessarily lead directly into a marriage that is marriage in the sense of a final, childbearing union. It is rather a preparation for marriage, P an opportunity for the youngsters to find suitable partners. It does [584] not even have to end in betrothal, so there cannot be said to be a [182] functional connection between *elima* and marriage.

C 881 The arrival at puberty among boys being somewhat less easy to determine, the signal for an *elima* is the first appearance of menstrual blood in a young girl. This is something that fills the local villagers with horror, and with fear of evil influences against which they take elaborate ritual precautions to protect themselves. These precautions are costly and inconvenient, and the girl who has brought both shame and annoyance to her family is hidden and treated harshly. There are elaborate cleansing ceremonies for the girl and her family. P Among the Mbuti, however, the appearance of menstrual blood is a 881 sign that the girl is now a potential mother, and it is consequently P a signal for rejoicing and for preparation for motherhood. Thus an [584] integral part of the festival is the selection of suitable potential husbands. Such selection demands that the boys prove their manhood, since it cannot be proven as simply as is the womanhood of the girl. In this sense, then, the *elima* is a joint initiation of boys and girls into adulthood. Having dealt with it in descriptive form elsewhere (Turn-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bull, 1960[1]), I shall keep the description here to those essentials 881
concerned with the structural implications of the *elima*.

The fact that it is not an individual family affair, to be concealed with shame as best possible, is doubly emphasized when two girls in a band, of quite different lineages, "see the blood" within a few days of each other. There will then be a joint *elima*. And there is also the selection by the girl or girls of the *bamelima*, the friends she likes and wants to accompany her for the duration of the festival, living with her in the *elima* hut. They will be drawn from her female age mates, [561] and may or may not already have had their own *elima*. If they have not yet seen the blood, participation in their friend's *elima* will excuse them from having one of their own when the time comes. If a girl sees the blood, and a close friend thinks she is about to see it as well, the *elima* will be delayed, perhaps for several weeks.

As with birth, this life-cycle crisis does not evoke any sense of need 881
for urgent ritual action, protective or otherwise. Its significance is of 182
a different order. It is regarded as essentially natural and therefore good. Also as with birth, the personal importance of the occasion [778] leads to an establishment of personal contact with the forest, a reification of the direct bond between the individual and the forest world; but the social importance of puberty for the band is recognized, so the band as such takes certain measures, both social and ritual, to mark the occasion.

The girl or girls with blood are expected to keep to their homes and 881
an extension may be built onto one of their huts, or onto that of any friend or relative who is willing to house the *bamelima*. Every *elima* girl with blood has to choose a personal assistant, and the choice is left entirely to her, and again may fall on a relative, though more often it is a very close friend, of the same age group. They then invite other friends to join them in the *elima* hut, when it is ready. The assistants share such restrictions as are placed upon the *elima* girls, except that they are more free to leave the hut unaccompanied. There are few restrictions anyway, it seems, and they are mainly concerned with maintaining adherence to the schedule of instruction and activities. There are some minor food prohibitions, based on the 881
personal taboos of the *elima* girls and their assistants, which in turn 262
are based on their individual reactions to these foods as young children. If a certain food makes a child sick it may be forbidden to him until puberty, when he may try it again and abandon the taboo if it no longer affects him adversely. Sometimes, but not always, there is 881

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

881 561 571 866 182 quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

881 602 Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

881 561 571 602 [578] Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

881 86 [561] Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death. 761 765 [182] [621]

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp. 764 768 184

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment. 764 171 * [184] [766]

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide. 765 302

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst. 765 152 [761]

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [965] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

625 157 [924] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

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627 attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other,
[126] even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

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DISPUTE	*Number Recorded*	*Number of Decisions or Judgments made*	*Instances of Positive Action*
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such
[626] disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on al-
[182] most any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

627 An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a
626 doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, de-
578 spite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal
121 "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stom-
182 ach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior.
626 There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including
121 the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the
182 contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in
778 the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[171] [10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

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forest as an incentive toward good behavior is far more important and far more strong than its negative aspect as a deterrent against bad behavior.

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likely to be highly disruptive but where disputes nonetheless occur. Any personal intervention or judgment would only be likely to lead to further disputes. The impersonal nature of the forest as arbitrator and judge maintains the impersonality of the laws; or if the forest is considered as endowed with personality, it is a spiritual personality and owes no more allegiance to one Mbuti than to another, and so is still impersonal in this context.

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628 582 583 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. 628 581 594 182 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 224 131 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 224 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

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self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [583] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

*177 754 In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

• [482] [626]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

533 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or
765 female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more impor-
462 tance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the
881 concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the
765 contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of con-
• 182 cern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death,
181 but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are
[561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

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"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

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the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, 621 which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of 771 the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The associa- 778 tion with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and 181 earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to 182 create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevè.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

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is resident. It is seldom that he refers merely to geographical boundaries, for trespass, as seen, is rare and of little consequence. Yet it is a term he frequently uses, and as an organizational principle it is equal in importance to age.

While agreeing with Steward that the environment may to some extent be determinant as well as permissive of certain elements of social organization, I find it impossible to see the validity of his wider deterministic claims for cultural ecology.[5] But while Steward seems to have overreached himself, or rather overreached his material, in trying to draw up general principles of culture change, nonetheless in regarding cultural ecological adaptations as "creative processes" (1955, p. 34), his stress on cultural ecology as a particular factor is highly relevant to the Mbuti and in itself an important contribution. We have seen throughout the importance of the economic abundance offered by the forest, permitting economic independence to each band. While the presence of the village tribes is sufficient indication of the permissibility of cultivation, at the technological level of the Mbuti one might say that the environment determines hunting and gathering. It is certainly relevant to say that the Mbuti, at least, would agree with Steward, for they say it is the only way they can live, that if they cultivate they will die. The truth of their assertion is not relevant here; its importance lies in that it reveals the depth of their felt dependence upon the forest.

Nothing is gained, however, by saying that the Mbuti exploitative

[5] Indeed, it would be impossible to do so since Steward uses the Mbuti as an example of an ecologically determined patrilineal band, content to base his analysis on Putnam (1948) as interviewed by Carleton Coon and represented in a brief and obviously general and sketchy article. Steward's only other Mbuti reference is to Schebesta's preliminary seventeen-page field report in *Anthropos* (1931). A minimum of inquiry would have revealed numerous other sources, which while admittedly unsatisfactory would, through their very divergence, at least have demonstrated the inadvisability of relying on the two sources quoted (ref. Turnbull, 1965). Further evidence to support his theory, for the Central African Negritos, was drawn by Steward from the reports of Schmidt (1910) and Trilles (1932). Not one of the many articles in *Zaïre*, *Congo*, or *Kongo-Overzee*, is cited, nor is Schebesta's major work, *Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri*, nor the abridged and revised edition of that work which appeared in French in 1952, *Les Pygmées du Congo Belge*. Unsupported assertions such as that "the exploitative patterns produced the features typical of the patrilineal band" (Steward, 1955, p. 128) are bad enough; the apparent ignorance of major texts (for Steward nowhere gives any reasons for not using them) is worse; but still worse is the sheer misrepresentation of the facts he does claim to have at his disposal. Thus he claims that the populations he has selected to illustrate patrilineal bands—the Bushman, Congo Negritos, Australians, Tasmanians and Fuegians, "and others"—are similar "because the nature of the game and therefore of their subsistence problems is the same in each case" (1955, p. 38). It is difficult to see much similarity between subsistence problems of the Kalahari Desert and the Equatorial Rain Forest, even if they are on the same continent.

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
626 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
[21] upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
• 182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[793] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177]* concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 16

Principles of Organization (2)

THE VILLAGE CONTEXT

* 177 The principles of organization that have begun to emerge with
171 reference to the forest world of the Mbuti only become fully com-
121 prehensible when we relate them to the village world. Gluckman (1960) gave some general but highly pertinent indications of a somewhat similar situation involving a dichotomy in the lives of Africans in North Rhodesia and Nyasaland. In that situation the conflict, or rather the opposition, was between the ancestral land and the town. The land represented subsistence to some extent, but primarily security; the town was a place to raid for money. While Gluckman did not see any "detribalization" involved, he pointed out that the African is tribalized, in towns and in rural areas, in two different ways, tribal attachments in urban areas having to work within a setting of urban associations: "Hence the African in rural areas and in town is two different men; for the social situation of tribal home and of urban employment determine his actions and associations, within the major politico-economic system covering both areas" (1960, p. 11).

Gluckman refers to the consequent social and mental conflict, and sees "considerable resolution of this conflict through the separation
* 177 of the spheres of activities" (1960, p. 11). In assessing the Forest/
121 Village relationship we see a similar situation, with the village being
• 182 regarded as a place to raid, creating numerous social and mental conflicts which again are largely resolved by separation in what I have called a system of indigenous apartheid. There is more to it than that, however. We cannot suppose, however complete the barrier, that the Mbuti live an utterly schizophrenic existence; even within the opposition there must be order. Nor can we suppose that the order comes from a mere dilution of forest values when the Mbuti come to the village; it is rather, as Gluckman says, that the same values have to work within a setting of urban (village) associations.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

132 Anyone who has
137 stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain forest must know how Stanley and his followers felt, coming as they all did from an open country of rolling plains, of sunlight and warmth. Many people who have visited the Ituri since, and many who have lived there, feel just the same, overpowered by the heaviness of everything—the damp air, the gigantic water-laden trees that are constantly dripping, never quite drying out between the violent storms that come with monotonous regularity, the very earth itself heavy and cloying after the slightest shower. And, above all, such people feel overpowered by the seeming silence and the age-old remoteness and loneliness of it all.

132 But these are the feelings of outsiders, of those who do not belong
137 to the forest. If you *are* of the forest it is a very different place. What
182 seems to other people to be eternal and depressing gloom becomes a cool, restful, shady world with light filtering lazily through the tree tops that meet high overhead and shut out the direct sunlight—the sunlight that dries up the non-forest world of the outsiders and makes it hot and dusty and dirty.

136 Even the silence is a myth. If you have ears for them, the forest
137 is full of sounds—exciting, mysterious, mournful, joyful. The shrill
182 trumpeting of an elephant, the sickening cough of a leopard (or the
825 hundred and one sounds that can be mistaken for it), always makes your heart beat a little unevenly, telling you that you are just the slightest bit scared, or even more. At night, in the honey season, you hear a weird, long-drawn-out, soulful cry high up in the trees. It seems to go on and on, and you wonder what kind of creature can cry for so long without taking breath. The people of the forest say it is the chameleon, telling them that there is honey nearby. Scientists will tell you that chameleons are unable to make any such sound. But the forest people of faraway Ceylon also know the song of the chameleon. Then in the early morning comes the pathetic cry of the pigeon, a plaintive cooing that slides from one note down to the next until it dies away in a soft, sad, little moan.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

There are a multitude of sounds, but most of them are as joyful as the brightly colored birds that chase one another through the trees, singing as they go, or the chatter of the handsome black-and-white Colobus monkeys as they leap from branch to branch, watching with curiosity everything that goes on down below. And the most joyful sound of all, to me, is the sound of the voices of the forest people as they sing a lusty chorus of praise to this wonderful world of theirs —a world that gives them everything they want. This cascade of sound echoes among the giant trees until it seems to come at you from all sides in sheer beauty and truth and goodness, full of the joy of living. But if you are an outsider from the non-forest world, I suppose this glorious song would just be another noise to grate on your nerves.

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The world of the forest is a closed, possessive world, hostile to all those who do not understand it. At first sight you might think it hostile to all human beings, because in every village you find the same suspicion and fear of the forest, that blank, impenetrable wall. The villagers are friendly and hospitable to strangers, offering them the best of whatever food and drink they have, and always clearing out a house where the traveler can rest in comfort and safety. But these villages are set among plantations in great clearings cut from the heart of the forest around them. It is from the plantations that the food comes, not from the forest, and for the villagers life is a constant battle to prevent their plantations from being overgrown.

C 182 C [609] [574] C 182 241 361

They speak of the world beyond the plantations as being a fearful place, full of malevolent spirits and not fit to be lived in except by animals and BaMbuti, which is what the village people call the Pygmies. The villagers, some Bantu and some Sudanic, keep to their plantations and seldom go into the forest unless it is absolutely necessary. For them it is a place of evil. They are outsiders.

C 776 182 825 829

But the BaMbuti are the real people of the forest. Whereas the other tribes are relatively recent arrivals, the Pygmies have been in

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they
[141] average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

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481 and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped
123 through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash.
[133] The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets
[136] and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

765 I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but
182 I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had
191 known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting,
[825] they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything
[778] except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a
765 whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly
182 on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

115 But, most important, he[1] told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
• 182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We
[533] wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[1] [i.e. Moke - analyst]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making
562 any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned"
562 the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the
773 women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to
[462] play. There is relativeiy little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had
372 asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy
182 it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again,
533 and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes.

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it.

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
771 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
• 182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
[765] festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
[533] dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
182

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 269-C]

only for certain purposes, reveals at once a lack 538
of interest in the past which is in accord with 128
the apparent shortness of memory among these Pygmies, particularly noticeable when an investigator tries to construct some sort of genealogy. For me it heightens my suspicion of such genealogies given by a people who at times are only too willing to please by inventing totally fictitious names. The legends prove singularly unrewarding to anyone seeking some evidence of a [181]
lineage system. If they represent anything, they represent a people who are wholly absorbed in the present. If we accept this evidence, we can look for its consequences in the magico-religious life of the Mbuti as well as in other spheres.

Also with reference to the Mbuti magico-religious system, there is possibly some significance in the tendency to emphasize the natural order of events in the legends relating to social life. The ideal represented in the legend is the normal; consequently, these particular legends seem singularly unimaginative. They read like reports of actual occurrences. A certain amount of cleverness is normal, but an excess of it (when the term becomes best translated as "trickery") is abnormal and leads us, as we have seen, into

538
183.

the world of the supernatural. The Pygmy is 538
anxious to preserve the normal, the *status quo.* 183
Although one could hardly determine this with any certainty from the legends alone, they certainly confirm the notion, which is of particular significanec with reference to Mbuti religious thought. We return briefly to this point below.

The second section dealing with social rela- 538
tions also reveals a center of interest on food, 181
the importance of the food quest being implied repeatedly. Also emphasized is the importance [476]
of cooperation, not only between members of the same family, but between all members of the hunting band. These legends tell us that [577]
vice and virtue are scarcely understood as such, that the dominating quality is cleverness, with its converse, stupidity. But, as pointed out, this is a borderline world. Whereas cleverness may 538
be of use to a Pygmy in his normal everyday 181
life, it is really a quality associated with his 183
dealings with the animal and supernatural worlds. In fact, one legend, not mentioned, quite distinctly tells us that in everyday life it is not good to be too clever, but better to be normal. An elephant hunter who loses his normality (by failing to accept food offered to him, and failing to join in the conversation) is

[P 269-D]

[P.270-A]

538 promptly deserted as being unsafe company. So
181 we might gather that in daily life normality is
• 183 the ideal, and, when the supernatural (including animals, regarded as possessed of supernatural powers), is dealt with, cleverness is dominant.

538 From the second section of legends we can
888 finally glean some information from the treatment of old age. Two things emerge: first, old age is associated with extra cleverness, approaching trickery; second, we find Pygmy realism emerging again when old age is accompanied by disability. Either way, old age is a dangerous condition. In this particular band it is perhaps significant that the leaders of the group are not old, but are the active—the "great hunters."

538 Animals, like food, enter into the majority of
825 legends, and in some cases they seem to be regarded merely as animals. But more often the trickery of the animal is emphasized and, consequently, its association with the supernatural. In the third kind of legends, those dealing with the supernatural, we find animals in almost every one.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P118]

CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

621 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of
626 the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which ac-
594 tivities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on
62 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal in-
183 stitution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream should wash himself, or at least a part of himself, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing. 578 649 578 152

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin. [264] [53] [765] [533]

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered. [301]

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention. [593] [372]

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest. 578 152 593 [606]

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

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Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled. [177]* [183]

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

578 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
*177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
186 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
436 the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission.
[621] Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[958] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[824] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

579 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
621 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[5] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*" —"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[5] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

577 deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with dif-
183 ficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure,
828 for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the
533 forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist,
778 of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

577 The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa*
183 *ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being
828 no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English
192 concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

577 Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best de-
183 scribed by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing
828 gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel
533 good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even
778 when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a
152 mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

533 While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well,
778 for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from
224 shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was sing- 765
ing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed 533
it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but 539
the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang 825
again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important 765
it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me 533
around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that [854]
Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general 765
pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but [183]
with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all [854]
women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody
objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the [533]

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
• 183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
518 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 197
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in
social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

101 If the Bushmen, whose relationship to the Pygmies is highly questionable, be left aside, there are three main groups of African Pygmies —the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, the Tswa of the western Congo and western Africa, and the Twa between Lake Kivu and Lake Tanganyika. Of these, only the first group is truly "Pygmy" according to Schebesta (1952), being under 150 cm. in stature and relatively free from intermixture with neighboring tribes. Schebesta refers to the Twa and Tswa as "Pygmoids." From all the available evidence it seems that the Ituri Mbuti alone preserve any semblance of their original nomadic life as hunters and gatherers, although little is known yet about the Pygmies of equatorial Africa.

[141] [144] [184]

175 Our earliest sources (the Sixth-Dynasty tomb at Beni Hassan, the Pompeian parietal paintings, Homer, Aristotle, and even the Mappa Mundi) all agree in placing a Pygmy population near the source of the Nile. Later sources enlarge little on this information, and the first real attempt to delimit the territory was made by Schebesta in 1929–1930.

131

131 The Ituri Mbuti inhabit the forested basins of the Lindi and Ituri rivers (Schebesta). The Bomokandi River forms the northern frontier. The Mbuti never move beyond the edge of the

[P. 159-B]

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P. 159-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
• 184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

[P. 161-A]
162 slight excess of females in the composition of the population. He gives the following figures, evidently from a population of 411 adults.

	Children Per Cent	Adults Per Cent	Total Per Cent
Male	48.0	48.9	48.4
Female	52.0	51.1	51.6

[165] Infant mortality (32.7 per cent)
Average age 27–30
9 widowers among 201 men
9 widows among 210 women
14 polygamous families (3.1 per cent)

16 Demographic data for the Sua net hunters is
[114] not available. Putnam kept detailed medical records for all members of the band for a decade, but many of these have been lost in the course of shipment to the United States, and the few that are available do not provide a
•[184] representative picture. From such data as are available, there does not seem, however, to be any significant difference between the two groups.

182 *trice.*" Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes
114 that the forest environment induces fear, suspi-
[15] cion, and guile, and limits the intellectual
[181] horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in
[184] agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change
825 with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." [P.164-B]

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his [789] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by [252] Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [262] states that he has never known these Pygmies to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 41 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which [184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P.165-B]

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 [342] [445] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

221 [p. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.170]

411
284
184

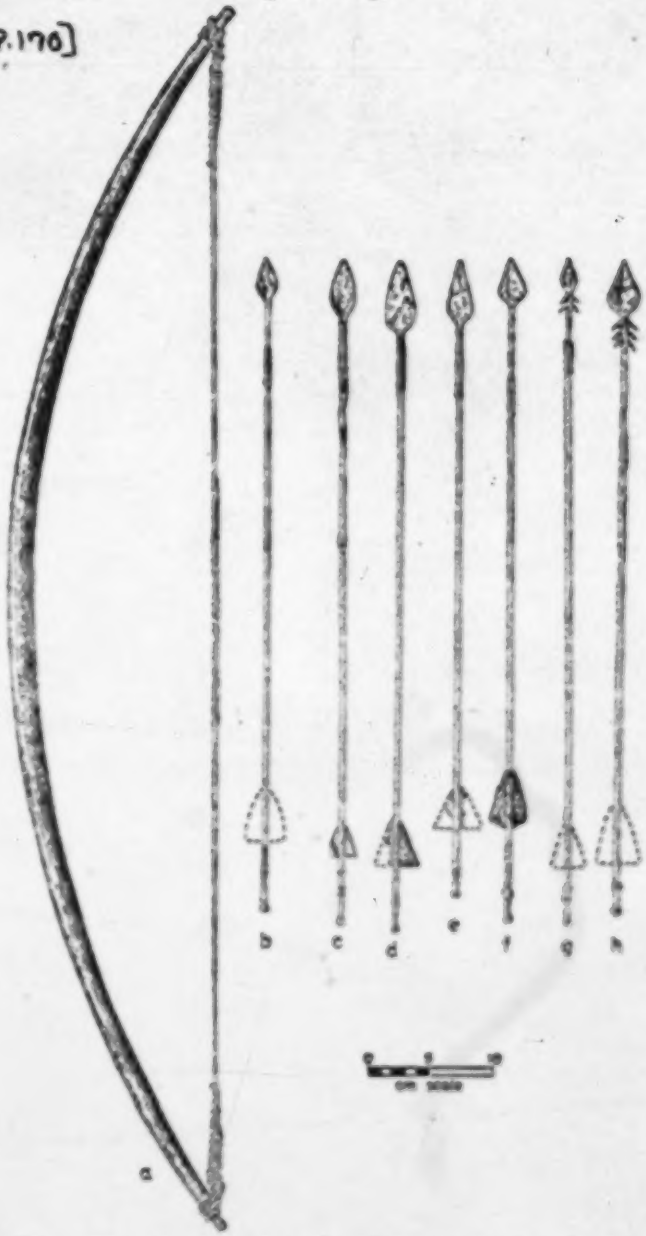

FIG. 6. Hunting equipment, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. These are typical of the eastern archers and similar to the bows and arrows of the neighboring Nyari villagers.

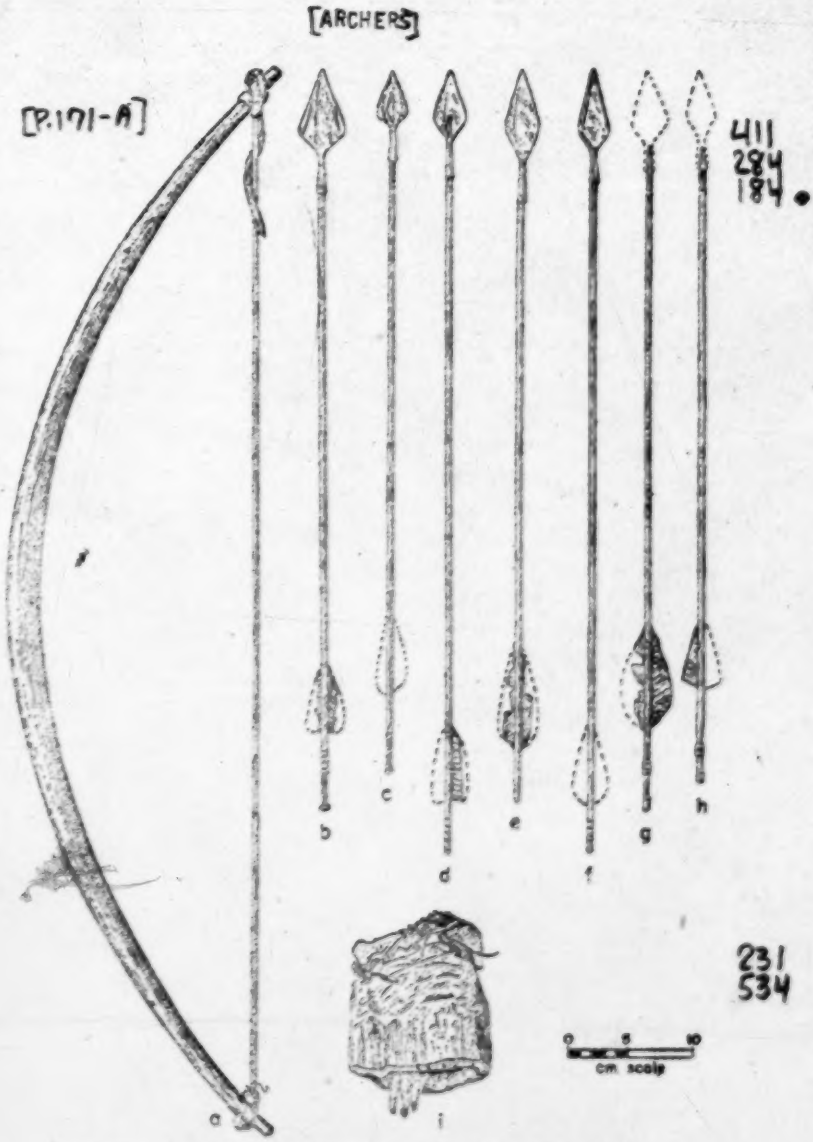

FIG. 7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Nduye District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. i. Dog bell.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.172-A]

411

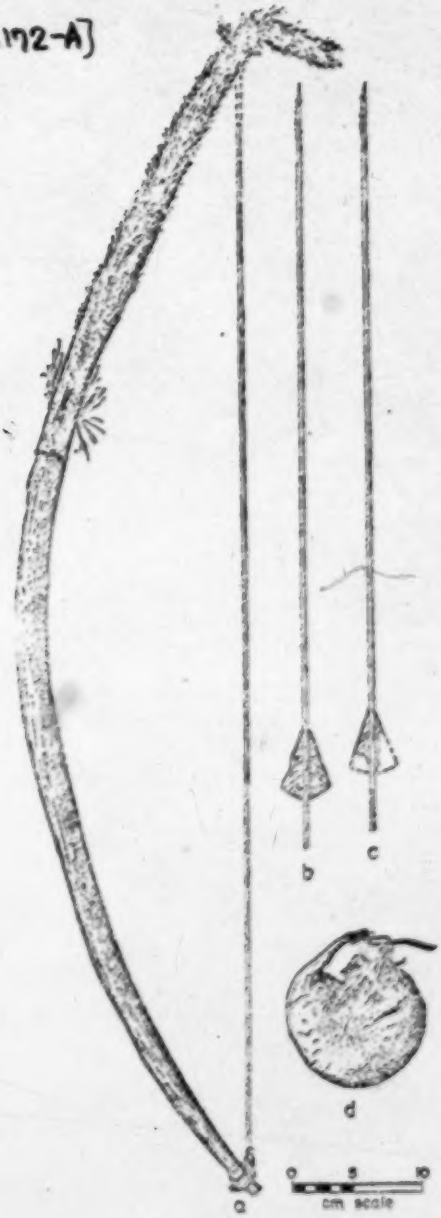

FIG. 8. Hunting equipment, archers, Oysha District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–c. Arrows. d. Wrist protector. Bows and arrows and wrist protectors of the archers seem, on the average, to be approximately 3 to 4 inches longer than those of the net hunters.

[184]

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.178-A]

000 would hasten the hour of birth. Pregnancy is
843 recognized by the cessation of the menses and the discoloration of the breasts. During pregnancy a woman is subject to various alimentary taboos, but otherwise lives her full, ordinary life, including the carrying of heavy loads of wood, carrying all household goods when moving camp, going in search of food, and other specific activities of women.

844 Customs attending childbirth vary from region to region, but Schebesta concludes that, although archers have no effective method of dealing with complications, the women normally give birth easily and without any particular preparation. Although this account does not
[184] specifically relate to the Efe archers, Schebesta (1948, 402) writes that, from his observations throughout the forest, certain generalizations
844 are possible. Women alone are admitted to
412 assist in the childbirth. The father cuts the umbilical cord with an arrowpoint, or, among some bands, with a sharp piece of bamboo. Before metal blades were available, Schebesta (1948, 404) says that there is evidence that bamboo knives or sharp leaves were used.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 182-C]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

764

Several early travelers mention burial customs among the Pygmies of the Ituri. Stuhlmann (1894) describes burial, with the corpse either stretched out or doubled up in a circular hole. Burrows (1898, 197), referring mainly to the Aka, says that, when a Pygmy dies, he is buried "and there is an end to him and his memory." He reports that there is no mourning and no memorials to mark the graves. Johnston (1902, 1904, 539) also mentions burial and says that important Mbuti are buried with supplies of food, tobacco, and weapons. [184]

According to Schebesta, although burial in some form or another, generally following the villager pattern, was in common usage at the time he wrote, the northern archers formerly abandoned the corpse, placing it with its back against a tree. If someone died inside a hut, the corpse was left there for about two weeks, until decomposition had well set in. Then, without burying the remains, the camp was abandoned.

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889-1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors. P 2 439 177 571 [114] P 2 [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 189-A]

000 his basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

114 Schebesta (1950) bases his detailed study of Mbuti religion on an eight-month sojourn among the southeast archers on his second visit to the Ituri. He also mentions other information collected during his two visits which is of relevance to the net hunters and the Kango farther west. Here we are concerned only with his archer material.

The Chthonic God

196 Among the Efe archers Schebesta found the
192 name Toré, applied to what he designates as
184 "*Buschgott*," or God of the Undergrowth. Other names frequently heard are Muri-muri, Mbali, Muku, Kalisia, Bi'i, Ba'atsi, Epilipili, Puchopucho, Matu, and Lodi. Like Toré, Muri-muri is found among all archers. Those to the north describe both Toré and Muri-muri as a small, Mbuti-like forest dweller, to meet whom is death because he is the destroyer of all. The central archers distinguish more clearly between Toré and Muri-muri. The latter, who is short in stature, is sometimes termed Toré *bo'ichu* (Costermans, 1938, Toré *bo'iko*). The former is,

[ARCHERS]

776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
76 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P. 189-B]

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to 776
a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of 177
Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager
notions of the demon of the forest (for the vil-
lager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans [114]
(1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take ac-
count of the essential difference between Toré
and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among
the central archers (above) but chose to ignore.

Schebesta believes that, though different 776
groups of archers give precedence to one name 82
or another, there is only one God of the Under- [184]
growth, and he is universally associated with
fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow
(which frequently brings death), dreams, as
well as with the good life of the hunter. The [825]
chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers,
in rapport with the sky and the moon, the
storm and lightning.

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, 776
whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The [171]
Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar
sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called
toré mo-ichu. They make their presence known
by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portend-
ing death, the other auguring good.

Cult Practices

776
A number of practices are associated with the 782
[p. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P. 190-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-C]

the Mbuti world. The other principle becomes 775
one of the forest sprites, the *befe*, living with the 776
earthly divinity, Toré, and assisting him in his [761]
lordship of the forest. Far from representing the dead, these sprites are regarded as knaves, to be fought with as such. In legends they are concerned principally with the hunt and frequently try to trick the Pygmy out of his prey to which, as *befe*, they have a right themselves. If they represented the souls of the dead, suggests Schebesta, the Mbuti would hardly be able to take the attitude toward them that they do.

Death may also be regarded by the Pygmy as 761
a punishment visited on man for one of three 773
sins. God forbade his children to look at him, but one of his daughters was overcome by curiosity, and death resulted. (This legend is actu- [184]
ally found more frequently among the net hunters than the archers.) God forbade his children to follow him on a certain path, but they became impatient and followed, and death resulted. God (Muri-muri) left firein the care of his mother, Matu; but a Pygmy stole it from her and she died from cold, so Muri-muri condemned all men to die. This curiosity, impatience, and greed are severally cted as causes of death.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[124] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-A]

Care of Body

515 According to the Putnams, the net hunters
302 take much greater care of their bodies than
[184] Schebesta's archers. They bathe frequently in the shallow streams near the camp, inspect each other carefully for bugs and lice (acquired inevitably when sleeping on the ground), and shave their heads for purposes of cleanliness rather than for esthetic satisfaction. Oil, when available, is rubbed into the skin. On ceremonial occasions, when they visit the Bantu village, palm oil is used, often mixed with *nkula* paste to add to its natural deep red color.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The only domestic animal, as with the arch-
184 ers, is the hunting dog, but this, although highly prized, is not so important to the net hunter as to the archer and tracker. Even among the larger net-hunting bands there may be only one or two dogs.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224
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The Pygmy has no use for traps or pits. These require too much work and are, by his standards, inefficient. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti can be classified as net hunters or non-net hunters or, conversely, as archers or non-archers. Putnam states that this adherence to either hunting technique depends on the prevailing villager custom, as the villagers supply the Pygmies with both nets and arrowheads. Later, he modified this view because the Pygmies are, in fact, making nets all the time by adding to and subtracting from their existing nets, as mentioned above. [Schebesta (1933) refers to the Pygmies as making their own nets.] This division into archers and net hunters is also significant with regard to social organization, says Putnam (1948, 328), since "The degree to which co-operation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band."

[C21]
[476]

[P. 202-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 202-C]

The net-hunting technique is similar to that of the *begbe* described by Schebesta (1952, 133 ff.) but with the notable absence of the leadership of an "elder." The decision as to when and where to hunt is made during the evening preceding the hunt, in conversation among all the hunters around the campfire. Whereas rain puts an end to both net hunting and tracking, lack of rain (causing dry leaves to crackle underfoot) is disadvantageous only to trackers. Like the beat hunt, net hunting relies on the *amount* of noise that can be made. 224 184

The net hunt calls for a minimum of seven nets, each married man owning a net. Unmarried men may also own nets if they have proved their prowess as hunters. It is usual in a normal camp of about 17 huts for the majority of men, women, and children to join the hunt. If the camp is large, some members stay behind and perform their various subsidiary chores such as the repair of nets, the manufacture of bark-cloth and twine, gathering, and so forth. The women joining the hunt carry their babies on their backs; boys and young men are armed with bows and arrows or spears; and the heads of families carry their nets and spears. Various 224 [422] [512] [854]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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FIG. 37. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epo'u District, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver, *bebe*. b. Bow, *mangi*. c–e. Arrows, *api*. f. Wrist protector, *arube*. The bows, arrows, and wrist protectors of the net hunters are notably shorter than those of the archers but are only of secondary importance in the food quest. The net hunters prefer poisoned arrows to those with metal tips (see Figs. 38–39). [192] [84]

[P 204-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.207-C]

411
284

FIG. 40. Spear, *ekenge*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Used throughout the Ituri, except possibly in parts of the north, primarily as a weapon of defense and secondarily for the hunting of large game, including elephant. Mbuti hafting. [84]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 208-A]

224 of elephant hunt known to him. The first makes use of a spear such as that described by Putnam, but the Pygmy, instead of thrusting it into the belly, creeps up behind the elephant and cuts the tendon above one of its heels. The elephant spins around, at which a second hunter, waiting for this action, leaps out of the bush and cuts the tendon of the other heel, thus bringing the elephant down, at which point it is easily killed —often by blinding it and then cutting off the trunk and leaving it to bleed to death. The second method makes use of a harpoon, and according to Schebesta, this is the method used among the net hunters. Here the harpoon is thrust into the belly, as described by Putnam, after which the Pygmy leaps clear. If thrust far enough, the elephant dies from lacerations caused by the dragging on the harpoon head as the attached cord snags on trees and undergrowth during the animal's flight.

[223] Men may individually kill monkeys and birds with their bows and arrows, supplementing their individual family food supply, and women out gathering may catch slow game with their 226 hands. Children, and occasionally women, fish and catch crabs. Fishing seems more highly de- [184] veloped among the net hunters than among Schebesta's archers, as the net hunters know of certain grubs that make good bait and can be found in the *kukumu* tree, and also understand the use of poison for catching fish.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

222
285

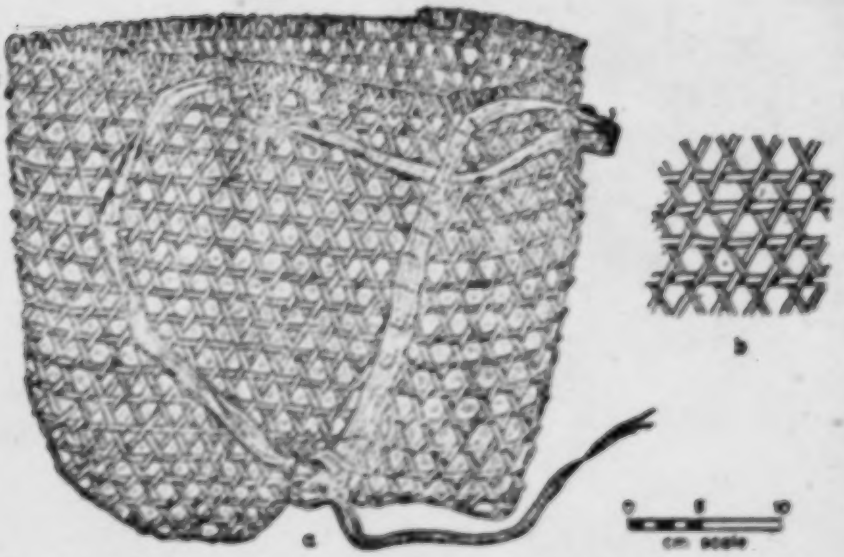


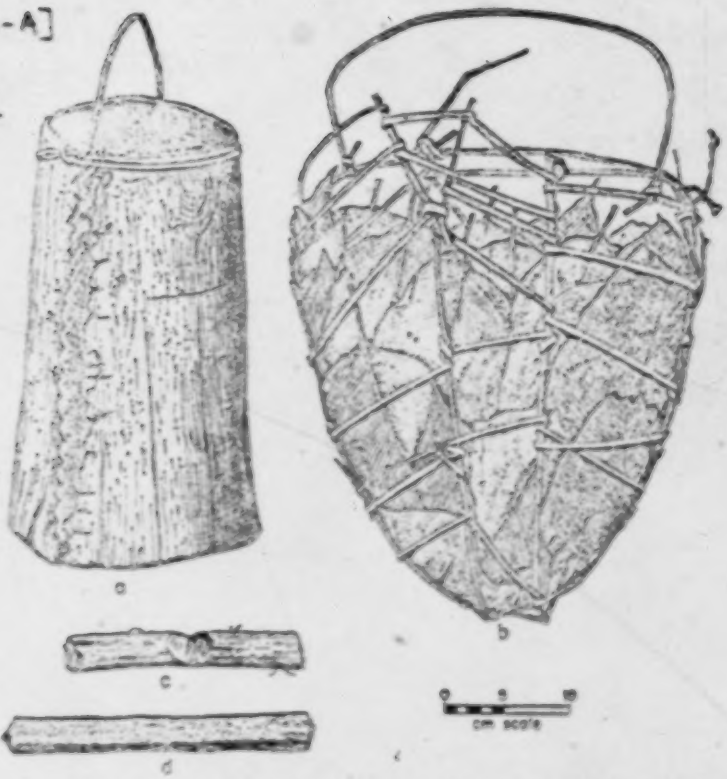
FIG. 41. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Basket, *as.* b. Details of construction. Open-mesh baskets, of strips [184] of dried vine, are made and used by Mbuti women among both net hunters and archers.

[P 208-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.210-A]

415
222



[634]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *olimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayahini*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *ngbengbe*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[184]
[22]
[533]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Honey Gathering

222 [221] [184] This is an important and festive season, coming toward the middle of the year. The method of collection is the same as that described by Schebesta (1952, 143–144) for the archers, and is undertaken by men. Women may accompany them, mainly to be sure of getting their share of honey. On such expeditions, and on any other occasion when they are going from one place to another, the women carry baskets on their backs and leave the right arm free to cut roofing leaves and gather mushrooms and roots and other vegetable foods in passing. In the left

[P 210-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]. [P 210-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 211 - A]

276 lagers, but the net hunters also make a pipe by twisting a bark strip into a cone, lining the end with fire-resistant leaves (Fig. 31b).

Food Restrictions

262 614 [184] Putnam's information on food restrictions differs from that given for the archers. While there are clan names and clan totems,[1] opinion among the net hunters themselves seems vague as to the exact extent of the restrictions arising from these totems. Probably, if the occasion arose (though the commonest totem animals in this particular group are the leopard and the chimpanzee, not important features of the local diet), a hungry Pygmy would turn a blind eye to the rules of totemism. Putnam says that these rules call for avoidance not only of the animal as well as of its flesh, but also of its favorite food. The animals are not regarded as representing the ancestors themselves but are associated with them in some myth.

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262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the [825] sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

TRADE

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by [777] Putnam on the present dependency of the net [784] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent val- [571] ues other than mutual satisfaction. But the villager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[777] [1] Very possibly of village origin.
[p. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]

alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of inter-village warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] 648 177 571

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[p. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

• 184 [P.212-A]
62 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[562] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[591] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *wèusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets. 512 22 [286] [287] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away: it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water. 364 514 [184] • 515 [481] [823]

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [84]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukumbi* (*sawa*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, [p 212-D] 535 [83] [372] [84]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 213-A]

535 the dance through fire, is reserved for special re-
[372] ligious occasions among the net hunters. Secular
[84] dancing takes place at any time of the day, any day, but nearly always there is dancing in the evening, and, when the moon gives enough light, the dance may continue through most of the night. Except for the religious dances, men, women, and children take part in the dancing together.

533 Song is even more important to the net hunters. There is not much information in the Putnam material, except that different types of song exist for men and for women and for different occasions, but from my own observations among this group there are, as with dance, clearly two major divisions. One is between secular and sacred, and the other is between songs proper to men and songs proper to women. Certain songs are sung only by members of the men's religious association, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusombo*), and those proper to members of the women's association, the *elima* (Schebesta: *elimo*). Then there are songs for hunting and songs for gathering. Each of these

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84

Conception and Childbirth

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also. 845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and 100 Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and adoption may also take place if a mother is without milk, or if one woman is childless and a baby is born to a friend or relative who already has a large family. 597 85

Twins

There is no information available, except that twins have been born and survived, and that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is known. It is believed that to separate them is to kill them. 845

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net hunters are given every care and attention. They are breast-fed until after they can walk and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of this group are much more prone than the archer women to leave their children with sisters or close friends for short periods. A great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and trying to climb trees before it can walk. When a camp is moved, an infant is carried either on the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide sling (Fig. 44) across the hip. 854 [184] [853]

The children, as they grow older, tend to play together, frequently away from the camp. 857

[NET HUNTERS]

Initiation: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's mate-
[184] rial and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta
[114] believes this to be a village custom (*elime*), but no details are available for comparison.
881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl,
[346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[30] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this
[302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At
[p. 216-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.217-A]

881 taught to the *elima* initiates. In one such dance
[535] witnessed by Mrs. Putnam, the girls held arrows and cut one another, and the women struck them with whips.

There is no information from the Putnam material as to any particular ceremony to mark the end of the *elima* (but see Turnbull, 1960a, 198 ff.).

Initiation: *nkumbi*

Putnam's notes on the initiation of boys concern a net-hunting band and are particularly interesting, as they describe an initiation that occurred in the Bira village of Kokonyange in 1935, 14 years before Schebesta witnessed an initiation among the same group. It is significant that Putnam makes no mention of *kari*
881 608 brotherhood between Pygmy and village boys.

For male initiation among the particular Epulu net hunters we are dealing with, I have only my own field notes,[1] and here again there is no mention of *kari* brotherhood (Turnbull, 1957). The full details of the ceremony do not concern us, as they vary from one village to another. It is important, however, to compare
• [184] the relationship between the net-hunting Mbuti and the Bira villagers with that between the archers and the Lese, with regard to initiation.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

264 Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as
[184] with the archers. In general it follows the same
[768] pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse.
[761] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke
[276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[p. 222-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 535 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *torl* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

[NET HUNTERS]
[p. 228-c]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [157]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628
between different bands of net hunters. Infor- 574
mal relationships are created through inter-
band visits. These visits may be made by indi-
vidual Pygmies or by whole families and may be
occasioned by the desire (particularly among
womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse,
or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by
trouble between the individual concerned and
his villager patron. The visits, according to
Putnam, may become permanent but normally
last only two or three months, which would
allow for one or two changes of camp. These vis- [584]
its are important with respect to the practice of [613]
exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which [184]
may amount to exogamy of the hunting band,
though among the net hunters less frequently
than among the archers) as an important way
of allowing marriageable couples to meet and
become known to each other's families.

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628
form a single hunting unit. Under these circum- 476
stances each sets up separate but adjoining 361
camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this
association continues, the camps are moved
closer to each other and finally become part of
the same camp. In one of the final stages of the
process of fusion, the two groups build their
huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct
unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a [578]
gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [321]

[P. 228-D]

Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

religious association (*molimo*) and of the women's religious association (*elima*); songs of the men's main economic activity (hunting) and of the women's (gathering). It is perhaps not quite justifiable to make the subdivision according to sex, as, in hunting and gathering among the net hunters, both sexes hunt. Most of the gathering songs concern honey gathering which is primarily a male occupation. Nor, in fact, does the classification into sacred and secular stand up to full scrutiny, as, in a sense, all songs are sacred as all are related to forest activities and the forest itself is sacred (pp. 258–259). 533 [178]

Unlike the archers, the net-hunting Mbuti make extremely little use of musical instruments of any kind, except for the resonant sticks used in accompaniment to their forest songs. For one thing, a truly nomadic group with only the most basic means of locomotion and transport, namely, the human body, can hardly afford to accumulate possessions beyond the absolute necessities—even less so with bulky nets as an additional item to be carried when camp is moved. Some net hunters know how to make and play notched end-blown flutes, with even greater skill and precision than the neighboring villagers, but they are rarely made. A *lukembi* (*sanza*) is the only instrument 534 [84]. [48]

[P. 234 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

531 This account of music among the villagers in
191 the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each
533 one of these four points. Though the music of
191 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifically considered, it appears from all the known
• 184 material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the
533 Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme
534 percussive effects are obtained by resonant
184 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted,
[191] there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of
his Sua material are net hunters or archers.
But, except for his remarks on the Kango and
"village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the
extreme west of the Ituri forest, he seems to
have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti.
His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184]
greatly from that for the archers. The names 176
given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti,
Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also
loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neigh-
boring villagers. According to Schebesta,
Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and
patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [224]
owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benev-
olent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt,
guiding their weapons and assisting the beat,
preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187]
is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes
known to the elder, telling the hunter where to
find game.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P-237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788
involves them in any significant change of 182
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224] hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184] steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 240-A]

789 tree limb on top of a hut. Such contests evoke a
• [184] different response, it seems, among the archers who actively influence the outcome of any critical situation by the use of their *megbe*, often by their *segbe* pipes. The magic described by the Putnams is essentially sympathetic and does not involve any belief in spiritual assis-
789 tance. Thus stones may not be dropped in the
821 water, or they will cause rain; a bright fire should be smothered until it is a mere glow during a storm, lest it attract the lightning (according to one informant) or in order to drive the lightning away (according to another, in the same discussion). All the magic that Putnam observed among the net hunters was connected with the weather and the prevention of rain, though he does not deny the possibility that magic might be used to stop the rain, once begun.

789 Mrs. Putnam describes a number of magical
224 practices, most of which are connected with either rain or the hunt. The latter simply involve the use of villager witch doctors to perform a ceremony to improve the hunting. The ceremony is never conducted by a Pygmy, nor is it clear on whose initiative it is usually per-

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 754 22 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 754 177 This belief seems associated with death and with people who are near to that particular crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 114 [84] The Putnam material does not support any theory of a celestial God such as that described by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

ENVIRONMENT

P 182 184 The importance of environment in this particular study cannot be overestimated. The forest environment throughout the Ituri is much the same, so it cannot be held responsible for such differences as we may find between one Mbuti group and another. Such differences seem more likely to be due to the human environment, that is to say, varying degrees of Pygmy association with different villager tribes.

P 182 The forest environment is important, however, in favoring the specific way of life followed by the nomadic hunting-and-gathering Mbuti communities. That it certainly does not compel Z [182] this mode of existence is witnessed by the very different and equally successful adjustment made to it by the other major group of forest P 182 inhabitants—the villagers. But by enabling the 177 Mbuti to continue their nomadic way with comparative ease and to their almost entire satisfaction, the forest enables them to preserve their independence in the face of technologically superior and politically more organized villager opposition. By virtue of their particular response to the forest, the Mbuti retain their individuality socially, economically, politically, and intellectually.

P Z 182 The environmental factor sharply divides the forest people (Mbuti) from the non-forest people (villagers)—the true forest hunting-and-

[P 243-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 243-C]

gathering economy of the former from the adapted forest cultivation of the latter. Perhaps, above all, it distinguishes the values of the forest people from those of the villager invaders from the plains. The Mbuti adapt themselves to their environment; the villagers adapt the environment to their own way of life in so far as they can, compromising when they cannot. It is not difficult to see the possible psychological implications of this attitudinal difference and the profound difference in religious and social values that either rise from it or are strengthened by it. In the opposition between forest values and non-forest values we find the highest degree of opposition between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors.

P 182
P 181
182

THE SOCIAL UNIT

P 184 •

At this elementary point in our survey of Mbuti society, we begin to find significant structural differences between one group and another. These differences are not related to linguistic differences. Moreover, we find that, with the possible exception of the archers described by Schebesta, the Mbuti are polyglots.

P 184
187

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 TO4 Pygmies TO4
Mbuti

While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

[P. 243-D]

[P 244-A]

184 remain in camp to guard it and perform other
224 duties. When the band falls below seven fami-
621 lies, it can no longer exist. Similarly, when it
182 rises above a certain number (between 20 and
30) it becomes too unwieldy to function as a single hunting unit and must, of necessity, split. Under these circumstances a compromise is reached, and very conveniently so, by the hunting from a forest camp by one section of the band, while the other section lives a more or less parasitical life near the village.

184 The composition of the bands of archers and
621 net hunters seems to be similar, though Putnam lays more emphasis on the presence of visiting families. The archers live in considerably smaller bands, some interconnected through kinship ties and also allegedly through common allegiance to a villager lineage. In the larger net-hunting band there may very likely be no single villager attachment.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters demonstrates a greater adaptation to the forest environment, and their material culture is consistent with the fact that they are more truly
[182] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such as the mortars and drums mentioned by Schebesta could not be maintained by a nomadic band unless it was always within easy reach of the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti into archers and net hunters, three factors in particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods described (including the *legbi* beat of the archers), produces both the surest and the largest supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[199] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[436] erally poor visibility, may account in part for the greater economic dependence of the archer bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest; and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[p. 244-3]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 244-C]

mutually dependent and equally important role in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Archery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, with the cooperation of two or three men. It is not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close cooperation and lack of specialization, is associated with a more egalitarian political system than that of the archers. While Schebesta described an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful lineage heads, Putnam vigorously denies the existence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

A fourth factor might be added: While the 184 •
net hunt quickly scares animals away from the 182
area around the hunting camp, necessitating 224
frequent changes of site, the archery technique 361
neither depletes the game so quickly nor
frightens it away. An archer band can therefore
remain confined to a smaller area, near the
village, while the net hunters sometimes must
wander several days' march away from their
patrons. The more nomadic group also has [262]
constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at
its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is
apparently felt by the more settled archers, for
plantation products.

Thus at once we can see the possible eco- 184
nomic, social, and political implications of the 184
difference in hunting technique and how these 224
implications follow in fact.

Gathering occupies a similar position of 222
social and economic importance in each type of 184
community. It is regarded primarily as the 462
work of women, though, wherever it calls for
tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among
[P 244-D]

[P 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
221 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[482] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P 245-B]

[p.245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.) [593]
does not deny the authority of the father in the
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

[P.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more fre-
551 quently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the archers and the net hunters concerns the initiation of boys. As this is treated more fully below (p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between Pygmy and villager initiates among the net hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places great importance on this pact for his archers, probably because of his insistence (1952, 281) on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an initiation into the religious association of *toré* for both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by Costermans (1938) for the archers and is contradicted by my own experience among the net hunters. In any case, if there is a difference between the two groups over the significance of *nkumbi* initiation (and it may well be only a difference of interpretation rather than of fact), it does not seem directly related to any difference in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with ritual connections, such difference as exists in the two accounts seems to be associated more directly with prevailing differences in villager custom rather than with any inherent differences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the nature and function of the closed associations, are more properly the subject of discussion of the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the difference between net hunters and archers, which is our main concern here.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 578 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p. 247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

Little can be said of inter-band relationships 628
as there are so few data. Neither type of band 476
has any need to cooperate with neighboring 224
bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occa- 184
sions when there is a particular profusion of
game. Among the archers joint hunting would
be necessary in order to make use of the *begbe*
beating technique. Among net hunters two or
more bands might combine either when the in-
dividual bands fall below economic level or
when a particular profusion of game requires
more nets than are possessed by the single band.
With the net hunters such association could be-
come permanent, whereas with the archers it
would never be necessary as the band is of such
small optimum size.

The difference between the archers and the 184
net hunters in their relationship with the vil- 182
lager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Put- 224
nam, is one of both degree and kind. We have 439
seen that with their less efficient hunting tech-
nique the archers must rely more on vegetable
products, and how, with the women's sphere
limited to gathering, the women have more time
and opportunity for gathering from the villager
plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy
[P 247-D]

[P 248 - A]

184 nature of the hunt also makes possible a more
182 permanent settlement near the village. The
224 trade relationship among the archers, then, as-
439 sumes greater importance and is more formalized. Schebesta further understands it as being an inter-lineage relationship. Putnam, while acknowledging its importance also for the net hunters, says that it is interfamilial and can be broken by either side. The net-hunting technique makes more game available for trade, so there is less demand by villagers upon the net hunters than by the Lese of the archers. The necessity of a more strictly nomadic life also militates against permanent and continuous attachment between the net-hunting Mbuti and any one villager "master."

128 Of the legal system no more can be added to the section dealing with authority and leadership. There are simply not enough data even for comparison of the concepts of property and ownership between the two groups.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold equally well among the archers. It is simply one [121] of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

121 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [575] important question when he questions Sche- [192] besta's assertion that the *toré* society is an in- [176] tegral part of the religious system of the archers and that Tore´ is applicable as a term for God.

[P. 248-B]

Schebesta (1950, 13) insists that there is a 184 cultural unity among the Ituri Mbuti, which 114 he believes is clearly visible in their magico-religious system. He may well be right. Probably he is, but his method of comparing terminological usage among a number of different Mbuti bands as though he were dealing with self-evident facts, while relying frequently on casual information, does little to support his theories. When dealing with cult practices, he is more concerned with the origin of a particular practice than with its sociological significance. He accepts statements and even legends at their face value and builds his elaborate theories on this flimsy foundation.

In trying to draw any useful comparison be- 184 tween the material on the archers and that for 121 the net hunters, we are constantly confronted with the question of origin. Is this or that custom or ritual of villager origin? If so, how far [177] has it been adapted and what significance has it? The latter question is more important for the social anthropologist than the former and is precisely the question we must ask. We are concerned not with the origin of any particular ritual but rather with its significance and its relationship to other practices in a system of related institutions. Thus when we deal with religious 000
[P 248-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-
439 hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic exis-
B21 tence and the loose structure of band composition, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 255-c]
shows the extent to which these particular 000
Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully P
integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien 621
societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well- 648
knit bands, such as may be found among the 179
archers described by Schebesta, may find it [184].
possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic Z
relationship with the villagers, but not so an [563]
active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind
of relationship must be established because of
the inevitability of contact. As the smaller,
more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies
must make the move to fit into the larger, looser
group. But there is no question of absorption;
the smaller group preserves its identity. The
nkumbi, and participation in or adoption of
other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti
with an opportunity both for establishing a
place in villager society and for asserting their
independent set of values by opposition. The P
antagonism that remains and is even heightened Z
by this opposition is smoothed over to some [439]
extent by the secondary mechanism by which
the two groups attempt to express their rela-
tionship-mutal trade

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must determine both their function and their meaning, to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers. 182 53

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably the major problem that arises from the survey. We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical grounds for the difference between the relationship of the archers to their villager neighbors and that of the more nomadic net hunters to 177 439 177 439 184

[P. 273- D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.274-A]

177 theirs. There is also evidence, but in regrettably
439 little detail, that certain hunting bands main-
.184 tain a client-patron relationship by specializing in elephant hunting, bringing the tusks to the villagers, on whom they rely for all vegetable products and on the edge of whose villages they live in permanent camps.

177 However, no matter how great or little the degree of dependence on the villagers, the Mbuti for whom we have any information all seem to maintain a distinct individuality in opposition to the villagers, despite their apparent adoption of villager institutions and even of [881] villager language. With regard to the adoption of villager customs, the 1954 *nkumbi* shows the degree to which this adoption may be a mere superficial conformity and may indeed conceal a formal rejection of villager values. A very careful study should be made of all such institutions held in common, if not practiced jointly.

177 It is indeed at this level that we seem to find
184 some excuse for referring to the Ituri Mbuti as a single people rather than as consisting of a number of widely scattered, semi-independent

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 184 hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the P [575] [114] difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *toré* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P 829 648 186 Z 563 The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net [P. 274-8]

PLATE 29[1]

A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

361 184 571 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 602 887 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

1, /Plate 29' appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning festivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migrations, living in every camp it established during the course of some fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it; on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

hour before dawn, then be up at dawn in preparation for the hunt. 123
This much I could manage, but whereas during the day individual men could stretch out and snatch an hour or two of sleep whenever they felt like it, I never had the chance to feel the same freedom. Acts associated with the *molimo*, such as the ritual gathering of food from every hut, continued throughout the day and I did not wish to miss anything new that might happen.

However, with all its drawbacks (and perhaps the physical and mental strain are not the least) the technique seems in this instance to have been justified by the results.

RESULTS

Both the general and the particular objectives were answered to 121
some extent during the course of the field work. The general form and structure of the Mbuti hunting band became evident, as did certain differentiations between the structure of the archers and that of the net-hunters. Further, certain principles were found that accounted for the cohesion of the band within itself, while at the same time enabling the band to present to the villagers a structure so fluid that any formal relationship of the kind envisaged by the villagers was impossible. Perhaps it is as well to point out here that the kinship system (or lack of it) that characterizes the Mbuti band today is not necessarily representative of what it was yesterday; indeed it may well be that the current ambivalence is in itself a response to the attempts of the patrilineal village society to enforce control through the myth of hereditary unilineal relationships. The origin does not concern us here, only the system as it exists in the present context.

The structural differences between archers and net-hunters are not 121
perhaps as wide as might have been supposed, but before any final 184
conclusions can be drawn there is great need for a detailed study to be made among the archers. Certain differences in behavior are shown, however, to achieve the same structural ends—for instance the process of fission and fusion, where the net-hunters and the archers behave in diametrically opposed cyclic patterns but to the same structural end.

The detailed study of the Epulu net-hunters was backed by suf- 121
ficient field work among other net-hunting bands to enable us to gen- 128
eralize with reasonable safety. Where generalization is not possible, I cite the specific, and where it is possible but not with absolute cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

121 tainty, then I cite supporting evidence; otherwise it may be taken
[128] that generalization for all net-hunters is considered valid. In point of fact there seem to be few differences of structural interest.

[184] Enough work was done among archer bands to get some idea of the extent and nature of the structural differences to be expected between them and the net-hunters, but again I must emphasize the considered need for further studies, one of which should include a detailed study of an archer band over a similar period and with similar intensity, and another of which should tackle the Mbuti/Villager relationship from the village point of view. Finally, there is need for detailed studies of the various local village tribes, at which point those who are interested may begin to sort out which elements of the present Mbuti culture may be considered as original, and which as borrowed.

121 The over-all picture is one of a society where the lack of formal
105 structure is so evident that one wonders why there is not complete disintegration. There are not only no chiefs or councils of elders, but no ritual specialists, and no lineage system that in any way contributes directly to order and cohesion. There is no legal system, and no body of belief in supernatural sanctions. The secret begins to reveal itself when you look at the band one day, to see what it really *is*, and look at it the next day and find it is something else.

As suggested above, the constant state of flux that characterizes the Mbuti band may be in response to the attempts of the villager cultivators to assert a formal relationship with it. The lack of chiefs and the lack of priests and the lack of unilineal descent system certainly prevent the formation of political, ritual or domestic ties, and as stated elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) the economic relationship is
[181] one of mutual convenience rather than of dependency. What emerges that seems to be of particular significance is the central theme of the forest, a theme that not only orders the hunting and gathering world of the Mbuti, but also divides them from the world of the villagers as if dividing the sacred from the profane.

121 If social flux is what prevents the formation of a relationship that
177 would necessarily involve the subordination of the Mbuti to the vil-
18 lagers, the central value of the forest is what maintains internal stability and cohesion, at the same time determining the relationship of opposition with the outside world. This opposition in fact creates a kind of voluntary indigenous system of apartheid, where two peoples live side by side, exploiting the same environment in totally dif-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

			Male Members		Female Members	
621 614 613	Camp 3a – in	26 huts, there were	13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
	3b –	22	10	5	10	6
	3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

			Male Members		Female Members	
	Camp 3d – in	9 huts, there were	5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
	3e –	9	5	3	6	3
	3f –	6	4	4	4	3
	3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 613 361 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)^A indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m). 621 114 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe- [614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

A [see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	Members Male	Members Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] [361] [84]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 578

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224] other factor.
[184]

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

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agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

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621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always pat-
[611] rilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band com-
613 position be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is com-
• 184 parable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
[224] groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
621 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
613 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
174 attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
621 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

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P 439 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager C 439 may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into 608 agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *karé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the 439 Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: *177 they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *karé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

P Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and 439 integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. 621 It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even 571 necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the C exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be [439] taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[2]

P In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti 439 upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of 433 any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such *184 exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing 224 on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

C [648] [2] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti; the offering of the first fruits of a new plantation is another.

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Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561
433

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

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Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epulu	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Biasiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

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ARCHERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

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Area	Portion of body	Given to
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

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224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[614] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

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262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

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Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

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village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *asumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 564 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 564 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P *177 than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

754 [482] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.246]

CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

114 771 In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

*177 • 184 771 Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

771 181 822 813 This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
[621] [628] posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as
776 *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any
778 different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that
184 the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré*, *e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

[P.276-F]

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[184]

32. Masisi stops on his way to the hunt to try for a monkey in the treetops. For net-hunters the bow and arrow is only an incidental means of food-getting. As seen here, poisoned arrows are preferred to those with metal tips provided by the villagers.

224
411
[882]

33. Two youths, armed with spears, carry their fathers' hunting nets. They will not have nets of their own until they are married but may, on occasion, take the place of their fathers on the hunt.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major 177
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [161]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [174]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Sche- [177]
besta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three [411]
families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 177 166
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
• [184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
522 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 574 P 115 123 this was not the point, and he finally just rolled over in his blanket, muttering that sometimes he thought Europeans were as crazy as villagers.

For the next few days we visited Kachui's plantations and talked with such Pygmies as we found there. But it was impossible to shake off the chief's sons, who stuck to us like leeches. As a result I could get no response at all; everything that the Pygmies said was said to impress the villagers. The only useful information was obtained by Kenge, who got into the habit of slipping away while I was "holding court," as he called it, and talking to his fellow Pygmies well out of earshot.

C 563 P 179 184 One thing was plain, however, and that was that no matter how powerful Kachui was—and it was certainly within his power to have any Pygmies put in jail and flogged—he was no match for the people of the forest. Kenge learned that the main group had been away for over six months and had no intention of returning yet. They were a long way off and came close to the village only when they wanted to raid the plantations. Even while we were there Kachui's sons tried to find out where the rest of the Pygmies were, but everyone protested complete ignorance.

C 648 186 622 563 123 P 123 A few days at Bafwakoa were more than enough. With Kachui lying in wait the Pygmies were not likely to tell us where their companions were, and even if they did Kachui was not likely to let us out of sight. He became un-co-operative when I asked to look at the tribunal records, for which I had official permission. He was forced into admitting that he did not consider the Pygmies real people, and therefore they had no right to have cases tried in the tribunal. He said that any complaints by the villagers against Pygmies C [592] were heard by him; he judged them himself and no records were kept. He made it quite plain that the judgment always went in favor of the villager. Kenge then disgraced himself by asking what happened if a Pygmy brought a complaint against a villager. Kachui

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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answered abruptly, "Pygmies have no right to complain." It was obviously time to go elsewhere.

On leaving Bafwakoa we headed down a little track that led to the banks of theIturi River. Across the river lay the territory of the BoMbo and BaBali tribes, both with unsavory reputations for cannibalism, among other things. The ferry was waiting on our side of the river—a series of huge canoes, each about thirty feet long, held together by a platform lashed across the center, just wide enough and long enough to take a truck or two small cars.

The men who operated the ferry were BaNdaka, and they came lazily down to the river from their village. They climbed into the ends of their canoes and cast off, each taking hold of a long stout pole. As we drifted out, the leader took his pole and struck it on the bottom of his canoe. It sounded like a great signal drum being beaten, and the echo rolled up and down the river with the force of thunder. The other men imitated their leader, then began poling slowly across, singing and chanting. The river at that point must be nearly a mile across, thickly forested down to the water's edge on each bank. It was vast and lonely. About an hour's walk from the far side is the spot where Stanley stood and watched the confluence of the two waterways, the Ituri and the Lenda, and remarked that this was one of the most beautiful sights in the whole of the Dark Continent. We went and stood on the same spot as the sun was setting, and I felt that this indeed was the heart of Africa.

Our stay among the BoMbo and BaBali was not much more fruitful than that with Kachui from the point of view of meeting or learning anything about the local Pygmies. The chiefs, Isiaka and Lukamba, both had the same complaints to make—they simply could not control their Pygmies.

"How can we control them?" Isiaka said. "It is their forest, and they can hide from us whenever they want to. They are worthless people. They only come to the village when they want to steal."

THE FOREST PEOPLE

C 563 P 177 184 We did meet some Pygmies, however, and they laughed and told us that no Pygmy would ever come near Isiaka; there were plenty of other villagers who gave them much more in return for their meat, while Isiaka always expected them to work on his plantations for nothing. This, in fact, was the picture we got wherever we stopped. The villagers throughout the forest complained bitterly about the Pygmies, saying, "They eat us up until we are ready to die"—meaning that the Pygmies take from them but give little in return.

C [186]

P C 177 439 C 829 It was not until we reached the western limits of the forest and turned north that we really had any luck. Some miles east of Wamba we left the car and followed a track through the forest. At the end of a full day we arrived at a series of old established villages of the Mabudo tribe. These people had a much more realistic attitude toward the Pygmies and consequently got along much better with them. They talked freely and willingly. They said that, after all, the Pygmies had been in the forest long before the Mabudo arrived, so they had the right to live as they wished. If they preferred to stay in the forest and live like animals, that was their concern, but if they wanted to come to the villages and work for the Mabudo, that was fine. At the time of harvest the villagers all gave gifts of the first fruits to the local Pygmies, because, as they said, it was their land. And any time the Pygmies were near a Mabudo village they invariably brought in gifts of meat or honey.

P 123 There were a few Pygmies in one of the villages when we arrived, and after a couple of days they agreed to take us out to one of the hunting camps. Kenge had done some talking to them on the side, assuring them that I was not really like a villager, but just like them, a "*miki nde ndura*"—son of the forest. When he introduced me to them he proudly pointed to the marks on my forehead that proclaimed me an adult. "The villagers call him Mulefu, because he is

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was 361
that they would be independent because they would no longer have 829
to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village 177
foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of 152
all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the 177
forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, 178
to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few 185
days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always hap- [533]
pened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we 533
heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the 825
Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies 222
the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, dif- 262
ferent kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*.

P 628 [574]

P [582] [224]

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

P Z 648 182 Z [563]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-A]

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the
428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

421 It seems, first, that the forest and both its animal and vegetable produce are considered by
[186] the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien
[621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the
[602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them-
[614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached them-selves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
595 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246-B]

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Intermarriage

P 144 582 As pointed out above, this traffic is one-way. There are no records of Pygmy men taking villager wives, nor any acknowledged instances Z 144 of Pygmy men begetting children by villager 523 mistresses. Blood counts (Schebesta, 1938, 111), 582 however, reveal a small proportion of villager influence in hunting communities, which may or may not be accounted for by the return of the half-breed offspring from the village to the P Z forest. Normally the children of such unions are [851] brought up as villagers. The father will, to the best of his ability, prevent children by his Pygmy wife from returning to the forest, and apparently the Pygmies themselves regard such children as villagers.

Z P 582 There are not enough data on individual intermarriage for us to determine how far this one-way tendency is a form of hypergamy. It may, in fact, simply be the result of the practical consideration that no villager woman could fulfill the requirements of a woman and wife in a Pygmy hunting camp. Even if the latter is the P case, it does not answer the question as to why 582 a Pygmy girl should marry a villager. Unfor- 186 tunately, there is no evidence that gives us even the hint of an answer. There is certainly no

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[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

[p. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association.

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

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This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the *nkumbi* or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the *nkumbi* to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

In the 1954 *nkumbi* there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the *nkumbi* should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *gama* (members of the *nkumbi*) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P 252-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.253-A]
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lagers when it suited them to do so. In the dispute over the visit of the *ganza* to the forest hunting camp, the villagers were quite unable to enforce their will or even to enforce the compromise they finally effected with the Mbuti. The villagers themselves made no major decisions concerning the arrangement or carrying out of the *nkumbi* without at least discussing the matter with the Pygmy fathers. No difference was observable in the preparations or the ceremony that could be attributed to the fact that Mbuti only were being initiated.

The account given shows not only the extent to which the villagers were unable to control the *ganza*, but also the thoroughness with which they attempted to dominate the initiation. Despite the fact that the *ganza* were entirely Pygmy, for the villagers the *nkumbi* was nonetheless sacred. They were interested in the *nkumbi* itself rather than in the individuals participating. Whether or not the villagers thought that by initiating the Mbuti they were subjecting them to tribal and supernatural authority is uncertain, though Schebesta (1952, 278; 1948, chap. 7) so suggests. The evidence considered here suggests that the villagers not only lacked control over the Pygmy *ganza*, but were not particularly rigorous in maintaining it, except in so far as any desecration of the initiation camp or the *nkumbi* itself was concerned. It seems that the villager was primarily interested in the *nkumbi* as a tribal festival; if any subordination of the Pygmies took place, it was incidental.

177 Similarly any subordination on the part of
• 186 the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant,
881 though they lost no opportunity for maintaining their individuality when their feelings clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the latter, they had no interest in the *nkumbi* as such. This lack of interest was manifest from the outset, when the village was in a state of festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony, and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack of interest was frequently manifest as total disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such touch and food taboos as were imposed by villager custom, and the general burlesquing among the *ganza* as described in the account, there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti band—notably the women and children. The
[857] young children in their forest camp found a new game to play. They were the *ganza*, imitating all
[P 253-B]

[P. 253-C]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, including some of the ordeals. They not only knew the initiation songs, but were taught them by their mothers, who even more than their uninitiated male children were supposed to be in complete ignorance of such matters. 177 186 881 [857]

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the instructors did not come with them, and the *ganza* had only occasional visits from one villager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting camp. There were no ordeals during this time, no singing except when visited by the solitary villager, and no other form of instruction by the Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to be, for both children and the adult members of the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors of the initiation school. 177 881 [527]

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, they could scarcely avoid respecting the physical discipline imposed by the various ordeals they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic 177 861 881

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If we look at the situation in reverse, the fact that the Mbuti simultaneously participate in the *nkumbi* and reject its significance indicates the instability of their relationship with the villagers. The villagers would undoubtedly like to assert their superiority but are unable to maintain effective control over the nomadic Mbuti, either as individuals or in bands, during the *nkumbi* or at any other time. The *nkumbi*, however, does at least place the villagers in an overt position of dominance. On the other hand, the Mbuti would like to be completely free from subordination to the villagers, yet they find it as necessary to submit to initiation in villager society as the villagers find it necessary to accept them as candidates. The *nkumbi* undoubtedly gives the villagers an opportunity to drive the first blow in asserting their superiority over the Mbuti, but at the same time it gives the Pygmy status, as well as economic benefits, in any village throughout the region. It also strengthens his own identity as a Pygmy by enabling him to reject the villager system of values in mimetic burlesque. The 1954 *nkumbi* shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

[P. 255-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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In the final section we consider some legends collected by Anne Putnam among these same Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*. 128 186 539

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

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In order to understand the Pygmy values more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti rejection of villager values is effectively valid and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by four of the more important hunters belonging to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters [181] [186] [177] 539 114

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The Mbuti, as might be imagined, tell it differently.

The Mbuti were out hunting termites because, as you know, termites are good to eat. They built their houses. When night arrived the wives cooked food for their husbands. Then they all went to sleep. But in the middle of the night they heard a cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" "What is that?" said one Pygmy. "It is coming from over there!" cried another, pointing into the Forest. "Yes, it is a great noise coming from the old *liboyo* tree!" shouted a third. "We should go and see what it is!" They took their spears and crept up to the old *liboyo* tree. There they found a large hole in the ground, and they thought they could see faces peering up at them. But it was very dark, and they were afraid to go too close, so they returned to their camp.

"Tomorrow we shall go and see what it is all about," they said. "We shall go and we shall smoke it out of the hole, whatever it is."

The next morning they went back to the *liboyo* tree, carrying bundles of sticks and some fire wrapped up in *mongongo* leaves. They put the fire to the wood and started filling the hole with smoke. Then they heard voices calling out from the hole: "I'm dying, I'm dying! Oh, let me out, Brother, I'm dying!"

The Pygmies stopped the smoke and hurried to

[P. 262- B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P 262-C]

help whatever it was out of the hole, and out came people—Real People—much bigger than themselves, holding their heads and crying. They were villagers. "Where do you come from?" asked the Pygmies. "We don't know!" answered the Real People. "We fell into the hole by the old *liboyo* tree and then you started filling it with smoke. We should have died if you had not helped us out."

P 539 177 186

Z 539 177

The Pygmies took the Real People with them, back to their termite camp, saying: "Come back with us to our termite camp. Now we shall all live together; there will be no fighting between us. You will be the Real People, truly, truly; you will be the Real People, truly."

Basi

But the Mbuti have their own notions as to the origin of the "Real People." This legend characterizes their attitude to the villager—an attitude they never express in the presence of the villager, finding it more profitable to let the villagers continue to think that even the Mbuti themselves recognize the great superiority of the "Real People."

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Mbuti

How the Real People Began[1]

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186.

In the old days there was a Savage. This Savage had a big house. She was a strange-looking woman. Not only was she tall and skinny and bony, but she had a mouth like a hippopotamus, and her stomach was enormous and her body covered with arrows. In the even older days she had had two husbands, but now both were dead. She said: "Now I'm all alone; everyone has left my village. But I'll get even. Anyone that comes by, I'll eat them."

And that is how the trouble started. She had a medicine that she put out to attract people, and when they came by she would say: "This is my house." If they became frightened and went away, her medicine brought them back. And always, she ate them. She ate them whole. She ate them one after another. Her stomach got larger and larger.

Then all the people she had eaten whole had babies and she soon had a flourishing village. She did not eat these people. They built lots of houses.

Bati

The remaining three legends in this section explain how the Pygmies got fire, how the "Real People" tricked them out of the plantains they discovered (which is why the Pygmies have none), and, finally, how war began between Pygmies and villagers. Again the villagers are at fault. A Pygmy is tapping away in a tree, chopping out some honey, and some villagers

[1] As told by a Pygmy.

[P. 262-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.263-A]

539 passing by hear the noise and shoot at it with
• 186 an arrow. But even though wounded, the clever Pygmy remains very still, so the villagers think they must have been mistaken and go on. Then the Pygmy cuts them off and lies in wait and kills one of them as they come to him. And that began the war.

2. Legends Dealing with Social Relations

539 In this group we have a few legends telling
593 of the good mother (who protects her daughter
577 against nasty villagers) and the good father (who looks after his son when out hunting); the good sister (who protects her baby brother against a *satani*, a forest spirit); and the good brother (who does not quarrel with his brothers).

539 Social behavior is extolled in a similarly pos-
577 itive vein. Marriage and divorce, cooperative effort in the food quest, war and feud, hospitality to strangers—these are common topics, treated by telling how the reasonable Pygmy behaves in any of these situations. The remainder of the legends in this group deal with virtue and vice.

[P.264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539
associated with smallness. In several legends 828
the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825
respect) of small animals over large. It is not
difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal [186].
as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539
connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828
are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577
of this quality, which automatically associates 888
them more closely with the animal and spiritual

539 "We'll fight him." One of the chimpanzees grabbed
825 at the Pygmy, but meanwhile the Pygmy had taken up his spear. The Pygmy killed the chimpanzee. The others said, "What did the Pygmy kill our brother with?" And one answered, "It seemed to be with the root of a tree." So another of the chimpanzees gathered up the roots of the trees and threw them at the Pygmy. The Pygmy killed him with his spear. The remaining chimpanzees sat down and tried to puzzle this out. One of them searched all round and found the spear. He took it and killed the Pygmy. The chimpanzees then gathered some leaves and put them over the Pygmy. They all left.

The Pygmy's brother went to look for him. He found him dead, covered with leaves. He said, "What could have happened? Who killed my brother?"

Basi

539 Leopards and turtles are tricky animals that
825 teach the Pygmy much of his cleverness in leg-
828 end. They appear frequently, and it is always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed. But here we consider another aspect of these
539 animal tales. Not only is it always their clever-
825 ness and trickery that are stressed, thus auto-
828 matically associating them with the supernatural, if only indirectly, but they are often
186 identified with villagers. In talking of villagers, in legend, more often than not the Pygmy gives them animal form. The villager is very defi-

[P. 266-8]

[p. 266-c]

nitely not included on the human side of the 539
opposition between the animal and human 825
worlds (the villager is often associated with an 186.
excess of cleverness). A frequently heard motif [828]
is for a Pygmy to wound an animal with a spear or an arrow. The animal escapes, carrying away the weapon. Later, the Pygmy discovers that weapon, covered with blood, hidden in the house of some Bira villager. The Pygmy then knows that he had, in fact, wounded a villager who had changed into an animal.

The collection includes one very similar legend in which exactly the same motif is used, accounting for enmity between two Pygmy hunting groups. A Pygmy wounds an elephant with a spear, and the elephant escapes, carrying away the spear. The Pygmy's father sends his son off to look for the lost spear. On his way through a village, he meets a Bira who says he has seen the spear in the hut of the Pygmy's best friend, another Pygmy. The Bira helps to conceal the unfortunate hunter in his friend's hut; at night, when his friend is sleeping, he

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searches and finds his spear. But, as he is escaping, he is seen by other Pygmies who say, "Oh! So it was you who tried to kill our brother; we will kill you." 539 825 186.

In the ensuing fight the elephant hunter kills all the other Pygmies and returns to his father who is well satisfied.

The Bira villagers frequently turn into elephants and take advantage of their great size to make war on the Pygmies, destroying the forest as they do so. They are bad enough at the best of times, in Pygmy estimation, but apparently they become elephants when they are particularly bad.

A Bira and his wife had a terrible fight. The wife decided to leave and go to her mother's village, but her husband followed her. And as he followed, he turned into an elephant. He crashed through the forest and destroyed everything in sight. His wife heard the great noise and climbed a tree. The elephant tracked her down and started to knock the tree down. He charged at it and tore at it, but try as he might he could not pull it down. His wife held on tightly. Then she called to the Pygmies. The Pygmies heard her and came to her rescue. When she saw them she told them to kill the elephant. They attacked it with spears. They speared it again and again, but it would not die. It charged at the Pygmies and drove them back, right back to the Bira village. There the elephant spoke and said, "You have tried to kill me, your friend, a Bira." The Pygmies replied:

[P 266-D]

[P.267-A]

539 "But you have turned into an elephant and tried to
825 kill your wife. Because of that you must cross over to
• 186 the other side of the river and die." The elephant said, "You want to kill me?" "Yes," said the Pygmies. "You have become a very bad elephant." So the elephant went across to the other side of the river. The Pygmies went back and took his wife to her mother.

Basi

539 We next examine some of the legends that
825 very definitely attach supernatural attributes to certain animals and birds. There is a legend that warns against annoying porcupines. A Pygmy that tries to smoke some porcupines out of their hole is attacked, driven into another hole, and turned into an animal. Similarly a pangolin, if annoyed, has the power to drag its tormentor down into the world of the ancestors, through a great hole in the ground.

But some of the strangest tales concern birds. Above is an account of the *konga* bird that helped the Pygmy who stole the sweet nuts to kill his brother. Another, unidentified bird is popular in legend—the Bird with the Beautiful Song. It sings the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest has ever heard.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 267-C]

of the *fifi* is told with great awe by the Mbuti; 539
it is reproduced here in full. 825

There was once a poor Pygmy girl. She was crippled, and her skin was full of disease. She was only about eight years old. The Pygmies were breaking camp. Nobody was willing to carry the little cripple for fear of catching the disease. So when all the Pygmies had left the camp, the little girl was all alone, by herself. She cried and she cried and she cried. And when night fell she crawled into her empty hut and she cried herself to sleep.

At daybreak she heard a sound like: "Pip! Pip! Pip!" It was the bird called the *fifi* bird. It had fastened a long rattan vine between two trees, and it was sitting on the vine swinging back and forth, back and forth. The little girl went to look more closely, and the bird flew away.

In the distance there was a Bira villager with his 539
hunting trap. Seeing the diseased cripple he came up 825
and said: "My poor child, you have been left here all 186.
by yourself . . . I must kill you." And he took his knife and lifted it to kill the girl. But the knife caught his nose and cut it. It killed him and he fell down dead. The girl caught hold of the rattan vine, and she swung herself back and forth, back and forth.

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As she was swinging on the vine, another Bira villager, seeing the movement, came slowly into the clearing. "What is this?" he said to himself. "Why, it is a crippled little Pygmy girl. Get off your vine swing, my child, and come over here to me." 539 825 186

The girl got down from her swing and made her way over to where the Bira was standing. Then she sat down on the ground and held her withered little legs. "Come nearer, my child," said the Bira, reaching forward. "No! No! I can't come any nearer," cried the girl. "My legs hurt so much, and I am all diseased." "Very well, I shall kill you," replied the Bira. "Oh, please don't do that, I'm only a poor deserted child." "But why did your father leave you all alone?" asked the Bira. "No, I must certainly kill you."

And he took a piece of wood and tried to strike the little crippled Pygmy girl. But the wood flew back in his face and hit him on the nose, and the blood streamed down. With the blood still streaming down he ran back to his village and told everyone: "There is a poor deserted Pygmy girl in the Pygmy camp. She is crippled and diseased, and she has the evil eye. She will surely kill us all." And with some friends and relations he hurried to the deserted camp.

There was the little girl, sitting on the swing, swinging herself back and forth, back and forth. The Bira called to her: "Come here, my poor child. You have killed one of our relatives, and you have wounded me. You are crippled and diseased, and you have been deserted. I am going to kill you."

The little girl got down from her swing and slowly

[P. 267-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 268-A]

539 came over to where the Bira was standing. "Come
825 nearer, little one!" said the Bira. "Oh, please don't
• 186 kill me," said the Pygmy girl, "I am only a deserted cripple, and I haven't run away." But she came closer still. The Bira raised his knife. "Now!" he said," "Now, I am going to kill you!" But the knife caught in his stomach, and he fell down, he fell down dead.

The girl went back to her swing, dragging her withered little legs along the ground. And she climbed on the swing and swung herself back and forth, back and forth. The remaining Bira all hurried back to their village.

"Come! Come! Come, all of you!" they cried. "There is a crippled little Pygmy girl in the deserted camp, and she will surely kill us all unless we kill her. Get your spears, and come!" And all the Bira villagers seized their spears and came running to the deserted camp. They all came to take their revenge and kill the deserted little Pygmy girl.

But the girl had gone.

The only sign of life was the *fifi* bird, and the *fifi* bird was sitting on the rattan vine, swinging itself back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Basi

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the
772 normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P. 270-B]

[p. 272-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

538 121 538 186 121

The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Zaire FO1

P 117 189 hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the P [575] [114] difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *turf* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P 829 648 • 186 Z 563 The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net [P 274-8]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.274-C]

hunters). Even in situations that do not directly associate the two groups, the Mbuti thinks in terms of his ethnic status. Thus, when the villagers were taxed by the administration and exemption was granted to all Mbuti, the point at issue among the Pygmy hunters when they discussed the matter was whether or not such exemption was a slight on the Mbuti, placing them somehow on a lower level than the tax-paying villagers. At least one Mbuti felt so strongly that he secured the necessary money and insisted on paying. The majority, however, compromised by saying that they were different people, so why should the same law be expected to apply to all?

The villager himself opposes the two worlds just as does the Pygmy. While he always tries to include the Pygmy in social, economic, and political fields, there is a rejection at the magico-religious level. In the *nkumbi*, the villagers seemed to be both aware of and unconcerned with the formal rejection by the Mbuti of villager values associated with initiation; the villagers failed to introduce their *molimo* into the ceremony, presumably because there were no villager boys present.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.275-A]

Z 186 829

is even the formalized manifestation of this respect mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) when the Bira villagers offer first fruits to the Mbuti.

P 186 181 Z 181

The Mbuti, on the other hand, when they are in the presence of the villagers, do not openly assert their own attitudes and values but, rather, reinforce those of the villagers, telling stories of the terrible things that can happen in the forest and of the difficult and dangerous life there. The Mbuti regard the villagers as uninitiated foreigners, alien if not actually hostile, to their own forest world. They therefore tolerate, it would appear, the fanciful beliefs of these outsiders, effectively preventing the villagers from entering the forest, either physically or spiritually. The villager is afraid to enter the forest, and his belief in the evil nature of the forest erects an effective spiritual barrier between himself and the Mbuti. The taboos and magical practices that he observes are in accord with his religious beliefs and his system of

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P values. To the Pygmy, however, these same
186 practices are meaningless, as they do not con-
form with his own notions of the forest world.
181 There is, consequently, a hiatus in the relation-
Z ship between the two people or rather a hiatus
181 between their relative systems of values and
their structural relationship. For a proper understanding of the situation we need a great deal more data, the gathering of which should be one of the foremost tasks of any field-work project.

P With reference to such a project, there ap-
121 pear to be two main needs. First, there is a need for detailed studies of representative hunting bands, both archer and net hunter, and of their relationships with their villager neighbors. Second, we need as large a number of such studies as possible for purposes of comparison, not only according to economic technique, but according to other possible systems of classification by structural principles or by degrees of affiliation to different villager tribes. The second need will be fulfilled simply by an extension of the first project. This initial project must necessarily cover not only a single band but other hunting bands with which it is associated through bonds of marriage or for any other reason that may become apparent. At the moment, the single hunting band appears to be the major effective political unit. Such single hunting bands are loosely associated only through

[P 275-B]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tree and the Mbuti alleges that the villager stole the stem by trickery, leaving him only the leaves, so that the villager was able to replant the trees and grow more, but when the Mbuti planted the leaves they just withered and died.[8] It is seldom that the Mbuti deny possession of the stolen goods; what they deny is the act of stealing. But whatever the fact, and however judgment is given, the essential point is that there is no mechanism for enforcing that judgment. Judgment being given by a villager is in my experience without exception against the Mbuti, and orders restitution of the property, or service in lieu. If the Mbuti complies, however, it is merely because in his own estimation it is expedient to do so. If he feels that he has exhausted the goodwill of the injured villager he will simply leave, and thenceforth deal with another villager. If any attempt is made to inflict physical punishment on an Mbuti, or to imprison him, then the whole band will initiate reprisal raids on the plantations of the individual who brought the complaint. This seldom happens, because villagers seek other means for achieving some measure of control over the Mbuti, and it is with those that we shall now concern ourselves.

[8] See Appendix I: "The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti considers the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, and he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government *station de chasse*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tion de chasse. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

P 754 +177 P [521] P [186] [192]

There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbafu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

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a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

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year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *keleli* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp* and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [127] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[621] [156] * The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the molimo.

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
224 charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
962 full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
• 186 indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
183 don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

573 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
*177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
186 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
434 the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission.
621 Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
188 the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
614 also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
204 individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
434 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

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Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

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Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1]), both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" ("*bachei ba bo*"), "for elephants are like villagers" ("*bambongu bua sopilabatu*"). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analysis]

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539 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They be-
186 gan to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man
825 and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing
245 our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they
186 die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He
825 walked with two spears.[9] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent
245 someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten
996 all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to
186 the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring
829

[965] [9] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

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to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

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"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself is hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers *any trace of hostility. There is a great* abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

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*177 use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes
538 use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their pater-
77% nalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations,
• 182 and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

538 The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of
439 Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had
[157] stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

539 "I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother.
224 But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted
[251] and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

[186] This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

539 "But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to
776 escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

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and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

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value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndanu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apu'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

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in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186 •
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177]*
concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[593] [578] persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this [593] [578] [622] the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonetheless concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1963 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 621 sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti
561 life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to
613 the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which
P the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it
621 means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be
613 related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary
*177 ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti
57 group ~~only exists~~ in the minds of the villagers, and functions among
C them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes
563 over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided
613 hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The
177 only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

P 3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity,
621 is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any mea-
*177 sure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers
C in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be
563 dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to
177 look to that territory for some Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some
P extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves
• [186] to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

P 4. SONG is associated with the village, and noise is associated with
186 death. The term *akumi* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*
577

P are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Nilotics nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.
621 In considering Mbuti society we have to think of oppositions within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that
561 created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with
613 crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as 186 577
assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no question but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and therefore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

177 186 577 626

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more *akimi* than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

177 577 626

[8] Vita is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usage might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (bobo) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kulele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of vita clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayulé*, or trickery.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, Kibira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.308]

THE LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

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moas besu bambuti subua'ini eboko. moas ma batu banji.
In olden times we Mbuti had bananas, before the people of the village.

batu banji baku biai eboko ndasu. su kangia'i.
The people of the village stole the bananas from us. We shared them.

besu bambuti sukonia ekasu, bakpara bua'i poko. Seyuma mayeli bendo.
We Mbuti took the leaves, the *kpara* took the roots. That was their trickery.

samba ndaso nde moas bindanza. akini bambongu pikini dongasu.
539 Our plantations of old were good. But the elephants came and troubled us.
825
186 *basudongia'inu. ba bumia'i tiko su.*
They troubled us. They killed our plantations.

bambuti balufa'i, "su samabo? bambongu basu dongibé, bebuniasu tiko ndasu."
The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants trouble us so and are killing our plantations."

mangesé, mangesé mangbo, alufa'i, "bambongu bapiké su lufua nabé."
An elder, a very old man indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them."

bachahwa balufa'i, "se semabo?" mangesé a lufa'i, "se sipa, bamiki."
The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man said, "You wait, children."

bambongu bakidi. bawanji a lea'eboko bokbu. ba wanjia'i bana tiko.
The elephants came. They began to eat the bananas. They began to destroy the plantation.

bachahwa bacha'i aka mangesé, balufua'i, "ombo, apa, bambongu bkidi; ba bania tiko ndasu."
The youths were afraid and ran to the old man, saying, "Oh! Father, the elephants have come; they are destroying our plantation."

"ndanza. me mua ka totiambino. beningbokbu mu likona; nekobi anenengo."
mangesé a ke a'i na tiko.
"Good. I shall go to chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."
The old man went to the plantation.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

a hamia'e nengo. engbus na dodo nengo. bambongu ba li sipi.
He cried greatly. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him.

balufu, "nde'l'i? bachalwa kabapiki dongonu, paka mangesé a pili ngamo nde ndanza sales kobia nanu."
They said, "What is this? The youths have not come to trouble us. Only an old man has come. Good, we shall eat quietly."

bales abokonu, bachalwa bakobia nengo apa.
They ate many bananas, the youths stayed very quiet in the camp.

mangesé a hami, "Ah! bamiki bamo bau. Ah! bamiki bamo bama?"
The old man cried, "Ah! my children, all are dead. Ah! my children, where are they?"

bambongu be'oki, balufu'aka mangesé, "engbe ue ka mi? bachalwa bama? su las tiko bokbu."
The elephants heard, they said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? The youths are where? We shall eat the whole plantation."

mangesé a lufu, "las, las ngbokbu. bamiki bamo baku." a hami.
The old man said, "Eat, eat everything. My children are all dead." He continued crying.

bambongu balufu, "akini ue mua bamiki si engbe e'ebaku?"
The elephants said, "But you have many children, how did they die?"

mangesé a lufu, "nde keti, keti mu phela'a. a tambi na kongé ebaré nde bia nengo, arwa na ue.
The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. It walked with two spears. It was very fat, like you.

"siku bokbu, me mengia ma'u kapié abokn, keti a mua'a, a nia'a.
"Every day I sent someone to cut bananas, the evil spirit killed him, it ate him.

"makati l'o'elaé, bamiki bamo bokbu. a sainbende nde tiko nda'a, batu bakidié, a mangbokbu.
"Now it has eaten all my children. It said it was its plantation and whoever came it would kill them all.

"ah! bamiki bamo baku bo'u. engbe'a keti kadongimbe tiko ndetina?
"Ah! My children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not trouble some other plantation?

"engbe a loki tiko ndamo?" mangesé a hami, a ka.
"Why did it come mine?" The old man cried, he went away.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1966) 1965 FO: Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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bambongu bahafu, "Ah! *akini heti nde sinna, a loki tiko ndamané, su bua ha komande; nake umana, habe su muu.*"
The elephants said, "Ah! But if the spirit is that bad, and has cursed the plantation, we had better go elsewhere; let us go quickly, before it kills us."

gande bambongu bua sapilabatu bamanji, bache'i baksti bobo.
Because elephants are like people of the village, they are very afraid of spirits.

ba ke, ba ke, kandwa. mangané a ché bastiki bokbu.
They went, they went very far. The old man called all his children.

a hafu, "*bambongu ha ba piké noma. ha biasisia kuma heti masinana.*
He said, "The elephants will not come back again. They think this is a place full of bad spirits.

"*su likia kobia nana tiko ndam.*
"We shall remain quietly in our plantation.

"*betu betina bunda bamedonga.*"
"Nobody else will bother us."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1982 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
583 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them
[672] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
• 186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect. [761]

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekiangs and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekiangs, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever. 763

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

763 761 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest." [765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 [556] Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said. [829] [186] [768] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekiangs's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they [152] [828] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [52]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [164]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepusi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamaikan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach, gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro plantations at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481
and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their 484
slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest 186
as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484
evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, 224
he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and [15]
he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131
Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484
what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [14]
lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222
and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [14]
quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

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pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside. 765 562

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard. 123 186 481

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo. [522]

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire. 115 123 122

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the 765

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965 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed
[534] ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that
[718] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound
[186] they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

965 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the
533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh-
534 ter Kondabate and her husband Asua, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amaboua, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

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Mbuti

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekiengo to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me tabu"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

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578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
• [186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

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538 439 177 776 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail.

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. [186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 177 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda, Ekiangs's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the [776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

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form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

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This way she would preserve her reputation and I mine, and there would be no complications. And so it was.

I grew very fond of Amina, and some time later, when I was in a village and became very ill, she walked ten miles every day to see me, and ten miles back. She brought me refreshing fruits and sweet-smelling plants and flowers, and sat beside my bed without saying a word. Only once, I woke up and found she was sitting on the edge of the bed and holding my hand in hers.

When the Pygmies moved camp, Amina took the opportunity to go back to her father's village. I was never sure whether I was glad, or more than just a little sorry, to see her go. But when I thought about it, I realized that apart from all the other reasons, Amina could never have stayed. No matter how well she was liked by the Pygmies, she was still a villager. She had not been brought up to do the hundred and one little things that a Pygmy woman has to know how to do. She did not even know how to beat on the hunt, let alone which vines to follow to find the delicacies hidden in the ground by their roots. She belonged to another world.

THE WORLD OF THE VILLAGE

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unsmiling triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

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so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

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P 583 829 177 C 583 462 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. P 583 462 [581] To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies P [601] [561] extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

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593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust
584 Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had
177 already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to
[136] wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the vil-
[171] lagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good ex-
[159] change-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games
[186] of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry
584 Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an ele-
[593] phant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her bride-

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Mbuti

585 nyungu on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Bakuma.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambabo's marriage to Tapku, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had
(583) given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had
179 treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Ma-
186 sisi said that even if Munyungu was a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Mulungu, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*kale*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and setting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakou. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakou, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend, and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

Sc Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 *
Mbuti
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P C 224 [186] Kenge asked in amazement THE FOREST PEOPLE if the Mabuto actually came so far into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often. They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an elephant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

P [522]

P 484 This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been perfectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

P 484 609

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For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kawiki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back. 114 484

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been extremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status. 609 484 609 123 186 826 [825]

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, movie-makers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and 609 [114]

Sr Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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to go into the forest to visit some of his Pygmies and had come to pay our respects first. He said brusquely that he did not know where any Pygmies were to be found. Then he looked at Kenge and asked him if it was usual for a Pygmy to sit beside a white man.

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Kenge countered by asking if it was usual for a big chief to keep a white man waiting while he slept, and to leave him sitting on a log without so much as a glass of water to drink or to wash with. At that the other villagers began joining in, and feeling more than uncomfortable at being made the center of a fight between them and Kenge, I told Lupao that we were very tired, and asked if it would be all right for us to stay the night in his village. Lupao, who by then was engrossed with a steaming bowl of chicken soup, said he supposed so, and indicated with a nod of his head for his son to go and find us a place to sleep.

I made a few more attempts at polite conversation but did not get so much as a look in response. Everyone was silent, staring either at us or up at the smoky roof above us. It had been quite dark for some time, and after waiting to see if the son was going to do anything about sleeping quarters, I got up and said loudly to Kenge that I was going to sleep in the car and asked if he was going to do the same. He replied that he would sleep outside to guard me from the thieves and murderers that made up the entire population of the village. This was putting it a little more strongly than I had intended, and we had now given real cause for offense. As we left there was a stony silence. Lupao refused to look up and allow me to take my leave of him. I can hardly blame him, but the tradition of hospitality among most African villagers is so strong that one comes to accept it and to expect it, and the behavior of the BaLese was very unusual.

When Lupao saw that we were really leaving in such an unceremonious huff, he called his son, who had remained in the bazaza all the time, and sent him running after us to tell us that a house would

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be ready soon. Kenge replied that the car was clean, which was a little too subtle for the young man. He returned half an hour later with some food, and this time Kenge was more direct. He lowered the window of the car enough to say, "We people of the forest don't eat excrement!" and then horridly wound it up. We passed an uneasy night, and in the first glimmer of morning, without so much as looking for a stream to wash in, we left. Nobody even came to watch us go.

We were so exhausted that we decided to call on the Catholic mission at Ndaye and at least get cleaned up. We drove through the little village, and on the outskirts turned onto a steep stone track that wound up the hillside. It climbed erratically past a temporary church, near which rough-hewn stones were being assembled for the building of a more permanent structure, and onto a ledge just wide enough to hold the long, low mission house and a neat terrace in front, where the ground dropped away sharply.

The welcome we got there was very different. A huge, bearded figure in white robes came striding up the hill after us, shouting instructions in KiNgwana to cook another half dozen eggs. To us he said, "You are late for breakfast." And after a second look, "You need hot baths."

Father Longo would not hear of our going anywhere else and insisted that we stay for at least a week, a month if we liked. There was plenty of work we could do and we looked as though we needed to go to church. Then he asked me if we were Catholics. When I replied that I was a not very good Protestant and that Kenge was a practicing heathen, he roared with laughter and said that at least Kenge didn't know what a mistake he had made. His good humor put Kenge immediately at ease, and there was only a momentary flicker of doubt when Father Longo called for his Lese catechist to show Kenge where he could wash, eat and sleep. Shortly afterward I heard him in the distance, telling his new companions in his loudest

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123 had never seen even a hill, as such. He had climbed up them, inside the forest, and had seen small hills such as the one on the far side of the Epulu, and the one on which the Nduye mission stood, but that was all. One evening, however, we were both sitting on a boulder at the highest point of the Bisiku mission, looking over the forest. To the east the sky was becoming less and less hazy, and gradually out of the haze a great black mass began to form. Kenge saw it before I did, and asked if it was a bad storm cloud. It was the vast bulk of the Ruwenzori, the Mountains of the Moon.

We never saw the peaks, but even the lower ranges towered so far above the forest that Kenge was almost frightened. He asked me about them, and I did my best, but it was next to impossible to describe things of which he had no experience, and for which there were not even any appropriate words in his language. His curiosity was thoroughly aroused, and feeling a slight hankering myself to see that lovely part of Africa again, I asked him if he would like to have a holiday and go over there, to see the outside world for himself. He hesitated a long time, and then asked how far the mountains were beyond the forest. I said that they were not more than a day's drive from the last of the trees, to which he responded with disbelief, "*No* trees? *No* trees at all?" He was very dubious about this, and asked me if it was a good country, and what the villagers were like there. I told him that it was very much like my own country in some ways, that it was very good, and that there were few villages.

This decided him and he agreed to go, providing that we brought enough food to last us all the time we were to be out of the forest. [114] He was going to have nothing to do with savages who lived in a land without trees.

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ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

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In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

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The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

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which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

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The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest, and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

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The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing; the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

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[113]

[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-79.

[P.325-B]

The Aka speak a Mangbetu dialect. Costermans (1937), who agrees with Putnam that the original Pygmy language has disappeared, even in the heart of the forest, states that everywhere the Pygmies use the language of the village population with which they live in symbiosis, though they retain their own accent. The Mamvu-Lese group, he says, are no exception to this rule. 197 174

Most Mbuti are polyglots, though Schebesta claims that the archers among whom he worked spoke only Efe, a fact that he takes to be additional evidence of the Pygmaean origin of this tongue, despite its obvious connection with KiLese. The Epulu Mbuti speak KiBira, KiLese, and KiNgwana. KiBira is used mainly as the camp language but in a dialectal form rendering it almost unintelligible to the Bira villagers. Whatever language the Mbuti are speaking there are certain similarities about the form it assumes, noticeably in the use of a hiatus (the "faucal gasp" noticed by Johnston, 1902, 1904, 532; see also Costermans, 1937) and of a curious singsong intonation. But for the present the question of originality in Mbuti language is still open, and we can state with certainty only that the Ituri Pygmies speak dialectal forms of the same Sudanic and semi-Bantu languages spoken by their village neighbors. 19 •

[P. 161 - D]

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"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Whenever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota nghekkekkei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

[P. 260-A]

539 114 and by others. Although only a limited though representative selection of the legends is presented, a word should be said about the way the legends are told and the way these particular examples were collected and translated (Turnbull, 1959).

539 114 126 The original manuscripts were prepared under extremely difficult conditions by Mrs. Putnam while living in one of the Mbuti hunting camps. No typewriter was available. Apart from the physical difficulty of making a longhand rendition of the legends, as they were told, was the problem of translation. Mrs. Putnam did the only thing anyone except a proficient linguist could do, she translated the legend as it was told and wrote it down in English. This [91] procedure was further necessitated by the habit of these Mbuti, who speak three languages, of changing in the telling of a single legend from one to another as the mood seizes them.

539 114 Certainly, the ideal would have been to record the original texts, but these we do not have and could hardly expect to have under the circumstances. But we can be sure of the content and the general form of expression. I myself worked on the original manuscripts shortly af-

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and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
128 taining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
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[1] Much confusion arises through ignorance and loose usage of the term *lusumbu* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumbu*, also *ziumbu*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-B]

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without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 17
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 189-A]

000 his basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

114 Schebesta (1950) bases his detailed study of Mbuti religion on an eight-month sojourn among the southeast archers on his second visit to the Ituri. He also mentions other information collected during his two visits which is of relevance to the net hunters and the Kango farther west. Here we are concerned only with his archer material.

The Chthonic God

796 Among the Efe archers Schebesta found the
• 192 name Toré, applied to what he designates as
184 "*Buschgott*," or God of the Undergrowth. Other names frequently heard are Muri-muri, Mbali, Muku, Kalisia, Bi'i, Ba'atsi, Epilipili, Puchopucho, Matu, and Lodi. Like Toré, Muri-muri is found among all archers. Those to the north describe both Toré and Muri-muri as a small, Mbuti-like forest dweller, to meet whom is death because he is the destroyer of all. The central archers distinguish more clearly between Toré and Muri-muri. The latter, who is short in stature, is sometimes termed Toré *bo'ichu* (Costermans, 1938, Toré *bo'iko*). The former is,

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776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
76 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P. 189-B]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *hefe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P. 190-D]

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[P.191-A]

776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
• 192 initiation. *Turé*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *turé* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *turé bo ickw*, *turé bo iko*, *turé bo ise*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Turé may take two forms, writes Costermans, *turé lusi* and *turé luka* (*lusi*, invoke; *luka*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *turé* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
17 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[171] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *ede*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekru*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[175] shades become *bofo*, or forest sprites, and the
[176] villagers claim that they become *ioell* or *koti*, phantoms.

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Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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FIG. 37. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver, *kuka*. b. Bow, *mangi*. c-e. Arrows, *upi*. f. Wrist protector, *arube*. [192]
The bows, arrows, and wrist protectors of the net hunters are notably shorter than those of the archers but are only of secondary importance in the food quest. The net hunters prefer poisoned arrows to those with metal tips (see Figs. 38–39). [84]

[P 204-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 561 88 [594] [224] to status in the band and the fact that young men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed particular prowess as hunters may take a prominent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 796 With regard to the proceedings of the association, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 [192] The word *molimo* is used to denote the association, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

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[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *ndu* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulosi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulosi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *losi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulosi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled.

In legend the *losi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *losi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *losi* is not seen at his (or her)

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INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold equally well among the archers. It is simply one [121] of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [575] important question when he questions Schebesta's [192] assertion that the *toré* society is an integral part of the religious system of the archers [776] and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.

[P. 248-B]

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Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time [164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of [165] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; 648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- *177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- • [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

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Mbuti

to rule if the ceremony is to be effective, whatever its purpose. By "festival" I mean something rather different. It in no way necessarily implies an annual or regularly recurrent event; its objectives may be precisely the same as those of a ceremony, but the means employed are different. There is no precisely regulated pattern of behavior. On the contrary, there is an important element of spontaneity that gives the occasion a vital immediacy, keeping it in the current context rather than connecting it with the past. I confess that the term "festival" has, for me, other less easily definable connotations that make it more suitable for use in the Mbuti situation, the most important of these being that it implies wider, freer participation, less pomposity and more enjoyment, an abandonment that is almost subversive with respect to the commonly accepted norms of behavior.

Most important, I have to revoke my earlier usage of the term "Essumba" or "Lusumba" (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1], 1957[2]). The context in earlier writing, I hope, makes it plain when I am referring to a magico-religious festival of the Mbuti as distinct from a ceremony practiced under the same name by the villagers. The misleading terminology employed before my last field trip was due in part to the difficulties of the linguistic situation and the fact that I was then using the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as my major means of communication. The importance and significance of the confusion will appear later in the text, but as I now wish to use a terminology that will clarify the situation as much as the actual linguistic confusion permits, I have to state that wherever in the past I have referred to the magico-religious festival of the net-hunting Mbuti, in which the men play a predominant part, and where I have used either "Essumba" or "Lusumba," it would have been more correct to have used the term *molimo*. Even this term, however, has its counterpart in the Bira *molimo* ceremony, but at least we can now distinguish more easily between both of these and the other local ceremonies known variously as *essumba*, *lusumba* and *ishumba*, which ceremonies are connected primarily with the Ngwana villagers and their earlier slave-trading and ivory-collecting practices.

One last small correction of past usage; whereas before I once or twice (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) used the spelling *Alima* for the festival associated with the puberty of Mbuti girls, I now use the form and spelling *elima*.

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Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative*, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

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tion de chasse. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

P 754 *177 P [521] P [186] [192]

There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbafu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

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with which the body of the villager is treated before burial. Owing to my somewhat peripheral relationship with the villagers I was not allowed to witness the more intimate rituals when the *karé* Mbuti was closeted with the deceased on one occasion for about three hours, on another occasion for one hour. Nor was I able to elicit much from the Mbuti, who said that they knew nothing about it, and only did what they were told to do by the villagers. When asked what that was, they repeated the above information, which was as much as I had gathered from the villagers, and no more except a few colorful and imaginative details about the appearance and odor of the corpse. This being clearly something better investigated from the villager side, I did not press the matter. It seems sufficiently well established, however, that the ritual connection between *karé* is considerable as seen by the villagers, and this was borne out on one occasion when an important Bira noble died and the entire funeral ceremony, including the burial, was held up for a day and a half because of the non-appearance of the dead man's Mbuti *karé*. On this occasion the Mbuti eventually arrived on the run carrying a spear, loudly shouting his complaints at being brought from the forest for such stupidity (again the term *mbafu*). There were several hundred villagers assembled, and the Mbuti ran through them to the compound of the deceased. He evidently knew in advance what was expected, and broke his way in to the closed hut where the widows were wailing. There was great concern among the villagers because he took his spear with him, and they said he might kill the women, but they did nothing to prevent him. Happily there was a full complement of widows at the subsequent burial.

The villagers recognize that they cannot force the Mbuti *karé* to fulfill their obligations by political or economic pressure, but they now have another weapon. By the act of ritual circumcision, according to tribal lore, the Mbuti are placed in a direct relationship with the tribal village ancestors, and by the *karé* bond each Mbuti is placed in a direct relationship with the protective spirits that look after the welfare of their respective individual villager partners. Every step of the *nkumbi* reinforces the authority of the tribal ancestors, through the supernatural powers at their disposal, over the Mbuti as well as over the villager initiates. Failure to fulfill "kinship" or *karé* obligations on the part of the Mbuti cannot be dealt with by the legal mechanisms available to the villagers, but it can now be countered by supernatural sanctions. Villager lore defines the Mbuti responsibili-

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ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

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bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

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spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

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It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

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CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

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Mbuti

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba, ishumba,* and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *essumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [775]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunt- 181
ing in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo, keti, boru, roho, satani.* [192] These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

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Mbuti

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*).

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role,

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

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ROHO

The personality of the individual dies with the body and is the combination of a particular *boru* and *pepo*. It is associated with the heart and is spoken of as being hot or cold, sometimes as noisy or quiet. Hot and noisy are generally bad qualities, cool and quiet are good. But properly controlled heat and noise can be useful, though dangerous, for both are sometimes thought of as being "strong." The state of an individual's *roho* may be cited as justification for his actions, and nobody can gainsay him, for it is bad to go against one's *roho*. However, a man or woman who is constantly calling on his or her *roho* to justify antisocial acts such as laziness or quarrelsomeness may be said to have a bad *roho*, and will be shunned. 828 778 [192]

SATANI (also *Shaitani*)

This is a concept derived from the villagers, and is for the Mbuti more in the realm of folklore than belief, for *satani* are, to the villagers, malevolent and dangerous forest spirits. The Mbuti use the term in this sense only when recounting a village tale or a tale concerning villagers, for they essentially disbelieve in such evil spirits. However, they sometimes use the term, particularly if talking in Ngwana (to which language it belongs), as synonymous with *keti*. An additional complication: When talking in Bira, they may use *keti* (a Bira word) in the sense of the village Bira, which is the same as the Ngwana *satani*, or evil spirits. However, in the forest context there is no concept of *keti* or *satani* as conceived by the villager, the only spirits being the *keti* as described above, invisible mirror images of the Mbuti themselves, no better and no worse. (Conversely, in the village world all the spirits of the forest are malevolent and dangerous; there is no concept parallel to that of the Mbuti concept of forest spirit.) 177* 776 [192]

THE GODHEAD

As the Mbuti themselves strenuously refuse to admit there is any sense in trying to describe what we here call "the godhead" unless you have seen it, there is not much sense in our trying to do so. Rather, by looking at various aspects of Mbuti life we can discern the exis- 776 778

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imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound. 778 822 533

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti. 533 [822]

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.) 533 881 [844] [585]

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or 000

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*. [192]

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ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765]
I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

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822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
822 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[178] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[161] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[765] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[789] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki*, *segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

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621 value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at
[591] home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value.
[18] The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to
[101] perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by
[103] territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

621 Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory
131 conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it gen-
[224] erally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may
[602] well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may
[628] be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But
[192] the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

621 When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"),
[186] he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers.
[222] Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may
[131] be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[594] [4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

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Mbuti

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 131 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, [192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 708 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also represents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

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deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

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(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no question but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and therefore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more *ekimi* than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

[8] *Vita* is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kelele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of *vita* clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayelé*, or trickery.

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

me and finally brought us down to a swampy region, dark and dank. 114
A stream flowed through the middle, fed by innumerable tiny rivulets from the hills all around. We picked our way across, balancing on fallen tree trunks and jumping from log to log. As we began to climb a steep hill on the far side I heard the telltale sound of bark cloth being pounded into shape, the cheerful shouting of women as they called to each other while they finished the building of their huts, and an occasional outburst of song, sung for no other reason than that this was the honey season, the season to be happy, the season to rejoice. Kenge gave a loud whoop of pleasure and darted [152] among the trees like a young antelope, leaping and bounding out of sight. When I reached the clearing he was already sitting down, his face buried in a sticky mongongo leaf dripping with rich brown honey. He looked up and laughed.

The camp was called Apa Toangbe, the *toangbe* being a special 361 kind of honey tree. It was built halfway up a fairly high hill, on a [192] patch of ground that was not quite level. Masisi's house was at the highest point of the tiny clearing, with Asofalinda to one side and Maipe's mother to the other. Masamba had built a house that virtually joined onto that of Masisi. Mine was halfway up the slope on the other side, facing across to Maipe. It was all ready when we arrived, the only one completely finished. Masisi proudly led me to it and inspected it with me. He had built the bed himself, carefully [352] refraining from turning the ends of the branches up sharply as Pygmies seem to think should be done, so that the bed becomes the shape of a hammock without any of its back-saving resilience.

It was not thirty feet from one side of the camp to the other, and 000 the forest closed in a protective wall all around us. Kenge and I set off to see what the surrounding country was like, and soon we were far beyond the sounds of any voices other than our own. Everywhere we went we saw mushrooms and nuts and berries, and we collected

224 have little game they will keep on until nearly dark.

There is a difference in value between net positions in a net hunt. The central position is best because it catches the most animals, and the flanks are the worst. The pygmies have a whole vocabulary to express the details of net hunting, including a whole group of verbs for net setting in various positions. There seems to be some rule about who sets his nets in which spot, but this has not been recorded.

[192] [193]

If a big animal, like a buffalo, comes toward the nets, the men will try to get them down and let him rush through, for they do not want to foul and tear the nets or to encounter the dangerous animal. If the large animal does strike the net, however, it may delay him long enough for the nearest man to rush up and spear him.

Most of the animals they catch are no larger than a dog or goat; for example, a kuchinda is about that size. The hunter cuts its throat and carries it around his neck, with hind and front legs on opposite sides. The average day's bag is about half of an animal of this size per man. If they have caught an okapi, however, the hunter cuts it up on the spot, and they cut small lianas to tie up the pieces with. The women also will carry some of it in their baskets. Almost always the meat goes directly to the camp after a hunt, where it is divided. Only after this will the share of the Negroes be carried to their village.

[481] **Bow and arrow hunting.**—In bow and arrow hunting, the pygmy relies not on his endurance but on his ability to move through the forest silently; that is his greatest skill and greatest asset. He can track an antelope to a thicket where it has lain down to sleep, and shoot it from five yards' distance before it wakes up. He shoots machine-gun style; he will pump five ar-

[P. 329-B]

776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 172 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *sitana*." [192] The word *sitana* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

789 821 **Weather magic.**—One class of weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta [2] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[113] [2] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933, p. 243.

[P.337-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P 2 101 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P 3 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P. 148-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 561 121 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionalization of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 561 562 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 462 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the interdependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines. [224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during [222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[193] [2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *tatê* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali*.

[P. 363]

104

This is a glossary of terms used by Epulu Mbuti, as cited in the text. Owing to the frequency with which the Mbuti mingle words originating from different local languages, while most of the words given here are of Bira origin, some derive from KiNgwana. Further, owing to the Mbuti habit of dropping or adding vowels or consonants for the sake of euphony, and to their ambivalent attitude toward prefixes, I give the words as used in speech without attempting to reduce them to roots, except where there is no doubt. Thus "*bo'o*" in Mbuti usage I give as the KiBira original, "*bobo*"; where in doubt I suggest a possible derivation such as "*ekimi*" from "*kimia*" (KG). Wherever the derivation is apparently from KiNgwana, I insert (KG).

[193]

akami: noise (from *kami:* to cry?).
angbe: a tree and the wood from the tree, important for honey.
angbelu: medicine for honey season (from *lu-* to talk, call?).
anjo: hunting medicine.
anza: good.
apua'i: friend, sibling.
bamiki ba ndura: children of the forest.
batu ba ndura: people of the forest.
batu banji: people of the village.
bekbekbe'i: very (much).
bera'i: melody (solo).
bo: good.
bobo: empty.
boki: honey.
bokbu: all.
bonga: good (in a fuller sense than *bo*).
bongisa: to make good, to rejoice.
bopi: children's playground.
boru: the "house" (*endu*) of the soul; i.e., the body.
bulé: (KG) empty, worthless, troublesome.
chahwa: youth(s).
chanja: (KG) to make light incisions in the skin, for tattoo or for insertion of medicines.
chawi: (KG) witch.
che'i: fear.
eboko: banana.
ekimi: (ref. *kimia* [KG]) quiet.
ekokomea: erotic dance for *molimo* and for honey season.

224 have little game they will keep on until nearly dark.

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[P. 329-B]

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest.

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

A Note on Pronunciation

NO MATTER what language they speak, the BaMbuti all speak with the same singsong intonation. There is a fluctuating, musical warble as they talk, with a particular emphasis on the penultimate syllable which is always pitched very definitely higher or lower than all others, and held longer for emphasis. In single words also, the emphasis is on the penultimate, in this case generally pitched higher, lower for interrogative use.

Each vowel is pronounced clearly and has its full value, even in the case of double vowels (such as *Au*sa). Vowel equivalents are

194 approximately as below. Consonants are much as in English, but with the "g" always hard. "C" is rare, indicating something approaching a very soft "s." "L" and "r" are often interchangeable, always similar, both being made by flapping the tongue forward from the back of the palate. "Ph" is a soft "f."

VOWELS

"a"	as in f*a*ther	example, M*a*sali'to
"e"	as in m*a*ke	K*e*'nge
"i"	as in f*ee*t	Mas*i*'*si*
"o"	as in *o*b*o*e	Nz*o*'b*o*
"u"	as in m*oo*n	A*u*'sa

(' follows the accented syllable, e.g., Nzo'bo)

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

127 number of articles published in various anthropological journals, there is nothing that we can draw upon for the present work. We have, then, 101 two distinct groups—Schebesta's Efe Mbuti and Putnam's Epulu (Sua) Mbuti, archers and net hunters, respectively.

101 A word should be said about classification. .197 Schebesta's division of the Ituri Mbuti into Aka, Efe, and Sua is a linguistic classification and, at that, a division not according to Mbuti languages but to the villager linguistic groups—Mangbetu, Lese, and Bira, respectively. It thus corresponds to tribal groupings of villagers and does not seem to be particularly significant for the purposes of sociological analysis. (Schebesta is more concerned with problems of racial and cultural purity, and believes the Efe language to be of Pygmy origin; consequently, he considered the Efe Pygmies to be racially and culturally the purest.

[P. 154-B]

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 197
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

[p.155-C]

stress [pick out?] that which was pygmy."[1] 114

Schebesta's division of the Ituri Pygmies into three linguistic groups is another result of his preoccupation with the problem of the separateness of the Pygmy and villager and the alleged anteriority of the former. He sets out to find an original Pygmy language and claims to have found it among the Efe archers. For this reason he regards them as the "purest" Mbuti. He also, of necessity, believes that their culture is the purest, being least affected by contact with the villagers. Yet from his account it is plain that the Pygmies he describes live in far closer association with neighboring villagers than do other Pygmy groups elsewhere in the Ituri Forest. This whole question of origin and anteriority is so highly speculative, resting, as it must, largely on conjecture, that again we prefer our own more factual basis of classification according to hunting technique, if only as a temporary measure, until we have sufficient information to make a classification according to structural principles.

114 177 101 114 177 [194]

1. [See footnote, bottom of p.155-D --Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 158-C]

the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a rela- 101
tively large one and shows some interesting 131
tendencies toward fission. It did not always 621
move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part
of the band would be several days' journey off
in the forest, while the rest remained at the
village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam 000
frequently visited the hunting band at its vari-
ous camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam
was more or less entirely confined by his illness
to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's 197 •
Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as
their camp language. They also use a great
many KiLese words, however, and the local
Bira affirm that they frequently cannot under-
stand what they call "KiMbuti," though they
recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the
Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some
KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

[P. 159-C]

forest to the east. Their southern limit is 131
bounded by a line from the Ruwenzori, through Beni to Bafwasende. The western boundary runs north from Bafwasende to Panga and to the confluence of the Bomokandi and Uele. (See Fig. 3.) Apart from the Lindi and Ituri rivers, Schebesta says that Pygmies also inhabit the areas near the Epulu, Ngayu, Nepoko, and Poko rivers. Putnam makes no attempt to delimit Mbuti territory, but his notes show that he traveled throughout the area described by Schebesta, with the possible exception of the extreme south, and found Mbuti everywhere, away from the major rivers as well as along their banks.

Schebesta makes the threefold division al- 197.
ready mentioned, of Twa, Tswa, and Mbuti, 101
and further subdivides the Ituri Mbuti into [619]
three major groups: the Aka to the north; Sua to the south; and Efe to the east (Fig. 3). These are linguistic groups, speaking dialects of Mangbetu, Bira, and Lese, respectively.

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197 •
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P. 159-D]

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [P.160-B]

[P. 161-C]
but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the 563
proportion of Negro blood passed to the 582
Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), how- [144]
ever, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare.

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the 197 •
question of Pygmy language. Some take the 114
view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira.

The Aka speak a Mangbetu dialect. Costermans (1937), who agrees with Putnam that the original Pygmy language has disappeared, even in the heart of the forest, states that everywhere the Pygmies use the language of the village population with which they live in symbiosis, though they retain their own accent. The Mamvu-Lese group, he says, are no exception to this rule. 197 • 114

Most Mbuti are polyglots, though Schebesta claims that the archers among whom he worked spoke only Efe, a fact that he takes to be additional evidence of the Pygmaean origin of this tongue, despite its obvious connection with KiLese. The Epulu Mbuti speak KiBira, KiLese, and KiNgwana. KiBira is used mainly as the camp language but in a dialectal form rendering it almost unintelligible to the Bira villagers. Whatever language the Mbuti are speaking there are certain similarities about the form it assumes, noticeably in the use of a hiatus (the "faucal gasp" noticed by Johnston, 1902, 1904, 532; see also Costermans, 1937) and of a curious singsong intonation. But for the present the question of originality in Mbuti language is still open, and we can state with certainty only that the Ituri Pygmies speak dialectal forms of the same Sudanic and semi-Bantu languages spoken by their village neighbors. 19

[P. 161 - D]

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

[P. 243-A]

197 was also Putnam's, although he was keenly
[114] interested in the problem and spoke all the major villager languages of the area fluently.
[177] All we can say is that the Ituri Mbuti now speak the same languages as the villager tribes with which they are or have been in closest contact.

114 Questions of origin and history can be answered only by speculation and do not concern us at the moment.

[128] As stated, physical anthropology is too
[144] specialized a subject to be treated here, though the findings of detailed studies would be of great value not only in helping to answer questions of origin, but also in tracing affinities between different Pygmy and Pygmoid groups, estimating migratory movements, and determining the degree of miscegenation with villager tribes and the relative direction of such miscegenation. This last consideration is of particular importance with reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 243-C]

gathering economy of the former from the adapted forest cultivation of the latter. Perhaps, above all, it distinguishes the values of the forest people from those of the villager invaders from the plains. The Mbuti adapt themselves to their environment; the villagers adapt the environment to their own way of life in so far as they can, compromising when they cannot. It is not difficult to see the possible psychological implications of this attitudinal difference and the profound difference in religious and social values that either rise from it or are strengthened by it. In the opposition between forest values and non-forest values we find the highest degree of opposition between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors.

P 182 P 181 182

THE SOCIAL UNIT

P 184

At this elementary point in our survey of Mbuti society, we begin to find significant structural differences between one group and another. These differences are not related to linguistic differences. Moreover, we find that, with the possible exception of the archers described by Schebesta, the Mbuti are polyglots.

P 184 187 •

While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

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study as a comparative base from which the study of the Mbuti as a whole may be more speedily and accurately advanced. It is also believed that although the bulk of the study involves a single hunting band, much of the basic structure uncovered applies to other Mbuti bands. The major limitation, however, is that we are here concerned primarily with one band rather than with the Mbuti as a whole, yet this was an inevitable necessity.

Other limitations arise from the lack of monographs on comparable groups of forest nomads, from my consequent reluctance to generalize too far from so narrow a base, and from the difficulty of presenting the principles of organization of a society that does not possess the formal institutions found in larger and more sedentary societies. Nonetheless, such principles plainly must exist, and while our general objective is to outline the form and structure of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers of the Ituri Forest in the northeast Congo (Leopoldville), we also have the more particular objective of searching for the elusive principles that integrate each apparently autonomous Mbuti band, giving it an identity of its own by which it recognizes itself and its integral but diffuse relationship with other bands. For it is in light of these principles that we must try to understand the effective but problematical relationship that pertains between any Mbuti band and the village cultivators who are its neighbors.

Another limitation derives from the lack of reference material on the Mbuti, which necessitated the gathering of ethnographic minutiae in the field and their presentation here, adding considerably to the bulk despite vigorous sifting. However, without a firm ethnographic base no analysis would be possible, so the provision of such a base is considered a prime prerequisite.

I have elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) given reasons for rejecting existing sources for both purposes of general comparison and particular analysis, though this is not to deny their possible value in other fields. My own subsequent account of the Mbuti (Turnbull, 1961) was in no way intended as an academic study, nor is it suited for use as such, though it served a useful purpose in helping the field worker detach himself from the subject of his study, enabling him to examine it more critically.

In my examination of other sources (1956) it was suggested that subsequent field work might discover a more meaningful division of the Ituri Mbuti than the linguistic division made by Schebesta, as

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the languages referred to, although spoken by the Mbuti, were evidently of non-Mbuti origin. Consequently another objective of the present study, based on further field work, is to begin to look for valid structural differences that do exist, following up the contention (*ibid.*) that one would expect to find such differences between the Mbuti who hunt by net and those who hunt with bow and arrow. The boundaries of the net-hunters and archers incidentally correspond, very roughly, to the linguistic boundaries drawn by Schebesta between the Sua- and Efe-speaking Mbuti: the Aka, to the north, although somewhat divided amongst themselves, offer a third category, some of them using the spear as their prime weapon.

To all these ends it was decided to make a further field trip in which one hunting band would be studied intensively throughout a calendar year, and in which as much comparative material as time and field conditions permitted would be gathered from other hunting bands. It was decided in advance, in the light of previous personal experience, that the sacrifice of a whole year to the study of one small band was essential, even though it would mean that any final conclusions about the general nature of Mbuti society would have to be delayed until a number of other such studies had been made. A band of either archers or net-hunters is a highly mobile, volatile entity, demanding of the field worker the utmost persistence in both physical and intellectual pursuit. It was quite obvious, also from previous experience, that the band not only constantly changes location, but it also constantly changes in composition. The significance of these fluctuations would only be discovered, it was felt, by following them right through their course in one given hunting territory before attempting any comparative studies among other bands. Above all it was essential in one band to find out what the significant social groupings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How was the band divided, along exactly what lines did the characteristic splits occur, what forces operated to hold the band together and to divide it? The scope of the one-band study was aimed at answering such questions and others that concern band relationships with local villages of cultivators. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding of the true nature of the over-all Mbuti/Villager relationship in this area, following up on the suggestion made earlier (Turnbull, 1956, 363–64) that this relationship was not one of master/servant, still less of slavery, and probably not even of symbiosis.

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niques do not affect the basic structural unity. The fact that the 101
Mbuti fall into different linguistic groups is no more than accidental, 197
and is of recent historic origin. The linguistic division is that propounded by Schebesta (1938, pp. 24–26). In effect he uses the terms Aka, Efe and Sua to refer to those pygmies who were in territories invaded and settled by the Ngbetu/Zande, the Lesé, and the Forest Bira respectively; these pygmies apparently adopted the languages of the newcomers to their respective areas and they have maintained some kind of relationship with their Negro neighbors ever since.

The question of language is by no means settled yet, and it may be 197
that either KiLesé or KiBira may in fact prove to be a language of 174
pygmy origin adopted by the Negro invaders. At the moment there is no significant evidence available to this effect, and given a situation where small isolated hunting bands (of an absolute maximum of thirty nuclear families and a possible minimum of three) are brought sharply into contact with larger, more permanent, technologically more advanced peoples with a tribal system, we can only assume the likelihood that the pygmies adopted the languages of the newcomers, losing most of their own.

In this case the linguistic division suggested by Schebesta most 197
certainly only refers to a post-contact situation and does not necessarily point to any indigenous difference between these three groups of 114
Ituri hunters and gatherers. The fact that, very approximately, the linguistic boundaries also correspond to the boundaries between pygmy hunters who emphasize the spear, the bow and arrow, and the net may be no more than a mark of acculturation with the three distinct Negro groups; on the other hand it may point to some earlier distinction, but in any case is of much more significance in any contemporary study of social structure.

In dismissing the linguistic differences as any indication of internal 197
differentiation it is worth pointing out that any pygmy from any area 101
in the Ituri can recognize though not comprehend any other pygmy speaking a totally different language because, throughout, the intonation is remarkably similar, absolutely distinctive, and different by far from the intonation used by the Negroes whose language is being spoken. This is one small pointer toward an earlier linguistic unity among all Ituri pygmies, as is the fact that they all seem to recognize themselves by the term Mbuti. One hears this term far more frequently than any other when pygmies are distinguishing themselves from villagers, in all parts of the forest. Even in distinguishing them-

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197 selves from neighboring pygmies, place names are more likely to be
101 used than the terms Aka, Efe or Sua. Although I have formerly used both BaMbuti and Bambuti, I here use the form Mbuti, as this eliminates difficulty in accurately representing singular and plural forms, and is in keeping with the current practice of the International African Institute.

101 In previous writings and occasionally in this work, the term "Ne-
144 gro" is used to differentiate the pygmy hunters from the immigrant farmers, but it now seems far better to use the term "villager," for the significant difference, as seen by the people concerned as well as seen by the anthropologist, is one between a forest people and a village people; the racial factor is structurally negligible. Precise tribal names cannot always be used, as in some villages the tribal composition is mixed, and as any one band of Mbuti may have contact with two or even three different village tribal groups.

121 I have made other modifications to my earlier terminology, neces-
128 sary simply because of increased understanding. I now use the term "band" where previously I used the term "group" to refer to a unit of Mbuti hunters, who, regardless of their kin relationships, recognize and share a common hunting territory. As will be seen, the term refers more to territorial boundaries than to the boundaries of kinship. The term "group" I now employ to refer generally to one villager group as opposed to another; i.e., Sudanic and Bantu, say, or to distinguish between all net-hunters and all archers. But wherever used, it is used only in its general sense, the context making its meaning plain. It does not have any specific academic significance, not being a translation, for instance, of Schebesta's (1948, p. 291) "Lokalgruppe."

By "family" is meant a nuclear family of a man, his wife and their sociologically recognized children, who are cared for and brought up in all respects in the same way whether or not they are biological offspring. The terms "clan" and "lineage" do not enter much into our analysis of actual Mbuti kinship, but are used as theoretical concepts by comparison with which we can more satisfactorily understand the Mbuti system. A discussion of their meaning is, then, an integral part of the test.

In the course of discussion of the magico-religious system, certain usages specific to the situation will be defined; here I would just mention my own understanding of the terms "ceremony" and "festival." "Ceremony" has, when I use it, the connotation of formal ritual, of an established pattern of behavior that must be followed according

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101 197
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major [161]
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [174]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [177]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Schebesta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent. [184]
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184] [411]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765]
I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

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822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
822 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[178] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[761] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[765] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[789] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

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"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

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593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 578 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonetheless concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [585] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

224 When they have arrived at the right location, the men set up the nets in a line and stand by to tend them; the women spread out in a circle to beat. Often the pygmies will have dogs which they have borrowed from the Negroes, barkless dogs with wooden bells tied to their collars. Each woman cuts a lot of twigs and makes a little broom with them. She beats the bushes with it, and cries out, "Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo!" over and over again. The young children, except for the babies which are being carried, are made to keep out of this.

[198] [825] When the women sight an animal and it heads for the nets, they change the tone of their baying; either they identify the kind of animal by this means or indicate that an animal in general is coming. When the animal rushes up to the net and entangles itself, the man who is tending that part of the net grabs the animal and kills it with his knife or spear. He will then beat his hand on his arm pit, and the others will come up to see what he has killed. Sometimes, however, the animal sees the net, or a man moves, and the animal leaps back into the line of women. Such an animal can well escape, for the women are not prepared to stop it. However, when a woman engaged in beating sights a slow animal, such as a turtle, pangolin, porcupine, or even a rat, she will dive for it and pop it into her basket which she carries on her back, and go on beating. [462] This is merely incidental gathering; slow animals are women's game.

During the course of a single day a pygmy band may set up their nets, conduct a drive, take the nets down, and repeat the process as many as seven times, each time in a different place. If the clouds collect early, they will go home. If there are no clouds and they have a good bag of game, they will still go home, but if it is dry and they

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[NET HUNTERS]

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224 animal with his knife or spear. He claps his arm-
[201] pit to signal his success to his companions. The women by the tone of their shouting and the men by their arm-clapping (KiBira: *kombo*) can indicate not only when and where game is put up, but the kind of game.

In a day's hunting this process may be repeated as many as seven times, if the rain holds off. But if the first few casts of the nets are successful the Pygmies return to camp. They make no provision for the storage of meat or any other food.

If large game, such as buffalo, is driven toward them, the Mbuti try to lower the nets to avoid their being damaged; otherwise, the buffalo will probably tear its way through, though it may be delayed long enough for the hunters to spear it. Antelope is the game normally
[483] caught. The hunter carries the dead animal around his neck back to the camp for division. If a larger animal, such as an okapi, is caught, it is cut up on the spot and carried back to the camp in the women's baskets. There all the meat is spread out and the division takes place

PLATE 26 [1]

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind. [292]

142 885 576 [301] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

[1], /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

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885
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/Plate 26-B/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

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renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Although this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and disloyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he

595
578

Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail. [765]

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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000 village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as
P 764 being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting
177 the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be
522 severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends
P in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be af-
• [201] fected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

C The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of
761 settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no
764 death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was
P not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not
[761] co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and
[177] that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

P Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's
765 little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534
533 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
825 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again, and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781
534 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was 224
much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what 372
had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, look- 578
ing in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from an- 156
other fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground. [201] •

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, [262] contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when 224
they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled "*Ayiiiiii?*"—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *karé* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *segbe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *karé* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

Z P 881 177 608 Z P [534] [202] •

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nkumbi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *karé* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

Z P 881 177 608 534

[P. 179-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 28 [1/A]

855 **Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri**

851 a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

882 b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married.

885 Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow

• 202 against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

[1/A],/Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 28-B/

/Caption appears on p.288/

[P.289-B]

554 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent
558 cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké
627 said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit
201 [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

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156 There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked
627 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to
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554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P·276-I]

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302
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202

36. When the kill is assured, a youth signals back to the camp and to other hunters, to let them know what kind of game has fallen into whose net. Relatively complex messages can be signaled in this way, variations in rhythm combining with variations in pitch achieved by flexing the elbow, which forms a sound box when clapped with the other hand.

husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled *"Ayiiiiii?"*—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 224 go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, [202] bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories [157] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he 439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he 177 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 The direct contribution of the children to the • 22 food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 175-C]

way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22.

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

[ARCHERS]

[p.176-A]
262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the
439 alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a
177 day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty
• 22 of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the pri- 512
mary concern of daily life among the net hunt- 22
ers. The net hunt is considerably more reward-
ing than the other form of hunt, although it
probably occupies as much time. Care and [286]
maintenance of the nets are also laborious and
time-consuming. Women gather not only as
they accompany the hunt, but also on those
days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. [857]
The children make a not inconsiderable contri-
bution to the family food quest. A common 512
occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and 283
women to assist each other in the making of
twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used pri-
marily in the repair of hunting nets.

As with the archers, elimination takes place 364
not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried 514
away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. [184]
These practices not merely create an unpleas-
ant smell after some weeks, but also attract
armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, how- 515
ever, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and
the favorite recreation of the children is playing
about in the shallow streams. The men assert [481]
that they can all swim but are never seen doing [823]
so; they are certainly much afraid of deep wa-
ter.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy 313
never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch
in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows,
arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women
use saplings of no greater size to construct the
frames of the huts.

The material used by the Mbuti throughout 28
the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they
make the barkcloth that is their only clothing;
the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets;
the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and
tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by
Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125)
that he has also seen basketry quivers.

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phryn- 824
ium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing [342]
their huts, though when near a village planta-
tion they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium [45]
leaves are also used in default of villager-manu-
factured or trade utensils, for carrying water,
as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of [386]
certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration
of body and of barkcloth.

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no ad- 221
verse repercussions, as they move camp fre- 361
quently. Among the net hunters every month 184
or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336).
[P. 165-D]

221 [P. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

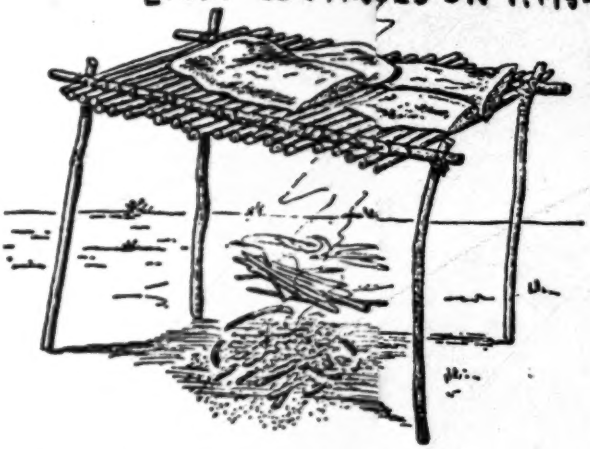
1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Honey Gathering

Honey gathering is of particular importance 222 [221]. and is seasonal. The equipment consists of fire,

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 175-B]



251
417

Fig. 12. Meat-drying rack, archers, Central and East Ituri. Meat drying takes place only when the Mbuti intend to trade with villagers and is by no [439] means a part of every hunting camp.

[P. 174-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

222 Putnam says that, for most of the year, gather-
221 ing can be said only to supplement vegetable
439 food obtained from the villager plantations, although during the "dry season" (January–February) certain seeds and fruits ripen, and forest foods become so plentiful that the Pygmy can live entirely by gathering.

222 Particularly important among the fruits is
[137] the *ibambi*, a large fruit somewhat resembling an outsized pineapple. When ripe it can be heard falling to the ground, at which there is a

[P 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

race between Pygmies and chimpanzees to get 222
to it first. Pygmies say that chimpanzees, if they [825]
are already well fed, will take a fallen *ibambi*
and hide it in the fork of a tree, but an obser-
vant Pygmy will find it. The *eseli* nut is the [137]
most important of the nuts and is too tough for
chimpanzees to open, and the *itaba* is the most
important of the edible roots. Following the dry [221]
season comes the season of termites, and then
that of caterpillars. The honey season, however,
is the only season of real significance.

[P. 209-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.210-A]

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[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *ebimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayabisi*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *ngbengbe*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[184]
[222]
[535]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Honey Gathering

222 This is an important and festive season, com-
[221] ing toward the middle of the year. The method
[184] of collection is the same as that described by Schebesta (1952, 143–144) for the archers, and is undertaken by men. Women may accompany them, mainly to be sure of getting their share of honey. On such expeditions, and on any other occasion when they are going from one place to another, the women carry baskets on their backs and leave the right arm free to cut roofing leaves and gather mushrooms and roots and other vegetable foods in passing. In the left

[P 210-B]

[P. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
22 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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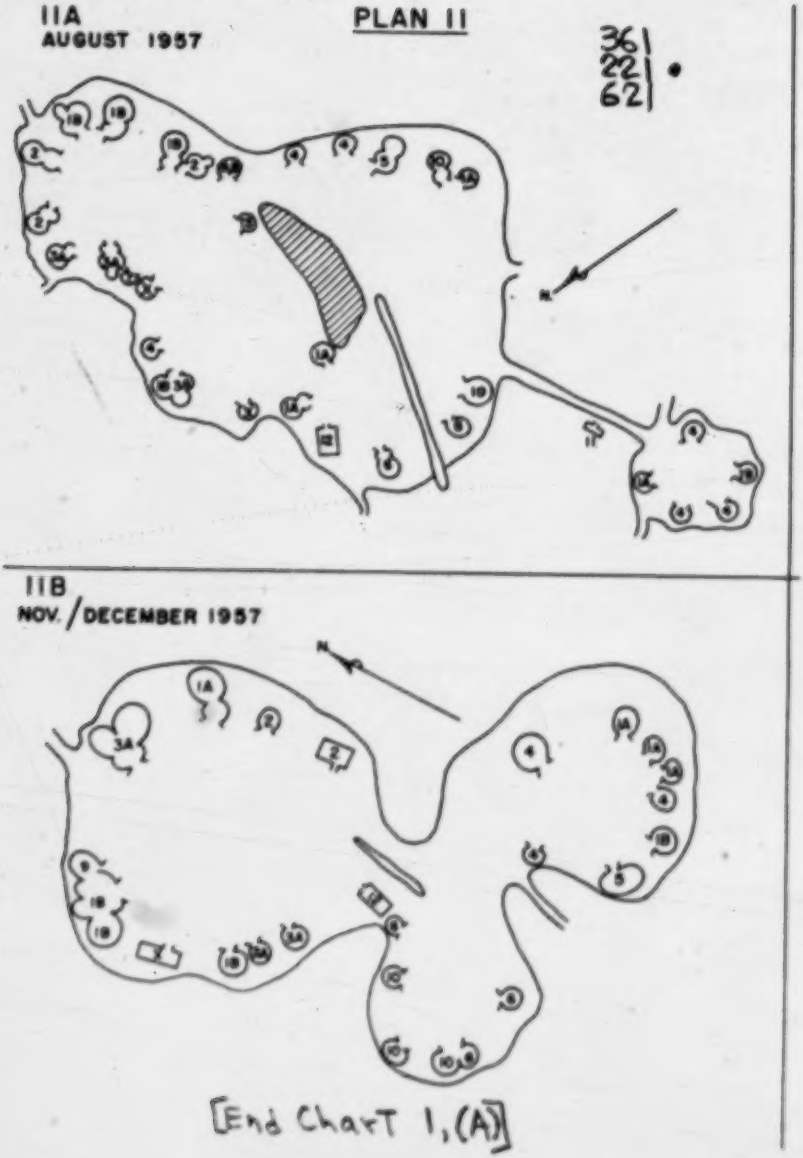
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

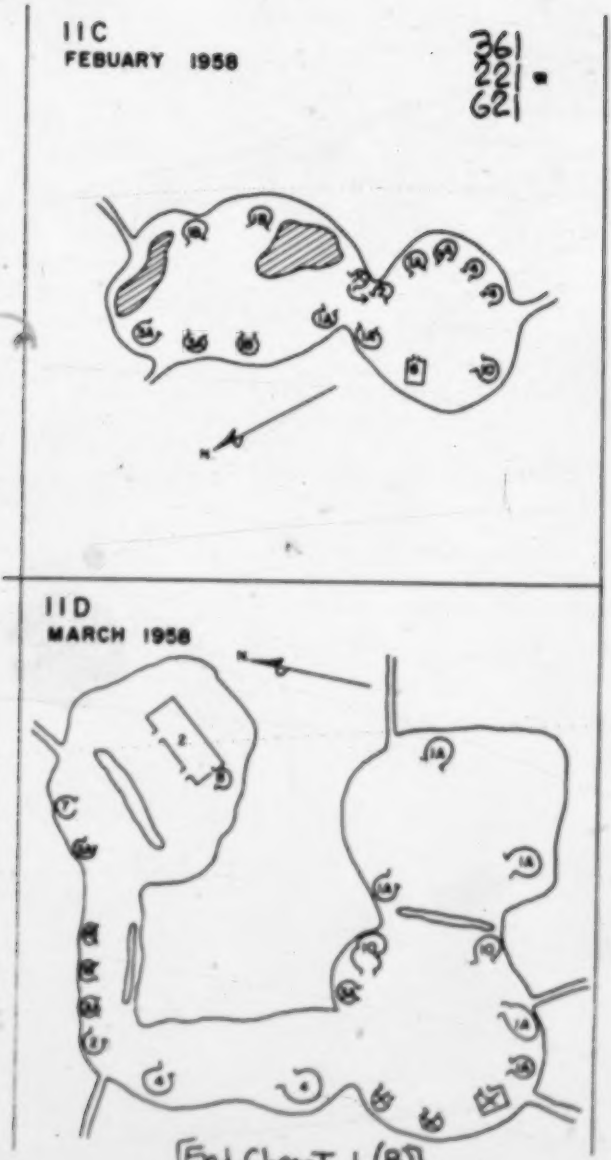
Chart of Positions of End Chart 1 (Plan 11).
[facing End Chart 1]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



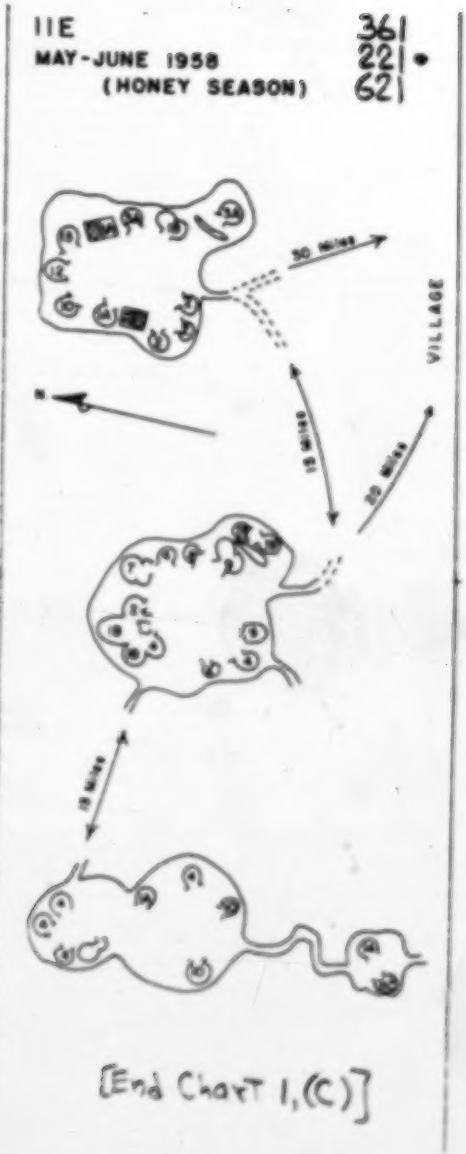
[End Chart 1,(A)]

2. Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



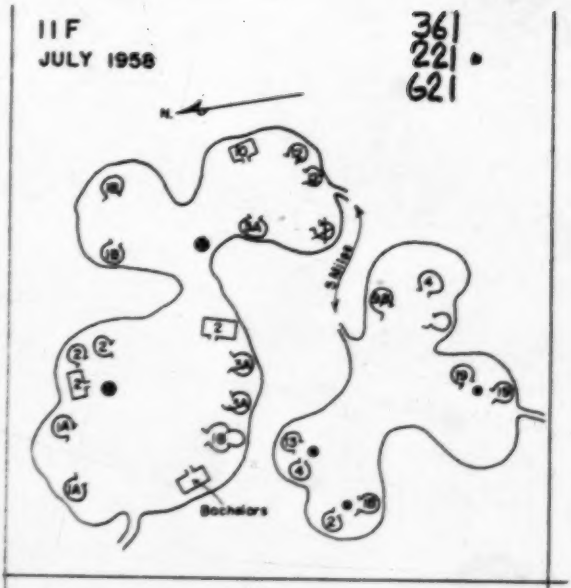
[End Chart 1,(B)]

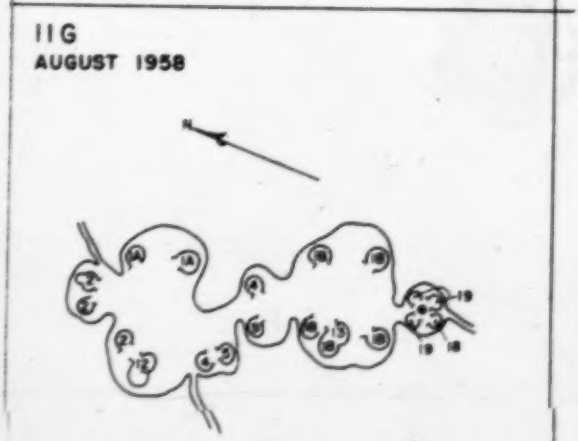
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 1,(C)]

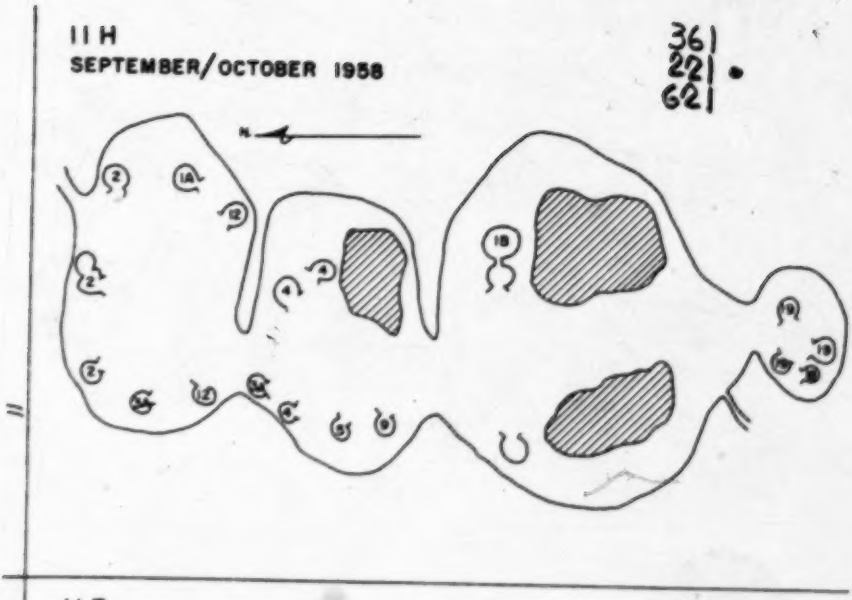
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

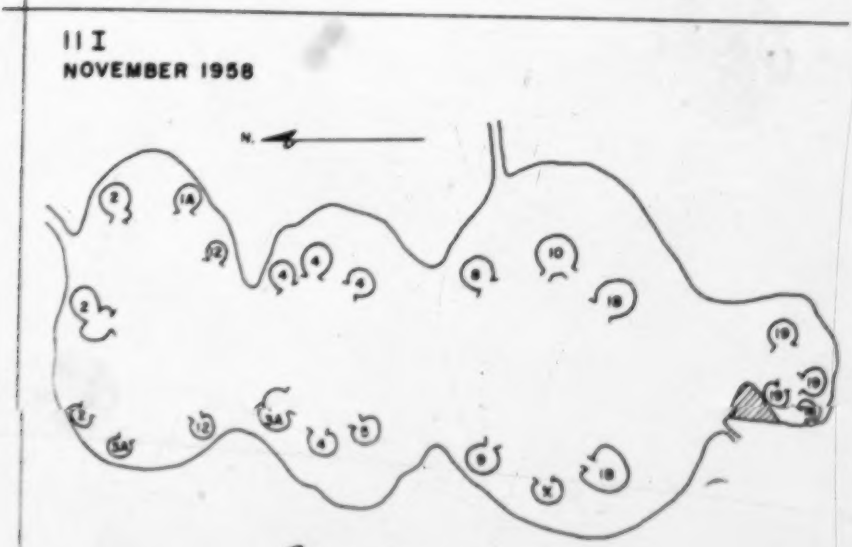




[End Chart 1, (D)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti





[End Chart 1, (E)]

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224] other factor.
[184]

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

224 magic seems to be somewhat more prevalent. Further, although
621 archery does not demand a relatively large co-operative band as does
[221] net-hunting, and although for most of the year the archers seem to be split into small bands of maybe only three or so nuclear families, the band is actually comparable in size and composition, and manifests its unity once a year for the annual *begbe* beat-hunt.

The *begbe* is remarkably like the net-hunt in technique and in social function. The major difference is the absence of nets, which makes for a much smaller circle for the same number of participants. Seven nuclear families could successfully hunt with nets; they could never form a *begbe* hunt. By the same token, more than thirty families could easily participate in *begbe* without inconvenience or danger, and if we define the archer band by stated territorial boundaries, and consider its composition as consisting of those who hunt within those boundaries during the year and form the communal *begbe* hunt once a year, then the average size of the archer band is probably larger than that of the net-hunting band.

The *begbe* demands large numbers; the men form a tight semicircle, each man well within sight of the next, the women and children forming a similarly tight semicircle opposite. The men are armed with bows and arrows, and with spears; the women make petards, which when beaten on the ground make a sharp, explosive sound. When the circle is complete, the women beat toward the men, who try to kill the animals before they break through their ranks, a procedure that is considerably more hazardous than the net-hunt, where the hunters can afford to wait until the game is at least temporarily held up by the net.

224 Among the archers the *begbe* is referred to as the beginning of the
221 new year, and the hunt coincides, it seems, with the honey season,
621 which for the net-hunters is similarly the beginning, or the end, of the year. During this season, then, the archer band is consolidated and co-operative, though it seldom builds a single camp. Rather, there may be from three to five large camps, but built close to each other (within earshot) and connected by trails. This, however, is the one time of year when the band does meet and hunt as such, though *even at this time there is no central authority.*

621 For the rest of the year the band is broken up into smaller units,
221 each one economically and politically independent of the other. These sections may vary in size from two or three nuclear families to as many as ten, or temporarily even a few more. Generally an archer camp contains from three to six families.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[718] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[716] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[508] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east. 221 222 533 535 [372] [534] [192]

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives. 222 [114] 221 481

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect. 222 [192]

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish. [415] 262

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled 262 252

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

• 221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[862] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the ground, and any who are timid or low get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 535 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomea*." No satisfactory translation

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo - Kinshasa F01

of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes [illegible] the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

224 626 [821] [152] [166] [648] ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of friction).

There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 621 221 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

578 593 152 281 621

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 593 621 166 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 626 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its members. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting [221] should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it was splitting badly (*"apa ndaso aké sinana"*). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: *"kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi"*) and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's. 621 626

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again." 621 626 829 769

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*. 621 502 571 578

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued 621 221 224 578

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[3] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[3] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange.

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apud'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*nubundura nu wendi, nubunenji nu wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubenji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu nu puti nuvi nde'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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Plan Ib
EPULU VILLAGE

Camp of Pygmies
(About twice scale of Plan Ia)

CLAN MEMBERSHIP
(Numbers inside huts)

1A	PUEMI	1
1B	PUEMI	2
2	BOMASUA	
3A	BOKELE	1
3B	BOKELE	2
3C	BOKELE	3
4	BAMBAKA	
5	BWANGO	
6	UMGBAUSU	
7	MEKI	
8	POKBAYA	
9	POKAMA	
10	POTEBA	
11	MGAMO	
12	BANDOHWA	

Letters inside huts indicate barter-relationship with correspondingly lettered hut in village (Plan Ia).

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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PLAN 22-d Village camp of Epulu Mbuti, October 1957–March 1958.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

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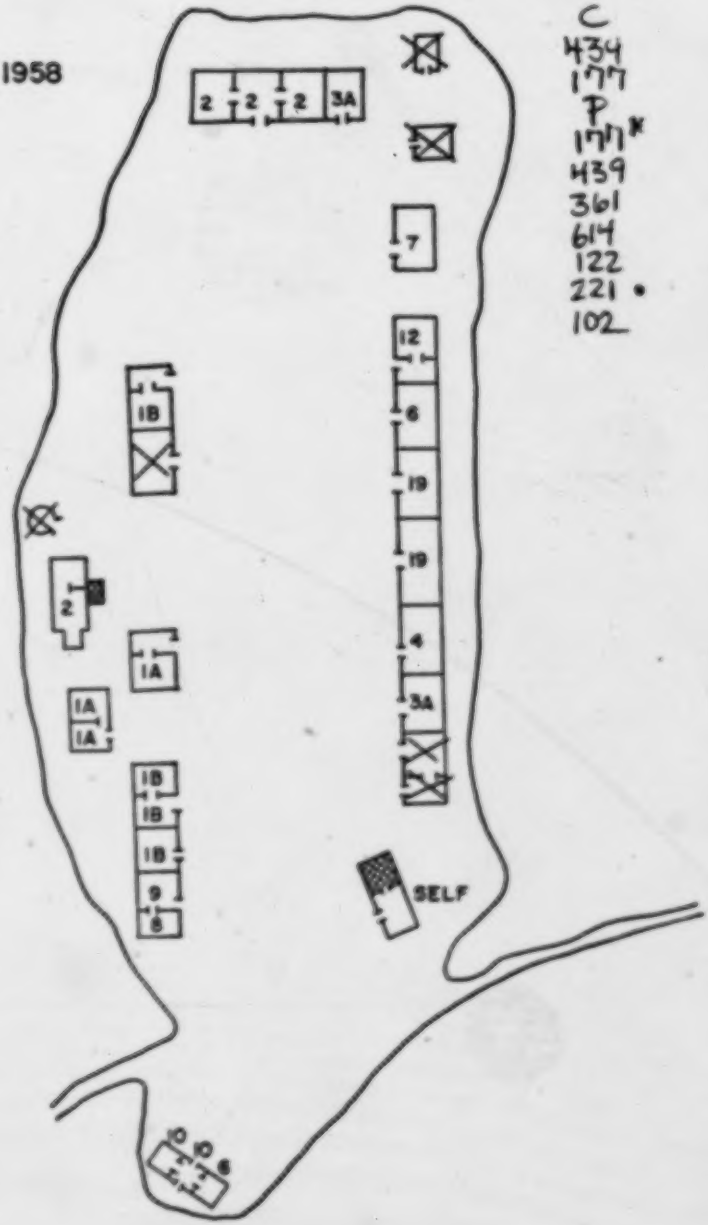
Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958



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2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

338

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*177
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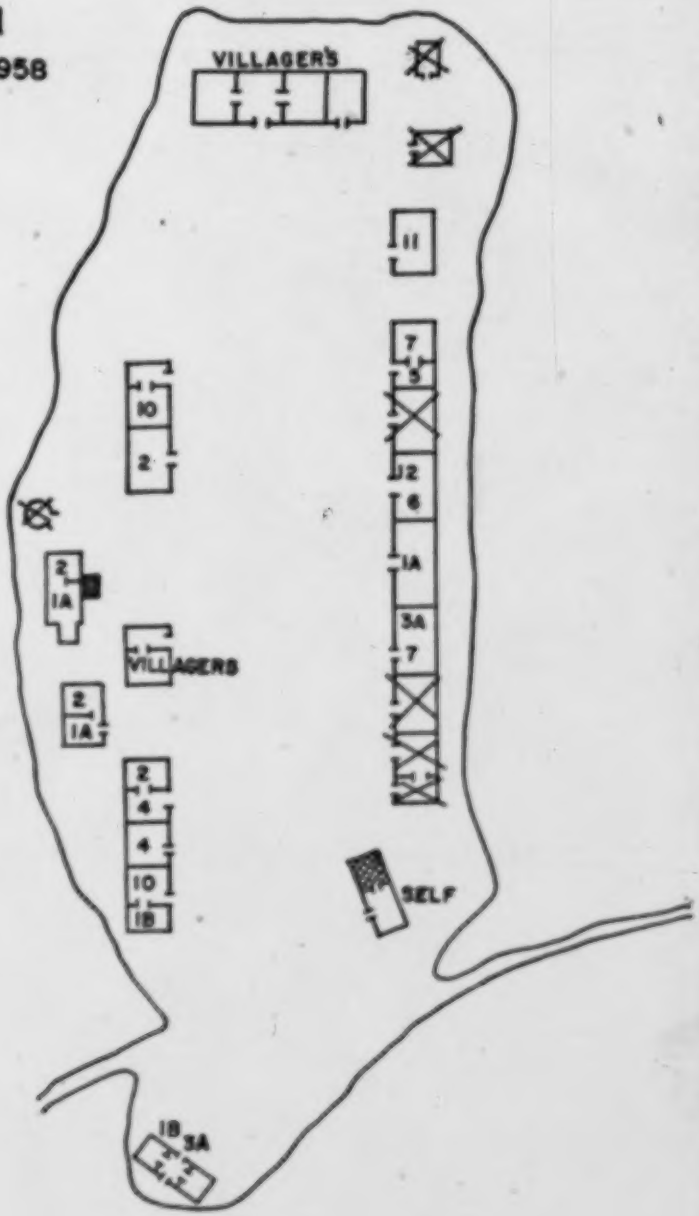
361
614
122
• 221
102

WAYWARD SERVANTS

Plan 2d
MARCH 1958



621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

• 221 621 And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

114 But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Masisi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to 221 the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the 524 dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from 526 the highest branches, and on these the youths practiced their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line 221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all 525 was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221 *
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372] up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534] on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their ap- 621
pearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The
[137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when
[125] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pygmies seem to be a little less talkative
571
[P.333-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Honey Gathering

222
Honey gathering is of particular importance [221]
and is seasonal. The equipment consists of fire,
[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 175-B]

251
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Fig. 12. Meat-drying rack, archers, Central and East Ituri. Meat drying takes place only when the Mbuti intend to trade with villagers and is by no means a part of every hunting camp. [439]

[P. 174-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.175-A]

B
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412
222
284

FIG. 13. Adze, Bira villagers, rehafted by Mbuti archers, Central Ituri. A villager utensil, useful but not indispensable to the Mbuti, for the extraction of honey from hives in tree holes.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 22 The direct contribution of the children to the food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P 175-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, with the exception of termite hunting which is conducted at whatever time of the day or night termites are found to be swarming. 512 222

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninterrupted throughout the year, except when camp is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account that birth arouses the least public interest. The band welcomes each birth gladly but at the same time accepts it as no more than its due. The wives of its menfolk are expected to produce children; it is their primary function in the eyes of both the band and their husbands, and even in their own eyes. 844 [512] 844 621 [562]

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual blood is an important factor in conception (Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the connection between coition and conception (1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hearing the opinion expressed that repeated coition would hasten the hour of birth. 842 843 [841]

[P 177-D]

[ARCHERS]

422 Certain objects that by their nature are col-
•222 lective property, however, are considered to be-
long to the finder. This applies mainly to vegetable products, a honey tree, a termite nest, or a nest of grubs or caterpillars. All who help in the gathering are due their share of these products, but the major part goes to the finder.

422 All personal objects made or acquired by an
[423] Mbuti are private property. Thus not only the utensils, but the homestead itself, is the property of the wife, who may, if she wishes, pull the hut down as a gesture of defiance. Weapons belong to men; clothes, to each individual. These objects can be disposed of in any way, at
[685] will. Petty pilfering is considered as theft, and theft is both forbidden and punished; but Schebesta does not describe any system of punishment.

428 With regard to succession, generally the brothers or the sons, says Schebesta, inherit from a father; sisters and daughters, from a mother.

000 Schebesta (1948, 533) argues that, as the
[P. 186-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 170
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering ac-
tivities that require the climbing of high trees,
such as the collection of most nuts, are under-
taken by men, who also collect termites, silk-
worms, and honey. The contribution of chil-
dren, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net
hunters make much fuller use of forest products,
the most important of which are nuts, edible
fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be
subdivided into a number of different species,
not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for
each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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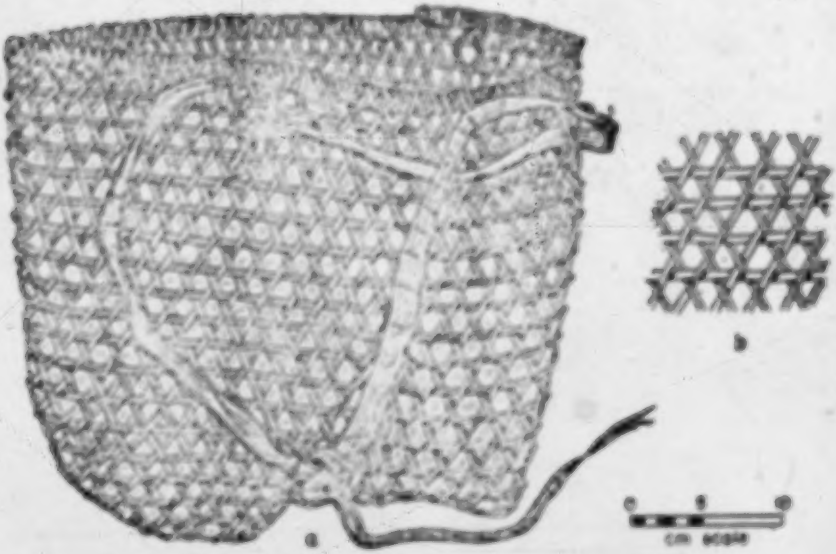

FIG. 41. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Basket, *sa.* b. Details of construction. Open-mesh baskets, of strips of dried vine, are made and used by Mbuti women among both net hunters and archers.

(184)

[P 208-C]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

FIG. 42. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a-b. Baskets, [139] c. Close-mesh baskets are obtained from neighboring villages and may be offered by villagers in exchange for forest produce.

Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

222 Putnam says that, for most of the year, gather-
221 ing can be said only to supplement vegetable
439 food obtained from the villager plantations, al-
though during the "dry season" (January–Feb-
ruary) certain seeds and fruits ripen, and forest
foods become so plentiful that the Pygmy can
live entirely by gathering.

222 Particularly important among the fruits is
[137] the *ekambi*, a large fruit somewhat resembling
an outsized pineapple. When ripe it can be
heard falling to the ground, at which there is a
[P 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

race between Pygmies and chimpanzees to get 222
to it first. Pygmies say that chimpanzees, if they [325]
are already well fed, will take a fallen *ibambi*
and hide it in the fork of a tree, but an obser-
vant Pygmy will find it. The *eseli* nut is the [137]
most important of the nuts and is too tough for
chimpanzees to open, and the *itaba* is the most
important of the edible roots. Following the dry [221]
season comes the season of termites, and then
that of caterpillars. The honey season, however,
is the only season of real significance.

[P 209-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 210-A]

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222

[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *ekimbe*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayahisi*, West Ndoye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c-d. Clappers, *aplengke*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[184]
[222]
[535]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

222

[221]

[184]

Honey Gathering

This is an important and festive season, coming toward the middle of the year. The method of collection is the same as that described by Schebesta (1952, 143–144) for the archers, and is undertaken by men. Women may accompany them, mainly to be sure of getting their share of honey. On such expeditions, and on any other occasion when they are going from one place to another, the women carry baskets on their backs and leave the right arm free to cut roofing leaves and gather mushrooms and roots and other vegetable foods in passing. In the left

[P 210-B]

I: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngòongò* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P 210-C]

Ir Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.225-A]

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789
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FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akhelea*, attached to fur headband worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they [237] set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbela*. c. Antelope horn, [238] *anje*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, [222] *madi*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madi*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyengi*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[NET HUNTER] A

421 lazy hunter and his family go without meat; an
224 idle woman goes without vegetables and has no roof to her hut. The division of game obtained during a net hunt is the only division that includes everyone in the band, whether or not they attended the hunt. Even then we do not know whether those who did not attend had any arrangement with any of the actual hunters. Nets are frequently lent, as are spears. It may well be that absentee members of the hunt participate by proxy and in this way entitle themselves to a share. The division itself, as is mentioned above, is said to be subject to complicated rules.

Apart from the net hunt, which is essentially
594 collective and cooperative and concerns the
222 band, other forms of food quest are familial. A
421 woman is entitled to what she finds, for herself and her family. Similarly a man, hunting
594 individually with bow and arrow, may claim as
224 his own anything that he may bring in, though
421 in such a case there is some doubt. Using bow and arrow he would be likely to bring in only small game, and rarely, these Mbuti being very poor shots. If however, he killed or found large game, such as an okapi, on his own, it would be

[P 230-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

789 224 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *segbe* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Segbe* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 534 222 *Segbe* are not to be confused with *madl* (Fig. 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the honey season.

789 821 372 Rain magic involves the covering of the campfires with leaves but evidently without much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P 240-3]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

A fourth factor might be added: While the net hunt quickly scares animals away from the area around the hunting camp, necessitating frequent changes of site, the archery technique neither depletes the game so quickly nor frightens it away. An archer band can therefore remain confined to a smaller area, near the village, while the net hunters sometimes must wander several days' march away from their patrons. The more nomadic group also has constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is apparently felt by the more settled archers, for plantation products. 184 182 224 361 [262]

Thus at once we can see the possible economic, social, and political implications of the difference in hunting technique and how these implications follow in fact. 184 182 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of social and economic importance in each type of community. It is regarded primarily as the work of women, though, wherever it calls for tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among 222 184 462

[P 244-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 245-A]

222 184 462 both groups it appears that food acquired by gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet than the product of hunting.

222 221 184 [462] Honey gathering, a primarily male activity, is the only major seasonal activity. There are indications from both groups that the Mbuti regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 262 128 There is not enough information on drinks, narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restrictions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[182] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P 245-B]

PLATE 33 $\frac{3}{A}$

AN MBUTI GATHERER WITH HER TYPICAL BASKET AND TUMP LINE,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

462 Women and girls do nearly all the gathering, though a man may pick any mushrooms or
482 fruits he happens across on the trail. Women are also responsible for the maintenance of
222 fire. Not knowing how to make fire, women always carry a smoldering ember, as does this
372 woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves.

1, /Plate 33 appears on page 299--Analyst/
A

[P. 298]

Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 36 1/A

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a hole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

322 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
{251} drunk.

1/A, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P.304]

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
291
222
412

/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
262
222

/Plate 36-B/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P 305-B]

222

Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[For additional information on the honey season, but only as it pertains to the effect of that season's activities on community relations and structure, see 621, 628 and 221.]

621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*177 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

[881] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

• 222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
*[177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
[622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the *molimo*, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

[P. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a *capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age,

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities. 621 22 602 613

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather. 224 [462] [222]

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp. 224 621 166 224 166 621 628 [461]

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more 224 628 825

224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[614] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

• 222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are frequently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the *elima* songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity,

222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east. 221 222 533 535 [372] [534] [192]

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives. 222 [114] 221 481

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect. 222 [192]

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish. [415] 262

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled 262 252

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[862] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the ground, and any who are timid or slow get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 222 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 535 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomes.*" No satisfactory translation

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo - Kinshasa F01

of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

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Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkuas* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

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Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the encroaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the encroaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seeking a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge occur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-operation as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

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that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

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wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

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uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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222 789 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 789 462 825 [535] The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, symbolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to attune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 789 561 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 789 561 824 823 372 412 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure [821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

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Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

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539 222 571 439 rest I put in a place where the tree had two arms [i.e., in a fork]. I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, but I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" My *kpara* looks at the basket.

"Ah! My master. I came to search for my honey, but there is only a little of it. It is a bad year. It is heavy work. You must go back with my honey; if I get any more I shall come with it."

The *kpara* took my honey with him and returned to the village to say that he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity! [*Ndamdama nda'e!* or *Mbafu yakéi!*] When he had gone I quickly climbed up above and I collected all the honey from the place I had put it, and I came down to return to the camp and share it with all my relatives. I walked, I walked, I walked. I arrived at the big river. Darkness began to come. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?" I climbed up a big tree and lay there.

539 222 776 Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke up. A little way off I saw two firebrands. "Ah! Who is walking in the middle of the night like that, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit." I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice. "Ah! My child, where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very, very old woman. I was surprised. "Ha! Grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost the trail."

I remained quiet, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree. It was truly an evil spirit, but he had changed into my grandmother. I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"Yes, Grandmother. I am here. I was searching for honey, but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Oh, child, you have done badly, for when you did not return I thought you were dead and I left camp to search for you, and I have found you well. You have done very badly toward me. Give me my honey."

"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, I, myself. We shall return together."

"Nonsense! You are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with my honey. Give it." I was afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit. I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more." I threw down more. "Give me more."

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"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

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822 [198] [192] "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. 822 198 [778] [761] [533] The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and [533] [765] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely [821] [789] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 824 [198] [192] All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunting dance. [822] [825] Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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602 561 121 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionalization of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 561 562 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 462 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the interdependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines. [224] [222] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[193] [2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *tatè* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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37. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

38. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemoké's uncle, Masalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 303]

THE LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

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me ke nandura ka ba boki.
I went to the forest to collect honey.

me ke a'i, me ke a'i, me ke a'i.
I went, I went, I went.

me ke akurahwa, ku pia libo mangbo.
I went very far, beyond the big river.

moki li suanjoki. me oni neko kuma boki.
I heard the sound of bees. I saw up high the place of honey.

me lufudo, "toka bo nangoli; nde mendamo; nde boki ndamo."
I said, "Nobody has enclosed the tree with vine, it is mine; it is my honey."

me poki loka phelea, phelea bekbekbe'i.
I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed.

me teningoli. ke kongi isa, me pisi isa subaso.
I cut a vine. I fanned my fire, and put the fire in my basket.

me pedi oda phangoli; me daphi, me daphi.
I began to climb; I climbed, I climbed.

boki neko kurahwa. nde boki, boki sandenengo, kanga piso.
The honey was very far. It was honey, real honey, not *apuma.*

me kidi. me boingoli, me liki. me pisi isa suba eboso.
I reached it. I fastened the vine, I sat. I put fire into the hole.

me lophi. me ki abi bekbekbe'i, me che'i banzoki.
I blew. I got much smoke, I drove out many bees.

me ko iti, me ko iti, me ko iti.
I chopped, I chopped, I chopped.

me ko iti, me mua kito, a mua pika na dodo.
While I was chopping I heard someone walking below.

"nu andea a mua pika pecha me?" nde mukpara ndamo.
"Who is walking below me?" It is my master.

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"a oki kueta mboki ndamo, a me beli." me wanzi nimbo.
"He heard me cutting my honey, he followed me." I began to sing.

me nimbi bekbekbei, akini mehufu. kanga me oki.
I sang loudly, but he called me. I did not hear.

me nimbi, akini me kweti.
I sang, but I chopped.

me nimbi, "Ha! me kweti boki. me ko oka kapa'i akpara mamo."
I sang, "Ha! I am chopping honey to give to my *kpara*."

me kweti bisa, me kweti boka. boki a bi lenga'i.
I chopped slowly, I chopped honey. There was much honey.

akini me pisa depha subaso.
But I only put part of it in my basket.

me pisi ndetina a su soro kokomea.
The rest I put where the tree had two arms.

me nimbi, "Ah! boki a bi depha, me ka bokbu akpara mamo." me ki a dodo.
I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! mambuti mamo, me siye ema?" mubira a si pi so.
"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" The MuBira looks at the basket.

"Ah! akpara mamo, me piki ka ba boki ndamo, akini me pati na che.
"Ah! My Master, I came to search for my honey, but I got only a little.

"me mua ka pa'i bokbu. me sia bo'u."
"I am going to give it all. I will stay empty."

"ue nde mambuti manza. me ka pa eboko mboye siki nanji."
"You are a good Mbuti. I shall give you bananas when you come to the village."

"Ah! akpara mamo, me lika nandura a ka ba boki, akini nde depha."
"Ah! My Master, I shall stay in the forest to search for honey, but there is little."

"nde mwaka sinana. nde kazi ndangbo."
"It is a bad year. It is hard work."

"ue sikia nanji na boki ndamo. me pati ndetina, me piki na'u."
"You go to the village with my honey. If I get more, I shall come with it."

akpara a bu boki ndamo, a siki nanji nda'e.
The *kpara* took my honey, he went to the village with it.

asibande a bi boki ndamo bokbu. ndandama nda'e!
He would say he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity!

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ake me daphi umana'o, me bu boki ngbokbu, kumande me pisibi.
I quickly climbed up again, I took all the honey from the place where I had put it.

me simi ya dodo a sia n'apa a kapa banama bame.
I came down to return to the camp and shared it with everyone.

me tambi, me tambi, me tambi. me kidi apua libo mangbo.
I walked, I walked, I walked, I arrived at the big river.

tokwaba a wanzi pika. me lufu. "ha! tudu a me pedi a me mandula? me sao mabo?"
Darkness began to settle. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?"

me daphi kua me mangbo, me langi neko.
I climbed up into a big tree, I lay there.

ame mangondo moki liso. me oni kurahwa isa ebaré.
Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke. I saw far away two firebrands.

"mondea na tamba kifa, na isa ebara bende? nde ketiba!"
"Who is walking in the middle of the night, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit!"

me kobi nengo. m'oki liso kali.
I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice.

"a miki mamo, miki mamo; miki mamo mu ma?" liso a tata, mozee nengo.
"Ah! My child, my child; where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very old person.

me moboki nengo. "Ah! tatamua kaba me amemangondo? nde tata mamo nengo?"
I was very afraid. "Ah! My grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"ah miki mamo mu ma? au moli a pedi, au a bungi?"
"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost his way?"

me kobi nengo, akini isa ebaré akidi tina me.
I kept quiet completely, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree.

nde keti nengo, akini akeoki tatamamo.
It was truly an evil spirit, but it had turned into my grandmother.

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481 484 186
and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484 224 [115]
evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131
Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484
what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [114]
lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222 •
and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114]
quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

222 [482] Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles and hitched them[1] to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 484 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we came up behind the women who had started early. They had also [222] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the [482] small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been [136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 484 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

1 [i.e., bundles of mushrooms. - Analyst]

314 and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far
114 edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle
123 had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they
went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did
[222] they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

361 As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we
114 heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

361 The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had ar-
342 rived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the
342 path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for
[123] her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and
[122] leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she
[516] squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Kelekome and his uncle, Masalito, examine a piece of honeycomb to see if the hive is ready for raiding. Honey is probably the most prized food in the forest.

[P.72-M]

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing. It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest. A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan. The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said, and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222 621 adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 578 or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 177 Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222 was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621 like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578 he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister, Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734] them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734 and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda, shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621 left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the [821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pygmies seem to be a little less talkative
571
[P.333-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 208-A]

224 of elephant hunt known to him. The first makes use of a spear such as that described by Putnam, but the Pygmy, instead of thrusting it into the belly, creeps up behind the elephant and cuts the tendon above one of its heels. The elephant spins around, at which a second hunter, waiting for this action, leaps out of the bush and cuts the tendon of the other heel, thus bringing the elephant down, at which point it is easily killed —often by blinding it and then cutting off the trunk and leaving it to bleed to death. The second method makes use of a harpoon, and according to Schebesta, this is the method used among the net hunters. Here the harpoon is thrust into the belly, as described by Putnam, after which the Pygmy leaps clear. If thrust far enough, the elephant dies from lacerations caused by the dragging on the harpoon head as the attached cord snags on trees and undergrowth during the animal's flight.

[223] Men may individually kill monkeys and birds with their bows and arrows, supplementing their individual family food supply, and women out gathering may catch slow game with their 226 hands. Children, and occasionally women, fish and catch crabs. Fishing seems more highly de- [184] veloped among the net hunters than among Schebesta's archers, as the net hunters know of certain grubs that make good bait and can be found in the *kukumu* tree, and also understand the use of poison for catching fish.

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula,* had tried to fight its way through Moke's net. 224 [136]

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekianga with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back. [114] [825]

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and 825 [223] • [231]

turally the purest. This assumption, however, is 101
open to question.) In the seeking of a more sig- 197
nificant classification, and with every available 184
source to hand, it has appeared that, as might 224
be expected, there are certain differences in social structure related to differences in economic activity, notably hunting technique. It is fortunate that Schebesta's Efe are trackers and archers, while Putnam's Sua Mbuti are net hunters. Thus we have represented two groups not only linguistically and territorially distinct but also distinguished by hunting technique. The importance of this latter distinction appears in the course of the present study. While it is not claimed that such a classification is comprehensive or final, at least it is factual and more directly related to sociological differences than Schebesta's linguistic division. Conse- 127
quently, we draw on sources in so far as they are 128

[P. 154-C]

[P. 160-A]

000 the other groups. Our main source on the Efe is
101 Schebesta, whose major field work was carried
114 out in the triangle bounded by the roads joining
128 Irumu, Mambasa, and Beni. Source material on
131 the Sua is almost entirely confined to a band in the area to the west of the Nduye and north of the Epulu, near the village of Camp Putnam (Fig. 3).

128 Thus the two groups available for study rep-
101 resent not only two of Schebesta's two lin-
184 guistic groups but also the two major hunting
224 techniques used by the Ituri Mbuti. The Efe are archers, while the Sua are primarily net hunters. It is probable that certain structural differences between the two groups can be accounted for by this difference in economic activity; all such differences are also related to the different degrees of symbiosis between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. What is said of these two groups should be taken to apply within these limited areas only, though it may be found that many of the facts have wider extension.

[P.160-C]
among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but 621
averages about six huts per hunting band 162
(termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948).
The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging
around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular
Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying
from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became
two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Put- 621
nam agree that hunting bands do occasionally 628
combine for some special hunting project, but
that such alliances are temporary and rare. The
Putnam material indicates that, even when
such an association does take place, each band
rigorously maintains its separate identity,
building adjacent but separate camps.

Each single hunting band, among both 621
archers and net hunters, has its own defined 224.
hunting area, but until more material is avail- 423
able it is impossible to learn in what other ways
the forest is thought of as being divided.

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D
--Analyst]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

The environment that so favors a hunting Z
and gathering economy also allows the adapted 241
form of cultivation practiced by the villagers 361
who now live in the forest. These village tribes, 262
generally highly segmented and living in rela- 182
tively isolated communities, cut large clearings P
and make plantations, the main products of 182
which are plantains, manioc, peanuts, corn, rice, beans, and various kinds of squash. Plantains seem to be the staple food throughout. But the cutting of large clearings opens these villages to the intense heat of direct sunlight, from which the Mbuti never suffer in the uncut forest.

The Ituri is full of all kinds of game, the most P 136
important of which for the Mbuti are elephant, various kinds of antelope, forest pig, and mon- P
key. The okapi is also hunted occasionally, [224].
though the Pygmies know that to do so is prohibited by game laws. It is in any case a difficult animal to catch and is pursued only if an easy opportunity offers. Danger comes in the form of forest buffalo, leopard, and a number of poisonous snakes such as the Gaboon viper and the horned viper.

There is a profusion of wild flowers and or- 000
[P. 164-D]

[ARCHERS]

with metal points. Schebesta believes that a 411
number of different poisons are used, apart from
the poison described in detail by Parke (1891).
The poisoned arrows are used against tree- [224]
dwelling animals, particularly monkeys, and
hardly ever against antelopes or larger game.
Schebesta contradicts, in the light of his own [114]
experience, Stanley's (1890) assertion that
Mbuti hunt buffalo and elephant with poisoned
arrows.

Mbuti use of antidotes is not known to 278
Schebesta (1941, 65).

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting 224

Schebesta (1941, 86 ff.) describes the various hunting techniques used throughout the Ituri. The Efe among whom he did his most detailed work are primarily archers. They do not know the net hunt and seldom practice the communal beat (Efe: *begbe*). Schebesta (1941, 86) ranks the ambush as most important. This method of hunting is used by the older men no longer able to track game successfully. They lie in wait and imitate the call of the game, attracting it until it is within range of their iron-tipped arrows.

The daily hunt, however, is the track hunt

[P. 169-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 171-B]

[ARCHERS]

224 (*Hetzjagd*, Schebesta, 1941, 89; Efe: *motá*) in which the male members of the local group take part. Five or six men go out when the sun is high (~~and the~~ undergrowth dry) accompanied by hunting dogs. Schebesta mentions a hunt leader (Efe: *aetasi*) who gives the signal for departure and follows the dog, guided by the sound of its wooden bell. He shouts encouragement to the dog, and the other trackers, guided by these sounds, spread out on either side of the hunt leader. When the dog puts up game, the hunters all stand rigid, bows flexed, ready to [P. 171-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 172-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 172-B]

shoot if the animal passes their way. Sometimes 224 •
the animal is killed by the dog; sometimes it escapes or is only wounded and must be pursued. It may happen that the dog itself is wounded, a major catastrophe for the hunters.

The rewards of this type of hunt are varied. A group of five or six hunters may be able to bring back an antelope each day, or may fail completely for days on end. The hunt seldom strays far from the camp and, with or without game, returns by late afternoon. According to Schebesta, the game caught is usually gutted on the spot and divided among the hunters, who bring back their shares wrapped in leaves, nothing being left unused. This division of game is according to traditional usage. If the game is [554]
brought back whole, only the elder with the aid of an assistant can divide it. It is laid on leaves, then skinned with sharp metal arrowpoints and gutted. The sharing is theoretically only between members of the band, but in fact is between any who took part in the hunt directly or indirectly. Thus the owner of the dog, or of the bow and arrow (if borrowed) that killed the game, may claim a share. An animal killed in [628]
the territory of another band belongs to that band, but Schebesta says that normally neighboring bands overlook this unless it happens frequently, when hostilities may ensue.

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *begbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magba*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

224 [824] stems in a special way they form cylinders which, when struck on the ground, make an effective clap. The women then go ahead and by the loud beating of their petards put up game for the men to shoot with their metal-tipped arrows. This form of hunt is usually successful in killing a number of animals, which are shared among the various hunting bands that took part in the beat.

Elephant hunting takes place only among those Mbuti who use spears (Fig. 10; Schebesta, 1941, 106); bows and arrows are quite incapable of doing more than blind an elephant, despite the reports of imaginative travelers to the contrary. Those archers who use only bow and arrow do not hunt elephant. Wild boar, similarly, are killed only with spear, especially when they appear near the camp. Monkeys and [262] chimpanzees, considered as delicacies, are pur-

[P. 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

sued and shot with bow and arrow whenever the opportunity arises but are never the object of organized hunting. Other smaller animals and birds are hunted individually; those that take refuge in holes in trees are smoked out. 224. [262]

Schebesta's account suggests that, despite his proficiency at the hunt, the Pygmy takes care to protect himself against its attendant dangers and disappointments by securing the cooperation of the God of the Forest, and of his ancestors, and by making use of magic. He carries charms, observes various taboos, and performs certain rites—mostly sympathetic. It is not clearly stated, however, exactly which rites and charms are used by which particular Pygmies; there is obviously a great deal of variation. Schebesta clearly indicates, however, that among the archers there seems to be a considerable amount of hunting magic and ritual, witnessed by their use of the special whistles (Efe: *segbe*), magic formulas, invocation, and ritual practices he describes. 224 [189] [176] [169]

[P. 173-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]
[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*.

P 628 [574]
P [582] [224]

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

P Z 648 186 Z [563]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]
000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

Legal System

671 421 There is virtually no evidence from which any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 621 628 The district hunted by the band, together with all the vegetable and animal food contained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is [224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *toré* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
821 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
534 blowing of the *segbe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *segbe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
782 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
224 the apparently ancient *begbe* beat hunt, as is
372 mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

[ARCHERS]

782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as *"Mugu! daó a iye!"* ("*Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in- [224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to [769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the 782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *sulia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190 - B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-C]

some individual among Toré's children. In his anger he closes the forest so that the hunters can kill no game. Under the circumstances all the weapons in the camp are brought out and placed in a pile in the center of the clearing. The hunters stand around in a circle, each with an arm held over the weapons. As described by Schebesta, the transgressor, who had divided game he had caught without waiting for the elder, brandished a live chicken over the center of the circle praying for success in the hunt. In the invocation he mentioned Bali (local name for the God of the Undergrowth), "fathers," "grandfathers," and the name of his own father who had apparently been an outstanding hunter. Then the elder cut off the head of the chicken, sprinkled blood on the weapons and the arms of the hunters, and threw the fluttering carcass onto the ground. Everyone watched which way it moved, and when it finally fell with the stump of its neck pointing toward the forest, this was taken as a good omen and there was a

782
776
224.

[789]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P. 190-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a division of labor between Pygmy and village groups, the two together forming a larger economic entity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very productive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time occupation.

[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 134 The Pygmy has no use for traps or pits. These require too much work and are, by his standards, inefficient. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti can be classified as net hunters or non-net hunters or, conversely, as archers or non-archers. Putnam states that this adherence to either hunting technique depends on the prevailing villager custom, as the villagers supply the Pygmies with both nets and arrowheads. Later, he modified this view because the Pygmies are, in fact, making nets all the time by adding to and subtracting from their existing nets, as mentioned above. [Schebesta (1933) refers to the Pygmies as making their own nets.] [C21] [476] This division into archers and net hunters is also significant with regard to social organization, says Putnam (1948, 328), since "The degree to which co-operation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band."

[P 202- B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 202-C]

The net-hunting technique is similar to that of the *begbe* described by Schebesta (1952, 133 ff.) but with the notable absence of the leadership of an "elder." The decision as to when and where to hunt is made during the evening preceding the hunt, in conversation among all the hunters around the campfire. Whereas rain puts an end to both net hunting and tracking, lack of rain (causing dry leaves to crackle underfoot) is disadvantageous only to trackers. Like the beat hunt, net hunting relies on the *amount* of noise that can be made. 224 184

The net hunt calls for a minimum of seven nets, each married man owning a net. Unmarried men may also own nets if they have proved their prowess as hunters. It is usual in a normal camp of about 17 huts for the majority of men, women, and children to join the hunt. If the camp is large, some members stay behind and perform their various subsidiary chores such as the repair of nets, the manufacture of bark-cloth and twine, gathering, and so forth. The women joining the hunt carry their babies on their backs; boys and young men are armed with bows and arrows or spears; and the heads of families carry their nets and spears. Various 224 [422] [512] [854]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.203-A]

• 224
286

0 5 10 15 20
cm scale

FIG. 34. Hunting net, *kuya*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Coiled and bound for carrying over the shoulders.

[NET HUNTERS]

• 224 [114] **Various** early travelers describe net hunts in similar terms (Parke, 1891; Lloyd, 1899; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924). Parke (1891) gives a detailed description of the nets, which corresponds to that given by Putnam, and records their length as from 100 to 200 feet. He gives the height of the net, however, as 5 feet, while the nets used by the Epulu net hunters are barely 4 feet high (Figs. 34–36).

When a suitable place is reached, the women make beaters of twigs and branches, and go off into the forest, while the men set the nets up end-to-end, in a large semicircle. The women carry their babies, but the young children are left with the men.

Putnam indicates that there is a difference in the value of different positions in the circle of nets; the central positions are the most likely to catch game. There is a definite system in set-

[P. 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.203-C]

534
224

FIG. 35. Magic whistle, *mamambamamba*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such magic is rare, though pipes and whistles are sometimes blown before a hunt in the belief that the sound will attract game.

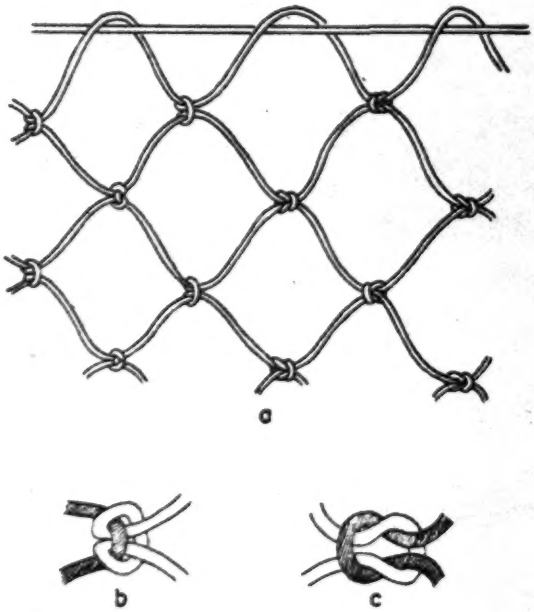
ting up the nets, with a special vocabulary of 224
technical terms to deal with it, but he does not give the details.

When all is ready, the women, who have spread out in an opposing semicircle, start beating into the nets, calling and shouting, beating their sticks on the ground. If they see any slow game heading their way, they dive for it and

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

catch it with their hands, put it in a basket, and 224 •
continue beating. Their main object is to put up game and drive it toward the nets. There, the men are in readiness, motionless until some animal is tangled in the meshes. Then they seize it, and the owner of that particular net kills the



224
284
286

FIG. 36. Details of knotting used in hunting net, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 203-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-A]
224 [201] animal with his knife or spear. He claps his armpit to signal his success to his companions. The women by the tone of their shouting and the men by their arm-clapping (KiBira: *kombo*) can indicate not only when and where game is put up, but the kind of game.

In a day's hunting this process may be repeated as many as seven times, if the rain holds off. But if the first few casts of the nets are successful the Pygmies return to camp. They make no provision for the storage of meat or any other food.

If large game, such as buffalo, is driven toward them, the Mbuti try to lower the nets to avoid their being damaged; otherwise, the buffalo will probably tear its way through, though it may be delayed long enough for the hunters to spear it. Antelope is the game normally [483] caught. The hunter carries the dead animal around his neck back to the camp for division. If a larger animal, such as an okapi, is caught, it is cut up on the spot and carried back to the camp in the women's baskets. There all the meat is spread out and the division takes place

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 62 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.205-A]

224 hit the target. At tracking, however, the Mbuti
411 are excellent, being able to move swiftly and silently through the forest. They can, in Putnam's estimation, catch game with their hands, and often do so, as successfully as by using their bows and arrows. Iron-tipped arrows are used on larger game, and untipped, poisoned arrows
[278] are used mainly for monkeys and birds. The poison is prepared individually, strophanthus being the vital plant acting as a heart stimulant.

224 Hunting dogs are used both during the net hunt and by individual owners for hunting wild boar.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 205-B]

Elephant hunting is important in the Epulu District. Certain bands of Pygmies are specialists. Among the local net-hunting band from which the most detailed information is available, however, four out of 12 or 15 hunters are elephant hunters. Putnam says that the present form of elephant hunting is a recent development in answer to the needs of the villagers whose plantations were continually being ravaged by elephants and who encouraged the Pygmies to kill them off. In the early days the villagers had little use for the tusks, other than as barkcloth beaters, but with the advent of 224 • [178] [237] [439]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 206-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Arab traders ivory became a most precious
[237] commodity, and the Pygmies were doubly in-
[439] couraged to kill elephants. For the Pygmies themselves, a slain elephant was a source of great satisfaction, providing them with meat ample enough to obviate the necessity of hunting for several days.

[157] The killing of the animal was, and still is, a matter that inspired the normally audacious Mbuti with some caution. Putnam says that elephant hunting is a specialist occupation; not every Pygmy is brave enough, and the tech-
[171] nique itself takes great skill. The villagers use spear-falls and elephant pits (dug so as to trap

[P. 206-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

the elephant's forefeet and head only), but this method of hunting is foreign to the Mbuti. Travelers such as Parke (1891) who observed spear-falls and pits almost certainly saw those made by villagers, not Pygmies. Casati (1891), Lloyd (1899), Geil (1905), Christy (1924), and others mention the fact that Pygmies are able to kill elephants with their bows and arrows, a technical ability strongly denied by Schebesta, Putnam, and the Pygmies themselves. Schweinfurth (1874, 65–66, 70) was told by a villager informant that the northern Mbuti are able to kill an elephant either with bow and arrow or by thrusting a spear into its belly. The latter

224 [171]

[P. 206-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 207-A]

• 224 method was known to Putnam, who says that a special spear, with a long wide blade of soft metal, is used (Fig. 40). The shaft is about 4 feet long and stout; the blade is carefully sharpened on a stone (as the Pygmy sharpens all his [825] blades). The hunter, who may make use of elephant droppings to cover his scent, tracks the elephant, approaches it silently up wind, and thrusts the spear as far as he can into the belly, just behind the ribs. Putnam says that the Pygmy then stands absolutely still (but presumably having jumped into the cover of the bush), and that the Pygmies themselves said that if you "as much as wink at this moment you are a dead Pygmy" (Putnam, 1948, 331). He may, if the opportunity offers, repeat this process. When he returns to camp the others examine his spear and decide, according to the distance the blood has reached down the blade, whether the wound is fatal and justifies tracking or not. If they decide the wound is fatal, the entire camp sets off, leaving only an old couple to look after the camp. They track the elephant for two or three days until it dies of peritonitis.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Putnam describes a ceremony that takes place at that time. A man other than the hunter cuts off a section of the skin, a little at a time, distributing it for all to eat. When he has cut down to the inner wall of the abdomen and everyone has had a piece, he stands aside for the youngest son of the successful hunter to bite through the wall, whereupon the bloated ele-
[262] phant bursts. Putnam says that this ceremony is repugnant to the Pygmies, who dislike raw meat, and particularly repugnant to the child, but he does not explain the practice.

251 Following this ceremony, the animal is
252 quickly and completely butchered, and the
261 meat is cooked. The Pygmies eat as much as they can. They partly boil and partly dry some (the only form of preservation of foodstuff ever practiced by them) and take this to the village.

224 In 1951, Putnam gave me another version of this form of hunt, in which the Pygmy thrusts the spear into the bladder of the elephant, and, if he sees that the urine is released, he returns to camp knowing that it will die within a few days. The procedure is then as above. Anne Putnam (1954, 93) mentions a net hunter who tracked and killed an elephant at a time when there was no shortage of food, simply because he felt the urge to do so.

Schebesta (1941, 106 ff.) mentions two types
[P. 207-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 208-A]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 208-A]

• 224 of elephant hunt known to him. The first makes use of a spear such as that described by Putnam, but the Pygmy, instead of thrusting it into the belly, creeps up behind the elephant and cuts the tendon above one of its heels. The elephant spins around, at which a second hunter, waiting for this action, leaps out of the bush and cuts the tendon of the other heel, thus bringing the elephant down, at which point it is easily killed —often by blinding it and then cutting off the trunk and leaving it to bleed to death. The second method makes use of a harpoon, and according to Schebesta, this is the method used among the net hunters. Here the harpoon is thrust into the belly, as described by Putnam, after which the Pygmy leaps clear. If thrust far enough, the elephant dies from lacerations caused by the dragging on the harpoon head as the attached cord snags on trees and undergrowth during the animal's flight.

[223] Men may individually kill monkeys and birds with their bows and arrows, supplementing their individual family food supply, and women out gathering may catch slow game with their 226 hands. Children, and occasionally women, fish and catch crabs. Fishing seems more highly de- [184] veloped among the net hunters than among Schebesta's archers, as the net hunters know of certain grubs that make good bait and can be found in the *kukumu* tree, and also understand the use of poison for catching fish.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 208-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 223 - C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill

575 561 88

[554] [224]

[P 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.225-A]

• 224
789
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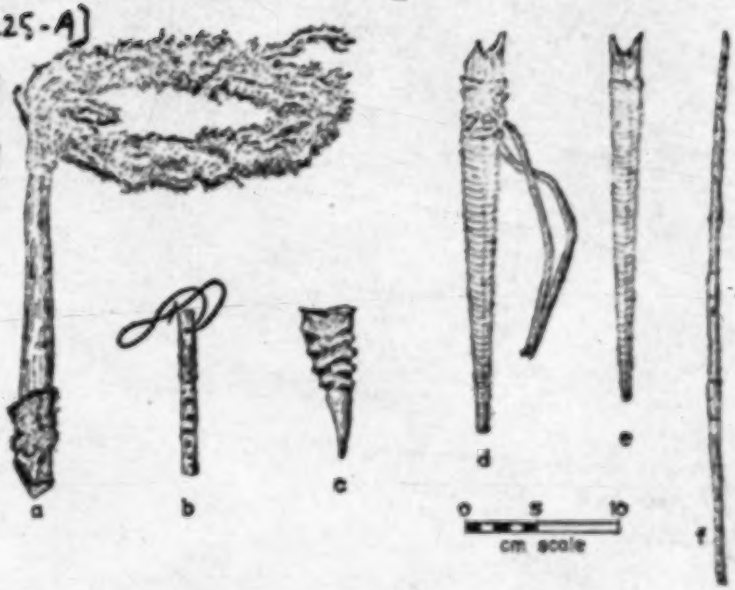

FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akbelea*, attached to fur headband; worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbelu*. c. Antelope horn, *anjo*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, *madé*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madé*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyongé*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing in the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[237]
[828]
[222]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 561 88 [554] [224] to status in the band and the fact that young men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed particular prowess as hunters may take a prominent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 796 With regard to the proceedings of the association, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 [192] The word *molimo* is used to denote the association, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-8]

[NET HUNTERS] A

421 224 lazy hunter and his family go without meat; an idle woman goes without vegetables and has no roof to her hut. The division of game obtained during a net hunt is the only division that includes everyone in the band, whether or not they attended the hunt. Even then we do not know whether those who did not attend had any arrangement with any of the actual hunters. Nets are frequently lent, as are spears. It may well be that absentee members of the hunt participate by proxy and in this way entitle themselves to a share. The division itself, as is mentioned above, is said to be subject to complicated rules.

594 222 421 Apart from the net hunt, which is essentially collective and cooperative and concerns the band, other forms of food quest are familial. A woman is entitled to what she finds, for herself and her family. Similarly a man, hunting 594 224 421 individually with bow and arrow, may claim as his own anything that he may bring in, though in such a case there is some doubt. Using bow and arrow he would be likely to bring in only small game, and rarely, these Mbuti being very poor shots. If however, he killed or found large game, such as an okapi, on his own, it would be

[P. 230-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of 594
division would not apply. It seems therefore 224
to be a question of surplus. Every family is 421
entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity 576
and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

[NET HUNTERS]

534 Normally, however, and when drums are not available, short resonant sticks are used. These are either smooth, giving a sharp hollow sound, or else they are split and shaved at one end to provide a totally different accompaniment. These sticks, handclaps, and leg stampings provide the rhythmic background to the dance.[1]

535 224 825 Mrs. Putnam has seen a dance in which a mask made from a leopard skin was used by the Mbuti. She also describes fully (1954, 296 ff.) a dance performed by them following the killing of a leopard. The body of the leopard is strung up to a branch or a tall stake. All the men, armed with liana whips and whips made from plaited antelope hide, gather around it. The men who are responsible for killing the leopard dance by themselves, approaching the stake. As they do so, they are attacked by the others, and have to fight their way to the leopard's body and cut it down, at which everyone gives a shout of triumph. In the

[1] It is most notable that for religious song and dance such is the only form of accompaniment, even if drums are available.

[P. 234-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-C]

dance observed by Mrs. Putnam the man who first speared the leopard was wounded but nonetheless took part in the dance. The other two men involved in the killing protected him as much as they could from their attackers and guarded him as he cut the leopard down. Onlookers said that he would not have been thought a coward if he had not taken part, because of his wounds, but he had chosen to do so. 535 224 825

Song, used in conjunction with dance, as described by Schebesta, also has a separate function and operates as an art form in its own right. This, at first, Schebesta (1933, 301) denied, but later (1936b, 27; 1948, 259) he conceded the greater importance of song over dance. Among the net hunters there is a very clear division of song into four main categories, each of which can be distinguished by style and technique alone, and a fifth subsidiary category of play songs. The main categories are, as briefly mentioned above (p. 213), religious songs and secular songs, each subdivided according to sex, i.e., songs of the men's 533

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of
his Sua material are net hunters or archers.
But, except for his remarks on the Kango and
"village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the
extreme west of the Ituri forest, he seems to
have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti.
His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184]
greatly from that for the archers. The names 176
given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti,
Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also
loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neigh-
boring villagers. According to Schebesta,
Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and
patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [224]
owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benev-
olent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt,
guiding their weapons and assisting the beat,
preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187]
is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes
known to the elder, telling the hunter where to
find game.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788
involves them in any significant change of 182
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224] •
hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184]
steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

788 any other god or spiritual being for protection
[782] or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A
number of symbolic actions performed as parts
• [224] of technological operations in order to smooth
over the disturbance caused by some kind of
change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in
which the youngest male descendant of the
hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and
opens the operations dividing the meat for
consumption (cf. p. 207).

771 Putnam, further, was never convinced that
[776] the Mbuti had any notion similar to the Euro-
pean notion of God. He disagrees strongly with
Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious
practice as indicating a belief in a personal god.
[789] He suggests that the ritual practices described
by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sym-
pathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct
cause and effect in their magical practices is the
only kind of "religious" belief that can safely
be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or
villager.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 240-A]

789 tree limb on top of a hut. Such contexts evoke a
[184] different response, it seems, among the archers who actively influence the outcome of any critical situation by the use of their *meghe*, often by their *segbe* pipes. The magic described by the Putnams is essentially sympathetic and does not involve any belief in spiritual assis-
789 tance. Thus stones may not be dropped in the
821 water, or they will cause rain; a bright fire should be smothered until it is a mere glow during a storm, lest it attract the lightning (according to one informant) or in order to drive the lightning away (according to another, in the same discussion). All the magic that Putnam observed among the net hunters was connected with the weather and the prevention of rain, though he does not deny the possibility that magic might be used to stop the rain, once begun.

789 Mrs. Putnam describes a number of magical
224 practices, most of which are connected with either rain or the hunt. The latter simply involve the use of villager witch doctors to perform a ceremony to improve the hunting. The ceremony is never conducted by a Pygmy, nor is it clear on whose initiative it is usually per-

[NET HUNTERS]

789 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies
224 may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a
[534] *segbe* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Segbe* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other
[237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 *Segbe* are not to be confused with *madé* (Fig.
534 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the
222 honey season.

Rain magic involves the covering of the
789 campfires with leaves but evidently without
821 much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as
372 putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P.240-B]

While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

184 197 184 224 621 182

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

[P. 243-D]

[P.244-A]

184 remain in camp to guard it and perform other
• 224 duties. When the band falls below seven fami-
621 lies, it can no longer exist. Similarly, when it
182 rises above a certain number (between 20 and 30) it becomes too unwieldy to function as a single hunting unit and must, of necessity, split. Under these circumstances a compromise is reached, and very conveniently so, by the hunting from a forest camp by one section of the band, while the other section lives a more or less parasitical life near the village.

184 The composition of the bands of archers and
621 net hunters seems to be similar, though Putnam lays more emphasis on the presence of visiting families. The archers live in considerably smaller bands, some interconnected through kinship ties and also allegedly through common allegiance to a villager lineage. In the larger net-hunting band there may very likely be no single villager attachment.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

• 224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods described (including the *begbe* beat of the archers), produces both the surest and the largest supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for the greater economic dependence of the archer bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

[p. 244-c]

mutually dependent and equally important role in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Archery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, with the cooperation of two or three men. It is not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close cooperation and lack of specialization, is associated with a more egalitarian political system than that of the archers. While Schebesta described an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful lineage heads, Putnam vigorously denies the existence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

A fourth factor might be added: While the net hunt quickly scares animals away from the area around the hunting camp, necessitating frequent changes of site, the archery technique neither depletes the game so quickly nor frightens it away. An archer band can therefore remain confined to a smaller area, near the village, while the net hunters sometimes must wander several days' march away from their patrons. The more nomadic group also has constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is apparently felt by the more settled archers, for plantation products. 184 182 224 361 [262]

Thus at once we can see the possible economic, social, and political implications of the difference in hunting technique and how these implications follow in fact. 184 182 12 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of social and economic importance in each type of community. It is regarded primarily as the work of women, though, wherever it calls for tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among 222 184 462

[P. 244-D]

554 The fact that men go through the not inconsid-
881 erable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

555 Male status depends primarily on skill in the hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by in-
• 224 dividual exploits such as elephant hunting. Among certain bands elephant hunting is a
[439] specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do so. This compulsion may have arisen in part by
[825] virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

274 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the
825 ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954,
[p. 247-8]

[P. 247-C]

296 ff.), following the killing of a leopard. The dead leopard is tied to a stake, which is surrounded by the men, armed with liana whips and plaited hide thongs. The hunters involved in the killing of the leopard perform a dance, in the course of which they have to fight their way through to the stake and cut down the carcass of the leopard they have already killed once. In the instance cited the most prominent of the three chief actors had been wounded by the leopard but insisted on taking part though his fellows said that none would call him a coward if he did not. The other two men protected him from the attackers and guarded him as he swung his spear and cut the leopard down. The cutting down is acclaimed by all with a shout of satisfaction. Unfortunately the information does not carry essential details such as which of the men or how many of the band held the leopard as their totem, or as to what relationship, kinship or otherwise, existed between participants in the dance. Possibly the ceremony is propitiatory, but from the information on totemism among these particular Mbuti it seems unlikely. It rather appears as a formal opposition between the human and the animal worlds.

224 825 [535]

Little can be said of inter-band relationships 628
as there are so few data. Neither type of band 476
has any need to cooperate with neighboring 224
bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occa- 184
sions when there is a particular profusion of
game. Among the archers joint hunting would
be necessary in order to make use of the *begbe*
beating technique. Among net hunters two or
more bands might combine either when the in-
dividual bands fall below economic level or
when a particular profusion of game requires
more nets than are possessed by the single band.
With the net hunters such association could be-
come permanent, whereas with the archers it
would never be necessary as the band is of such
small optimum size.

The difference between the archers and the 184
net hunters in their relationship with the vil- 182
lager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Put- 224
nam, is one of both degree and kind. We have 439
seen that with their less efficient hunting tech-
nique the archers must rely more on vegetable
products, and how, with the women's sphere
limited to gathering, the women have more time
and opportunity for gathering from the villager
plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy
[P 247-D]

CP 248-A 1

184 nature of the hunt also makes possible a more
182 permanent settlement near the village. The
224 trade relationship among the archers, then, as-
439 sumes greater importance and is more formalized. Schebesta further understands it as being an inter-lineage relationship. Putnam, while acknowledging its importance also for the net hunters, says that it is interfamilial and can be broken by either side. The net-hunting technique makes more game available for trade, so there is less demand by villagers upon the net hunters than by the Lese of the archers. The necessity of a more strictly nomadic life also militates against permanent and continuous attachment between the net-hunting Mbuti and any one villager "master."

128 Of the legal system no more can be added to the section dealing with authority and leadership. There are simply not enough data even for comparison of the concepts of property and ownership between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Magical Practice

P 177 789 It might be observed that the Pygmies have adopted a number of villager magical practices; certainly some individuals give the appearance of having done so. But we cannot accept this as significant, nor can we relate these practices to other practices in Pygmy society until we understand, for instance, the significance of the old Pygmy who blew his magic whistle vigorously at the sky to prevent rain and who, when it poured, simply shrugged his shoulders and P [829] retreated to the shelter of his hut. This incident may seem trivial, but there are many such incidents that indicate a lack of faith in the efficacy of such magical practices as the Pygmies attempt.

P 224 177 789 Also to be considered, and more important because it brings villager and Pygmy together more directly, is the reported resort to villager witch doctors to improve the hunting. Sche-

789 [P 250-B]
177
563
[791]

[P 250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. There is no evidence of such a practice among the net hunters, but they may call in a villager for the purpose. But here we should consider Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying the villagers with meat for some time, yet has been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as his excuse the fact that the hunting has been poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as one can judge from casual conversation among themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti have little faith in it. Further, they have their own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song may or may not be accompanied by a *dance re-enacting a successful hunt*, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

P 224 177 789 789 533 177 P [439] P 224 789 533

[P.256-C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and even returned to the care and authority of their mothers. None of these boys was allowed to take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. The reason—they were not "hunters," they had not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large enough to be worth distributing among the band, as opposed to the small animals caught by children and that are not worth dividing except within the family). To kill "real animals," usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to be allowed to wander away from his father during the hunt and to try his luck at either end of the semicircle of nets, where animals might escape and be shot with bow and arrow, speared, or caught with the hands.

575 881 882 885 [575]

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on a combination of physical growth and prowess. Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full member; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*; like the *elima* it is a religious association without priests. There is no ritual to be performed; all members play the same part in the meetings of the association with the exception of one who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The choice invariably falls on the best performer present, without regard for age or other qualifications.

575 885

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women are members, and participation is compulsory in one's own camp or when visiting another. Communication with the forest God is again established by means of songs, special and sacred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The exception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

575 796 [885] [533] [776] [778] [858]

In the survey we give an account of *elima* initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the initiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

881 885 224 575

[p. 251-D]

[P. 258-A]

881 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I
885 have never witnessed nor been told of any for-
224 mal rite introducing the new hunter to the asso-
575 ciation, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only
881 act that might be regarded as a formal token of
885 initiation is the cutting of three sets of three
304 vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each
575 side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 34 1

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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a. Net hunters on the trail. The Mbuti are naturally well camouflaged and can conceal themselves with ease against the foliage. Although net hunting demands cooperation between men, women, and children, the men and youths generally set off by themselves. Spears are carried for protection and for killing large game that might fall into the nets.

b. Net hunters setting up the net. Youths help their older brothers, or sons their fathers, as the net is stretched through the undergrowth for up to 300 feet, joined end to end with the nets of other hunters to form a vast semicircle into which the women and children drive the game.

1, /Plate 34 appears on page 301--Analyst/

[P. 300]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

• 224
484
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/Plate 34-A/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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484
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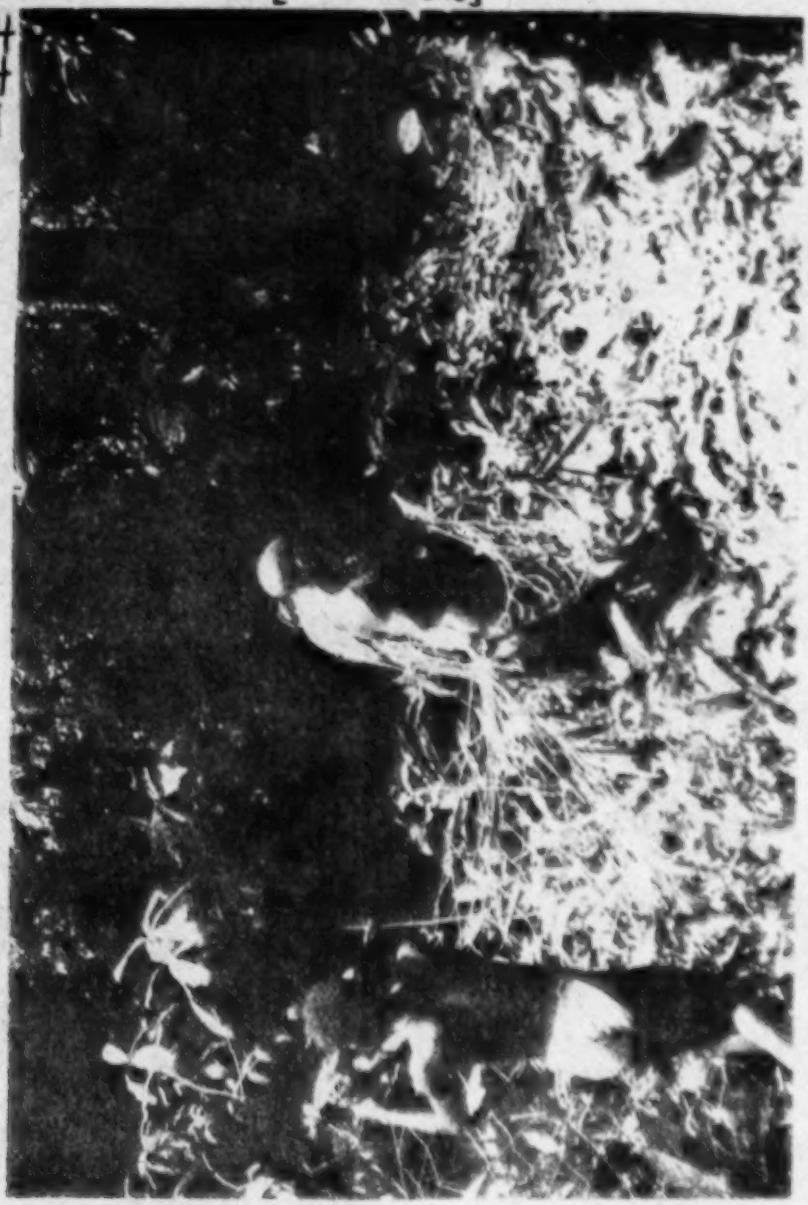

/Plate 34-B/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 35 $\frac{1}{A}$

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

• 224 a. The kill. When an animal falls into the nets, nearby men and youths run to catch it before it tears itself loose or damages the net. As the men disentangle the trapped animal, a youth stands by with a spear ready to make the kill. Even the smallest antelope, when trapped, can be dangerous. Although the hunt is vital to the food economy of the Mbuti, they take no pleasure in the kill. It is considered a crime to hunt or kill more game than is essential for sustenance.

411 [177] b. The main weapon of the archers, the bow and arrow, is for the net hunters only an incidental means of obtaining food. The net hunters prefer their own poisoned arrows with a fire-hardened tip (as used here) rather than the unpoisoned metal tips supplied and used by the villagers.

$\frac{1}{A}$, /Plate 35 appears on page 303--Analyst/

[P. 302]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224
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/Plate 35-A/

/Caption appears on p. 302/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the languages referred to, although spoken by the Mbuti, were evidently of non-Mbuti origin. Consequently another objective of the present study, based on further field work, is to begin to look for valid structural differences that do exist, following up the contention (*ibid.*) that one would expect to find such differences between the Mbuti who hunt by net and those who hunt with bow and arrow. The boundaries of the net-hunters and archers incidentally correspond, very roughly, to the linguistic boundaries drawn by Schebesta between the Sua- and Efe-speaking Mbuti: the Aka, to the north, although somewhat divided amongst themselves, offer a third category, some of them using the spear as their prime weapon.

To all these ends it was decided to make a further field trip in which one hunting band would be studied intensively throughout a calendar year, and in which as much comparative material as time and field conditions permitted would be gathered from other hunting bands. It was decided in advance, in the light of previous personal experience, that the sacrifice of a whole year to the study of one small band was essential, even though it would mean that any final conclusions about the general nature of Mbuti society would have to be delayed until a number of other such studies had been made. A band of either archers or net-hunters is a highly mobile, volatile entity, demanding of the field worker the utmost persistence in both physical and intellectual pursuit. It was quite obvious, also from previous experience, that the band not only constantly changes location, but it also constantly changes in composition. The significance of these fluctuations would only be discovered, it was felt, by following them right through their course in one given hunting territory before attempting any comparative studies among other bands. Above all it was essential in one band to find out what the significant social groupings were, and what principles enabled them to maintain any kind of consistency and continuity in the face of perpetual change. How was the band divided, along exactly what lines did the characteristic splits occur, what forces operated to hold the band together and to divide it? The scope of the one-band study was aimed at answering such questions and others that concern band relationships with local villages of cultivators. It was hoped to arrive at an understanding of the true nature of the over-all Mbuti/Villager relationship in this area, following up on the suggestion made earlier (Turnbull, 1956, 363–64) that this relationship was not one of master/servant, still less of slavery, and probably not even of symbiosis.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

621 *177 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

[221] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 • 224 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic 224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here 476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual independence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best [177] seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*beghe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita* [622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the *molimo*, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

224 433 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 262 252 415 *177 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 415 *177 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal

439 412 *177 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in

224 411 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even

412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of

[322] [324] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

P It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers
685 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing
648 what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara*
571 and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti
121 are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But what-
C ever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be
648 seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that
571 particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp
P of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a
[361] [621] society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

P The situation becomes more understandable in light of the ex-
829 pressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They
648 refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating.
571 Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and
P fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part
[224] of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the
P villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse,
[825] but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

C Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdepen-
439 dence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of eco-
648 nomic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest,
121 powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
628 site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
621 shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
• 224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analysis]

B: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224] other factor.
[184]

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always pat-
[611] rilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band com-
621 position be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is com-
613 parable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
184 groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of
[224] fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
621 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
613 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
174 attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
621 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent system or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1964) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification.

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*keribu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative.

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern.

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will.

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pretending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the entrapment of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the villagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry. 357 224 868 [231]

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision. 357 868

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out at 357 871 561 357 868

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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P 439 C 439 608 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *karé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P 439 #177 This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *karé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

P 439 437 621 571 C [439] Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[2]

P 439 433 184 • 224 In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

C [648] [2] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti, the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a *capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age,

become spirits, but there is no evidence of the old or crippled actually being treated with anything but a care and respect that, judging from appearances, derives more from affection and a sense of responsibility (not unmixed with a certain amount of rare forethought) rather than from fear. 732 734

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The iron tools available to the Mbuti since the inception of their relationship with the village tribes have not, apparently, tempted them to develop their hunting technology. They do not dig pits or make traps, nor do they erect spear-falls, techniques employed by the villagers. To make their traditional technology more efficient, however, the Mbuti do use iron blades for their spears, axes, knives and arrow blades. The spear blade makes the hunting of elephants much easier, though old Mbuti assert that they used to kill elephants with fire-hardened wooden spears. The knives and machetes undoubtedly make the cutting of leaves, saplings and vines much quicker and easier, and the honey ax affords simple access to beehives deep within hollow branches or tree trunks. The arrow tip is used more by the archers than by the net-hunters, it seems, but both groups rely primarily on poisoned arrows. The bows of neither group are large or efficient, accuracy is made doubly difficult by the limited vision of the forest environment, and hunters often aim at a sound or a movement of leaves rather than by sight of the actual quarry. With the poisoned arrow even a light graze will bring down the quarry, whereas with the metal-tipped arrow direct impact on a vital spot is essential. Even so, so chancy is Mbuti archery that throughout the forest the practice is to hold a handful of arrows in the hand that holds the bow; this enables them to be drawn and fired with remarkable rapidity. Naturally many are lost, but the loss of a poisoned arrow is of far less economic significance than the loss of a metal tip. 224 411

Traditional hunting techniques include archery, net-hunting and spear hunting, and occasional snaring (usually by youths, sometimes by old men). Nets vary in length from one to three hundred feet, and are about four feet in height. Seven small nets, together with beaters, might form a circle of over one hundred yards in diameter. Any area smaller than this would be impractical, as the game would be scared away before the nets could be set up and the beaters get in place. Even seven nets of average length would only form a circle barely two hun- 224

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for
[422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache-
[654] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen
[162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they
476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt.
[593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next
476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the
561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there
789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss
821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224 •
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider *enjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

One clear example of village influence is that in any village context the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt. These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of actual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[3]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[3] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

224 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the
482 camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or
578 acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt
152 returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be al-
626 most deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the
[476] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

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Mbuti

Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epula	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Bisiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

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ARCHERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

• 224 184 561 602 562 422

Area	Portion of body	Given to
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasu	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

224 56 [562] It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

224 602 The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

224 621 626 594 The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the forest, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunting fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's description of food offerings being made to the forest, except through villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals certain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for game are comparable in their political and religious connotations:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

224 magic seems to be somewhat more prevalent. Further, although
62 archery does not demand a relatively large co-operative band as does
[221] net-hunting, and although for most of the year the archers seem to be split into small bands of maybe only three or so nuclear families, the band is actually comparable in size and composition, and manifests its unity once a year for the annual *begbe* beat-hunt.

The *begbe* is remarkably like the net-hunt in technique and in social function. The major difference is the absence of nets, which makes for a much smaller circle for the same number of participants. Seven nuclear families could successfully hunt with nets; they could never form a *begbe* hunt. By the same token, more than thirty families could easily participate in *begbe* without inconvenience or danger, and if we define the archer band by stated territorial boundaries, and consider its composition as consisting of those who hunt within those boundaries during the year and form the communal *begbe* hunt once a year, then the average size of the archer band is probably larger than that of the net-hunting band.

The *begbe* demands large numbers; the men form a tight semicircle, each man well within sight of the next, the women and children forming a similarly tight semicircle opposite. The men are armed with bows and arrows, and with spears; the women make petards, which when beaten on the ground make a sharp, explosive sound. When the circle is complete, the women beat toward the men, who try to kill the animals before they break through their ranks, a procedure that is considerably more hazardous than the net-hunt, where the hunters can afford to wait until the game is at least temporarily held up by the net.

224 Among the archers the *begbe* is referred to as the beginning of the
221 new year, and the hunt coincides, it seems, with the honey season,
62 which for the net-hunters is similarly the beginning, or the end, of the year. During this season, then, the archer band is consolidated and co-operative, though it seldom builds a single camp. Rather, there may be from three to five large camps, but built close to each other (within earshot) and connected by trails. This, however, is the one time of year when the band does meet and hunt as such, though even at this time there is no central authority.

62 For the rest of the year the band is broken up into smaller units,
221 each one economically and politically independent of the other. These sections may vary in size from two or three nuclear families to as many as ten, or temporarily even a few more. Generally an archer camp contains from three to six families.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

P 224 628 825 [554] sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

P [221] P [621]

P 224 613 614 Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

C [613] [614] [439]

P 224 613 614 262 825 Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[214] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine traps, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time 222
throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti [252]
to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of [224]
the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark [482]
tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There [602]
is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much [422]
more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but 222
insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are fre- 533
quently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the 288
elima songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity, [778] [776]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1963 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the
621 economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is
628 determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to
224 move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it
166 temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself
131 is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence
131 the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING
224 BANDS
131

It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of 628
game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey 222
season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a 131
neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either pouch, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As 621
often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the en- 602
croaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered pouching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the en- 621
croaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seek- 628
ing a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, 624
joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge oc- 476
cur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally [439]
involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means 438
of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-opera- 628
tion as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands 621
is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum 628
economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

554 156 157 [595] particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). 554 156 593 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 554 555 157 [224] Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and [648] frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, 156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or 152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him 554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 604 596 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, 627
though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain 578
behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from 252
Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Tening- 152
bengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually 578
her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and [626]
was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad 224
and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His 578
cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody 224
should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was 626
reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they [578]
moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had [821] been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and dis- [152] comfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move [166] wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur- [648]

224 626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of [821] [152] friction).

[166] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur- [648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 621 221 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 593 152 291 621 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 593 621 166 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 626 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem- [221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly (*"apa ndaso aké sinana"*). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: *"kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi"*) and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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626 621 578 222 152 [533] [534] [431] wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

157 461 536 [261] [789] 7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

• 224 461 626 578 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [965] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
• [224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
186 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
[621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *essumba* or *husumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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Mbuti

porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange. 628 224 [602]

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other. 628 224 221 621

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible. 628

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month. 628 602 574

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have [621] [591] [594]

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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

*177 use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes
538 use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their pater-
776 nalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations,
186 and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

538 The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of
439 Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had
[157] stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

539 "I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother.
• 224 But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted
[251] and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

[186] This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

539 "But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to
776 escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

776 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try.
828 He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine
169 choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was
534 not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However,
776 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if
778 the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place
• [224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778
761 A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as
826 for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh
[192] and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as re-
778 quiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed
761 out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape
826 through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti
831 recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the
[535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual
[765] apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

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ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail. [765]

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry 752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many 757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the [224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If [75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or 778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire 796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest 533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the [782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not [533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*, [535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and [765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although [626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think
561 in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionaliza-
121 tion of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and
561 only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and
562 *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the inter-
462 dependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines.
[224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during
[222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[193] [2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *taté* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catègories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

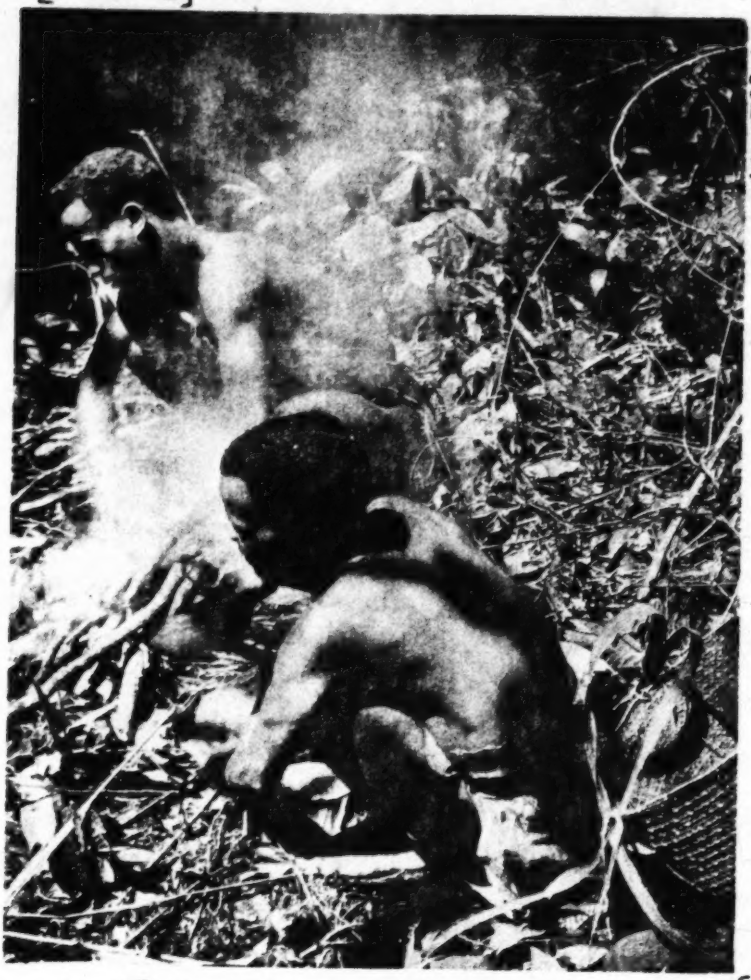
Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]



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29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-D]

224
137

36. The hunt sets off, well camouflaged against the leafy background. The men and youths

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-E]

142
301
291
482
372

31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
[462]
[222]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-F]

224
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137

[184]

32. Masisi stops on his way to the hunt to try for a monkey in the treetops. For net-hunters the bow and arrow is only an incidental means of food-getting. As seen here, poisoned arrows are preferred to those with metal tips provided by the villagers.

224
41
[882]

33. Two youths, armed with spears, carry their fathers' hunting nets. They will not have nets of their own until they are married but may, on occasion, take the place of their fathers on the hunt.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-G]

142
302
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883
224

34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[881]
[885]
[593]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-H]

224
291

35. When an animal falls into the net it is quickly caught by the hunters and carefully extracted before it damages the netting. A youth stands by for the kill.

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are
[621] effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
121 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

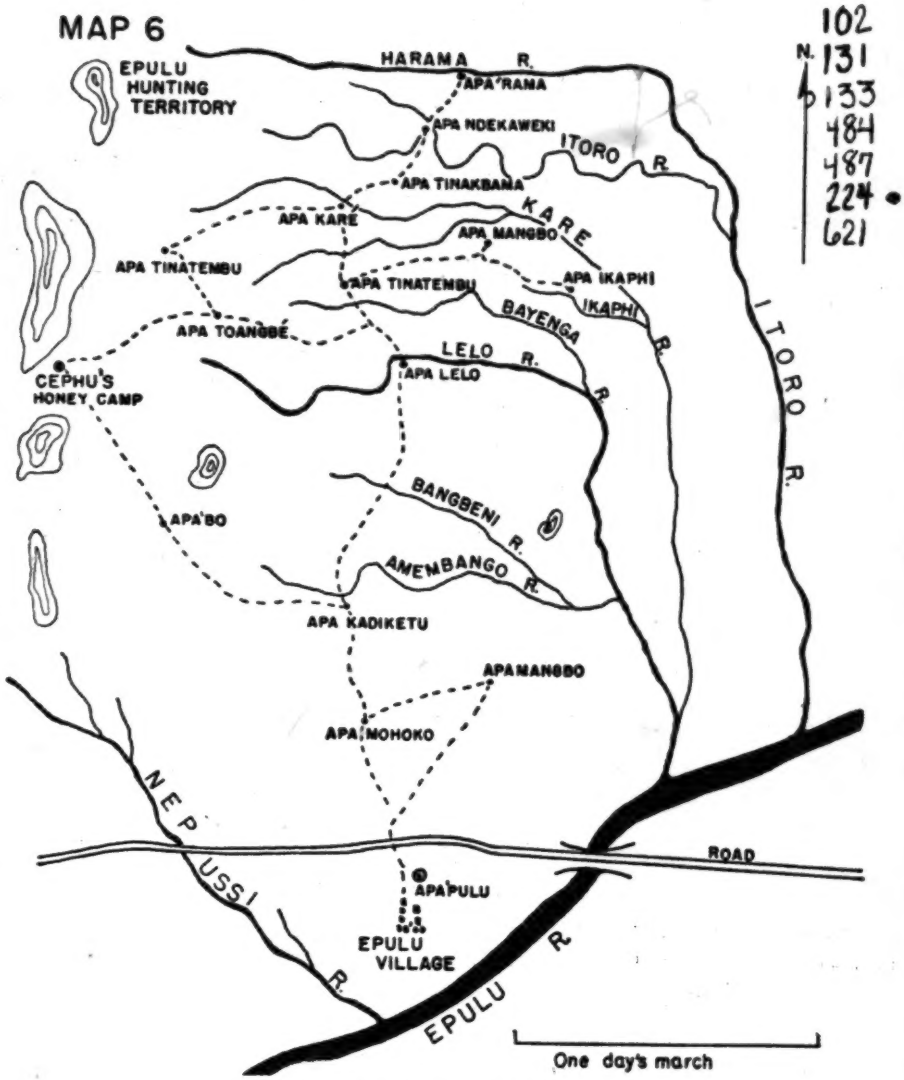
There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

ing the power, small as they were, to kill elephants. The Pygmies 000
today still kill elephants single-handed, armed only with a short- 224
handled spear. And they blend so well with the forest foliage that
you can pass right by without seeing them. As for their having tails, 291
it is easy enough to see how this story came into being, if the Pyg- [175]
mies seen by the Portuguese dressed as they do today, as is more
than likely. The loincloth they wear is made of the bark of a tree,
softened and hammered out until it is a long slender cloth, tucked
between the legs and over a belt, front and back. The women par-
ticularly like to have a long piece of cloth so that it hangs down
behind, almost to the ground. They say it looks well when dancing.

Some of the accounts of nineteenth-century travelers in the Congo 175
are no less fanciful, and it was George Schweinfurth who first made
known to the world, in his book *The Heart of Africa*, that Pygmies
not only existed but were human. He was following in the path of
the Italian explorer Miani, who a few years earlier had reached the
Ituri but had died before he could return. One of the most curious
of little-known stories about the Pygmies is that Miani actually sent
two of them back to Italy, to the Geographic Association, which had
sponsored his trip. The president of the association, Count Minis-
calchi of Verona, took the two boys and educated them. Contempo-
rary newspaper reports describe them as strolling the boulevards,
arm in arm with their Italian friends, chatting in Italian. One of them
even learned to play the piano. From the present Count Miniscalchi
I learned that both Pygmies eventually returned to Africa, where one
died and the other became a saddler in the Ethiopian army. He last
heard from the latter, who must then have been an old man, just
before the outbreak of World War II.

Stanley describes his meetings with the Pygmies in the Ituri, but 175
without telling us much about them, and indeed little was known 114
beyond the actual fact of their existence until a White Father, the

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

3

The Making of Camp Lelo

484 WHEN KENGE WOKE ME the sun was not yet up, and the birds were still silent in the trees. It was three days after Balekimito's funeral, and the previous night it had been decided in a general discussion that we should all leave early in the morning and build a camp at the Lelo River, several hours' walk away.

[482] Already the Pygmy village was alive with women bundling up their household possessions in the baskets they would carry on their
• [224] backs. The men were busy checking their hunting nets, examining their arrow shafts and testing their bows, or sharpening the blades of their spears. The children were running about in the semi-darkness,

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[177] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

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BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481 484 and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their 186 slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484 evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, 224 [115] he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131 Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484 what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [114] lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222 and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114] quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

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In the middle of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up [516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo [825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor- [136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take [151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
589 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
[462] had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
[578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

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For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [765]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

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stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- 826
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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Masisi hunts birds and monkeys. The wooden point of his arrow is tipped with poison.

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[P. 72-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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A group of men sets off for the hunt, some carrying their hunting

[P. 72-F 1]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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nets, others spears or bows and arrows.

[P. 72- F 2]

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

224 4% 28 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [482] [251] [372] The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 777 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo,* as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, looking in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from another fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground. [201]

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, [262] contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

224 The end of the net stopped a few feet short of the boulders, and Maipe deftly joined it to his net; then, slipping each coil off his shoulder in turn, he hung his own net, fastening it to low branches and saplings. It stretched for about three hundred feet, so that one end was completely out of sight from the other. It stood about four feet high, and Maipe walked the length of it, silently adjusting it so that it touched the ground all the way along and was securely fastened above. If he found the net drooping where there was no support, he cut a sapling, stuck it in the ground and hung the net on it, bending the top sharply back, twisting it around and through the mesh so that the net could not slip. When this was done he took up his spear and casually sharpened it with a stone picked off the ground.

It was about another five minutes before he suddenly stood up and beckoned me to do the same. He stood absolutely motionless, his head slightly on one side, listening; his spear was raised just a few inches from the ground. I listened too, but could hear nothing. The forest had become silent; even the crickets had stopped their almost incessant chirping. Maipe raised his spear higher, and then at some signal that I did not even notice there was a burst of shouting, yelling, hooting and clapping, as the women and children started the beat. They must have been about half a mile away, and as they came closer the noise was deafening. We saw one antelope, a large [136] red sondu, ears back, leaping toward the boulders as though it were heading straight for our net, but at the last moment it saw us and veered away to the left. Maipe could probably have killed it with his spear, but he said, "That is not for us. It will probably fall into Ekianga's net." Just then there was a lot of yelling from Moke's nephew. Maipe vaulted over the net and ran swiftly, leaping and bounding like the sondu to avoid obstacles. I followed as best I could, but was passed by several youngsters from farther down the [136] line before I reached the others. The sondu had gone into Ekianga's

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula,* had tried to fight its way through Moke's net. 224 [136]

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekianga with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back. [114] [825]

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and 825 [223] [231]

825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 578 186 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 123 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

224 This dance[1] was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
578 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
152 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
[765] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

[1] [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

224 578 152 156

for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, *"Nyama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!"* (Animal there! Animal there! Come at once, *you*, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekianga and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masisi spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu did so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the [231] civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hat. He looked peaceful and contented.

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224 765 578 156 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 765 578 156 593 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, [602] [621] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 156 152 224 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu 224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, 578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped 156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

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he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

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6

The Giver of the Law

CEPHU HAD COMMITTED what is probably one of the most heinous crimes in Pygmy eyes, and one that rarely occurs. Yet the case was settled simply and effectively, without any evident legal system being brought into force. It cannot be said that Cephu went unpunished, because for those few hours when nobody would speak to him he must have suffered the equivalent of as many days solitary confinement for anyone else. To have been refused a chair by a mere youth, not even one of the great hunters; to have been laughed at by women and children; to have been ignored by men—none of these things would be quickly forgotten. Without any formal process of

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224 156 626 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent spe- [858] cialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512

husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled *"Ayiiiiii?"*—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

512 224 go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, [202] bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories [157] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he 439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he 177 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

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512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
181

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
527 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
574 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

177 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
[151] Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

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881 everywhere. The men retreated to the outskirts of the clearing and
832 stood uncertainly, peering around trees or over the tops of huts, their
574 bows and banana skins at the ready.

But the girls felt they had achieved their end. Each one had marked her victim, who was bound by the strongest bonds of self-respect to respond to the challenge and brave the elima house itself. Pumba, who had followed at a safe distance, sat disconsolately on a log that Akidinimba had thrown at him in a friendly way, and he did not even look up as we left.

881 The girls sang all the way home; even when they left the forest and made their way back across the Epulu, gleaming orange and gold in the late afternoon light, they sang. They sang so that everyone should know that they were the *Bamelima*, the people of the elima, girls who had been blessed with the blood and were now women.

881 There were occasions when the mood was different. One evening
• 224 in particular, after a relatively quiet day, nearly all the women of the group gathered together outside the elima house. It was toward the end of the time that had been set, in an arbitrary fashion, for the duration of the festival. The Pygmies felt they had been in the village long enough, and the elima was interfering with their hunting. As much as the young men enjoyed hunting, the attraction of the elima house offered strong competition. If the boys were away too long, due to pressure from their parents, the girls complained that they were not being treated properly. Everyone agreed that this was an insoluble conflict, unless the elima was either brought to an end or moved out to the forest. It was not only the boys that were away from the hunt, but also the women and girls, who would otherwise have been gainfully employed gathering and helping to drive more animals into the men's nets. And the women said they were having far too good a time in the village. So it was decided to bring the elima to an end.

herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so 881
laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing 152
ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as 302
decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes.

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, 881
both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, 881
the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of 885
adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba 182
and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it.

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to 881
kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child 885
might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov- 224

881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
771 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
[765] festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
[533] dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
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P Kenge asked in amazement THE FOREST PEOPLE
C if the Mabudo actually came so far
224 into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often.
[186] They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any
P Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an ele-
[522] phant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

P This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide
484 suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge
P was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while
484 he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been per-
609 fectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

222 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ring-
527 ing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
517 cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his
[533] group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing
[825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
602 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had
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sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey. 621 578 602 224

One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as everyone would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

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224 Although between themselves the pygmies have little division of labor, in
433 another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

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Z This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy
224 spends all of his time hunting, the
433 Negro only a portion of his. The pyg-
[481] my depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

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Throughout the pygmy country, the
224 pygmies can be classified either as net
[101] hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

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[621] Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

[P. 328-A]

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

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224 When they have arrived at the right location, the men set up the nets in a line and stand by to tend them; the women spread out in a circle to beat. Often the pygmies will have dogs which they have borrowed from the Negroes, barkless dogs with wooden bells tied to their collars. Each woman cuts a lot of twigs and makes a little broom with them. She beats the bushes with it, and cries out, "Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo!" over and over again. The young children, except for the babies which are being carried, are made to keep out of this.

[198] [825] When the women sight an animal and it heads for the nets, they change the tone of their baying; either they identify the kind of animal by this means or indicate that an animal in general is coming. When the animal rushes up to the net and entangles itself, the man who is tending that part of the net grabs the animal and kills it with his knife or spear. He will then beat his hand on his arm pit, and the others will come up to see what he has killed. Sometimes, however, the animal sees the net, or a man moves, and the animal leaps back into the line of women. Such an animal can well escape, for the women are not prepared to stop it. However, when a woman engaged in beating sights a slow animal, such as a turtle, pangolin, porcupine, or even a rat, she will dive for it and pop it into her basket which she carries on her back, and go on beating. [462] This is merely incidental gathering; slow animals are women's game.

During the course of a single day a pygmy band may set up their nets, conduct a drive, take the nets down, and repeat the process as many as seven times, each time in a different place. If the clouds collect early, they will go home. If there are no clouds and they have a good bag of game, they will still go home, but if it is dry and they

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224 have little game they will keep on until nearly dark.

There is a difference in value between net positions in a net hunt. The central position is best because it catches the most animals, and the flanks are the worst. The pygmies have a whole vocabulary to express the details of net hunting, including a whole group of verbs for net setting in various positions. There seems to be some rule about who sets his nets in which spot, but this has not been recorded.

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If a big animal, like a buffalo, comes toward the nets, the men will try to get them down and let him rush through, for they do not want to foul and tear the nets or to encounter the dangerous animal. If the large animal does strike the net, however, it may delay him long enough for the nearest man to rush up and spear him.

Most of the animals they catch are no larger than a dog or goat; for example, a kuchinda is about that size. The hunter cuts its throat and carries it around his neck, with hind and front legs on opposite sides. The average day's bag is about half of an animal of this size per man. If they have caught an okapi, however, the hunter cuts it up on the spot, and they cut small lianas to tie up the pieces with. The women also will carry some of it in their baskets. Almost always the meat goes directly to the camp after a hunt, where it is divided. Only after this will the share of the Negroes be carried to their village.

[481] **Bow and arrow hunting.**—In bow and arrow hunting, the pygmy relies not on his endurance but on his ability to move through the forest silently; that is his greatest skill and greatest asset. He can track an antelope to a thicket where it has lain down to sleep, and shoot it from five yards' distance before it wakes up. He shoots machine-gun style; he will pump five ar-

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224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 411 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries two kinds of arrows, the first with iron tips, which he generally uses on the larger, antelope-size, animals, and wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned, and which he uses for monkeys. He rarely shoots a monkey with an iron-tipped arrow, through fear of losing it. Each man makes his own poison as well as his own darts. The [824] plants from which the poison is made are well known, and there is neither ritual nor mystery attached to the proc- [137] ess. The vital plant is a strophanthus; they will mix other plants with it, but they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart stimulant. Its action is not immediate. The monkey runs along a bit, grows weaker, and urinates. The pygmies watch for this, for the moment of 224 urinating is the fatal one. If the monkey is out on a limb where there are no other branches, he will fall off; if he is within reach of a lateral branch or one rising upward, he will clutch it, and the hunter will be obliged to climb the tree if he wants the monkey. To do this he uses the technique described under pygmy locomotion. Since the monkeys are usually high in the trees and the pygmies are such poor marksmen, they undoubtedly miss more of them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant hunting involves a technique that is wholly different from either of the above two. The pygmy elephant hunter is a specialist; not every pygmy has the courage to face an elephant and kill it, and not every man the skill. Wheth- [177] er or not pygmies ever killed elephants in the early days, the present form of

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P 224 [178] elephant hunting is a recent development, the historical growth of which can be easily traced. It is also an important reason for Negro-pygmy relations.

Z 224 The chief reason why the Negro hunts is to kill elephants. The elephants barge about in great herds, destroying the plantations which represent a great deal of labor in clearing the forest and planting the bananas, and which form the Negroes' whole capital, his whole means of livelihood. The elephants burst in, pushing down fences, eating some of the bananas by the bunch and trampling the rest. This dread calamity usually happens on moonless nights when it would be almost certain death to go out and attack the elephants. All the Negro can do is to let the elephants do their worst, and try to kill them later to prevent recurrence.

Z 237 439 435 177 In the old days, when the Negroes had killed an elephant they did not know what to do with the tusks, other than make bark-cloth beaters from a few, and a number of other minor uses. The majority of the tusks were therefore stuck up around the Negroes' clearings as fences. Now when the Arab traders began coming in from Zanzibar, they were interested in commodities which were nonperishable and of concentrated value, and ivory filled these specifications best of all local goods. At first the Arabs bought the ivory from the Negroes for very low prices, since the Negroes were ignorant of its worth. Then when the Negroes began raising the prices to equally ridiculous heights, the Arabs raided them and seized it, and the Negroes began hiding it. Ivory is heavy, and the Arabs had to find bearers to carry it out to the coast. Hence they seized Z [567] men and women and made them carry it, and when they arrived at the coast they sold their bearers as slaves, mak-

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ing a double profit. Slavery, therefore, was a by-product of these raids, and not the primary objective, which was to obtain ivory. When the white men came in, they said to the Negroes, "Why deal with these Arab slavers? Sell your ivory to us, and we will leave you alone." Thus, ivory became an important item to the Negroes, and the more they could get of it the better.

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The pygmy could never, by himself, kill enough elephants to stop them from trampling his host's gardens. He could, however, kill enough to swell his host's supply of ivory and increase his host's capital. So a pygmy who was an elephant hunter became a special favorite of his Negro host and would get special gifts and favors in return for the ivory.

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The pygmy elephant hunter uses a special spear. Its handle is three to four feet long; its blade is leaf-shaped, of thin iron, about eight inches long and four wide. It is Negro-forged, of soft iron; the pygmy hunter sharpens it on a stone, until it is razor sharp.

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His technique of hunting is daring and simple, and takes as much skill as that of a Spanish matador. He tracks the elephant, which is not difficult, until he knows from the spoor that he is close to it. When he hears the elephant's bowels rumble, he goes along even more quietly, until he sees the elephant through the underbrush. He then approaches the elephant silently, up wind; he jabs his spear as far as he can into the elephant, gashing the belly just behind the ribs; then he pulls it right out again. The elephant at this point usually turns, and the pygmies say that if you as much as wink at this moment you are a dead pygmy.

The man stands stock still, so the elephant can't see him. Then he goes through a sequence of stab and jump and stand still, as many times as he can. Every time the elephant looks

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• 224 away he stabs him, and every time the elephant turns he stands still. The elephant can run faster than a man, and the pygmy's only hope is to wound the animal so badly that it will be unable to catch him before he gets away.

Finally the elephant goes charging off with one or more wounds in his intestines. The hunter, with his spear in his hand, returns to the camp. Perhaps the other men will be there, but they may be out net hunting. In the latter case he waits until they have all assembled, and as soon as they are together he tells them his story. There is much excitement; men, women, and children crowd around him and inspect the spear. They may say, "Hmmm, only that much of the tip is bloody, probably he won't die. Let it go." But if the spear is bloody way down to such and such a point, then the elephant has a serious wound and they will follow him.

[484] In the latter case the whole camp goes together. The women load on their babies and cooking pots, and their bunches of plantains. The men take their weapons, and they leave only an old man or two to watch the camp while they are away. They will follow the elephant two or three days, until he finally lies down and dies of peritonitis. Sometimes he has been dead for some time when they reach him, and he may be blown up like a balloon and rotten. Still they will eat him, for rotten meat, if thoroughly boiled, is edible.

224 796 When a group of pygmies reaches a blown-up elephant, a special ceremony takes place. A man other than the elephant hunter cuts a square of skin off the elephant's side. He cuts this up and puts pieces into the mouths of everyone. Then he cuts another layer, and passes this around, and another layer, until he comes down to a point where the body wall is very thin, and

[P. 331-B]

224 796 everyone has had a taste of the raw skin.

Then a small male child, squalling and screaming, is thrust on the elephant's side; he is told to bite, which he does, and the balloon bursts.

This ceremony is repugnant to the pygmies, as they do not like raw meat; it is especially repugnant to the child, who does not enjoy having the whole rotten insides of the elephant burst in his face.

[611] The child is the youngest son of the man who killed the elephant. If the man has no suitable son, it may be his nephew; or, if he has several young sons and the youngest is too small, either to understand the order or to bite, it will be the next older son.

224 Now that the elephant has burst, the ceremony is over, and a free-for-all takes place; the men cut the sides open, pull out the entrails, and climb inside to hack away at the meat. Other men rush to the head and chop away the tusks. The women take the pieces of meat which their men hand to them, and boil them. As soon as they have cooked one chunk, they will start to [251] boil another. Everyone eats as much of the boiled meat as he is able, and they spread out the rest on drying racks; when it has dried they will take it into the village to the Negroes, who keep it and eat it gradually, for the combination of boiling and drying serves as a means of preserving it, the only food preservation the pygmies practice, and then not for themselves. The tusks go to the special patron of the elephant hunter, and the patron sells them to the Greek or Hindu trader; the patron gives the pygmy a small share of what he receives.

Division of meat.—The need of giving some of the meat to their Negro hosts, and the knowledge that no one will starve as long as they can get bananas, makes the problem of meat di-

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224 vision among the pygmies different than among food-gatherers who have a more direct and immediate dependence [594] on hunting. The principles which the pygmies follow are: (1) The biological family is the least common denominator, the basic unit in sharing. No man would think of eating his meat without giving some to his wife and children. [596] (2) The next unit in sharing is the family group. Any man who has acquired meat will share some of it with other biological families within his family group, but all the shares may not be equal or equivalent. (3) Each man who participates in a hunt is given a share commensurate with his degree of participation. Thus if men from several family groups combine in a hunt, the meat goes to them, and they share their portions within their family groups by single unit families.

For practical purposes, the chief distinction is between meat acquired by stalking and that acquired by net hunting. In the case of stalking, only one man, or more often two or three, will be involved, and these men may well belong to the same family group. With net hunting, however, the whole camp joins the hunt and the whole camp shares the bag.

When an animal is caught net hunting, a number of people have special rights. The man who owns a hunting dog which chased the animal gets the neck. Other special pieces go to the man in whose net it was caught. However, someone else may have borrowed the net and been tending it at the time, and the net tender thus gets a special piece. Then there are pieces for the men whose women bayed it in, and every degree of participation in the killing is recognized and suitably rewarded.

If they bring in five or six antelope there is enough meat for everyone to eat well that night. One family may

• 224 get one cut of one animal, another cut of another, depending on what part they played in the capture of each. In any case, even if there is only one animal, everyone will get something to eat. This does not mean that all families eat equally well, however; some have more than others, some better cuts. There is both a reward for special luck and prowess, and a charitable mechanism for those who have shown neither. Sometimes the net hunters catch an okapi; in this case there is enough meat to feed the camp for a week, and everyone eats and eats well.

The meat is cut up by the man who killed the animal, or anyone who knows the rules. In any case there are always arguments. The man who makes a [626] mistake is cried down; they all know [591] the rules, or think that they know them. Government, as far as distribution of spoils is concerned, is by argument and common consent without specific leadership in any individual—the typical pygmy way of making decisions and ordering events.

In the case of the hunter who catches his animal all alone, without help of any kind, the carcass belongs to him alone. Theoretically, he and his family could [626] eat it all up if he wished, but there is little chance that this would happen; he would not dare face public opinion. He would be labeled a mean man and [439] would suffer for it in the end. It may happen however that he is behind in his gifts to his Negro host. In this case he will take the carcass uncut into the village, to avoid trouble from that quarter, and the other pygmies will not hold this against him, provided that there is other food to eat.

[171] The division of spoils after an elephant hunt follows the same principle as it does among the Indians of Tierra del Fuego or Lower California when a whale washes ashore—regardless of who may be responsible there is a

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224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

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157 **Evening talking time.**—The pyg-
571 mies seem to be a little less talkative
[P.333-B]

789 especially those taken from a wild pep-
821 per plant, to stop storms; and the lighting of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[5] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude
[811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is
789 usually a simple business. During the division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[6] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

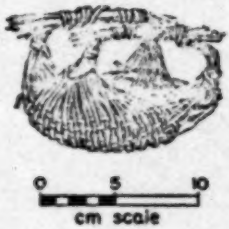
844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women
862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they
000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[5] *Op. cit.*, p. 157.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 157.
[P.339-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.194-8]



285
252

FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is provided almost exclusively by women. First place goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and peanuts acquired from the villagers in return for meat or service. But the forest itself provides an abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses. Schebesta gives no details as to the exact proportions of these various foodstuffs consumed, so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics of this group. He also mentions the place of snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk catch crabs and small fish in the shallow streams, using their hands or small nets.

262 [462] [439] [226]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 208-A]

224 of elephant hunt known to him. The first makes use of a spear such as that described by Putnam, but the Pygmy, instead of thrusting it into the belly, creeps up behind the elephant and cuts the tendon above one of its heels. The elephant spins around, at which a second hunter, waiting for this action, leaps out of the bush and cuts the tendon of the other heel, thus bringing the elephant down, at which point it is easily killed —often by blinding it and then cutting off the trunk and leaving it to bleed to death. The second method makes use of a harpoon, and according to Schebesta, this is the method used among the net hunters. Here the harpoon is thrust into the belly, as described by Putnam, after which the Pygmy leaps clear. If thrust far enough, the elephant dies from lacerations caused by the dragging on the harpoon head as the attached cord snags on trees and undergrowth during the animal's flight.

[223] Men may individually kill monkeys and birds with their bows and arrows, supplementing their individual family food supply, and women out gathering may catch slow game with their
• 226 hands. Children, and occasionally women, fish and catch crabs. Fishing seems more highly de-
[184] veloped among the net hunters than among Schebesta's archers, as the net hunters know of certain grubs that make good bait and can be found in the *kukumu* tree, and also understand the use of poison for catching fish.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net
hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (Efe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

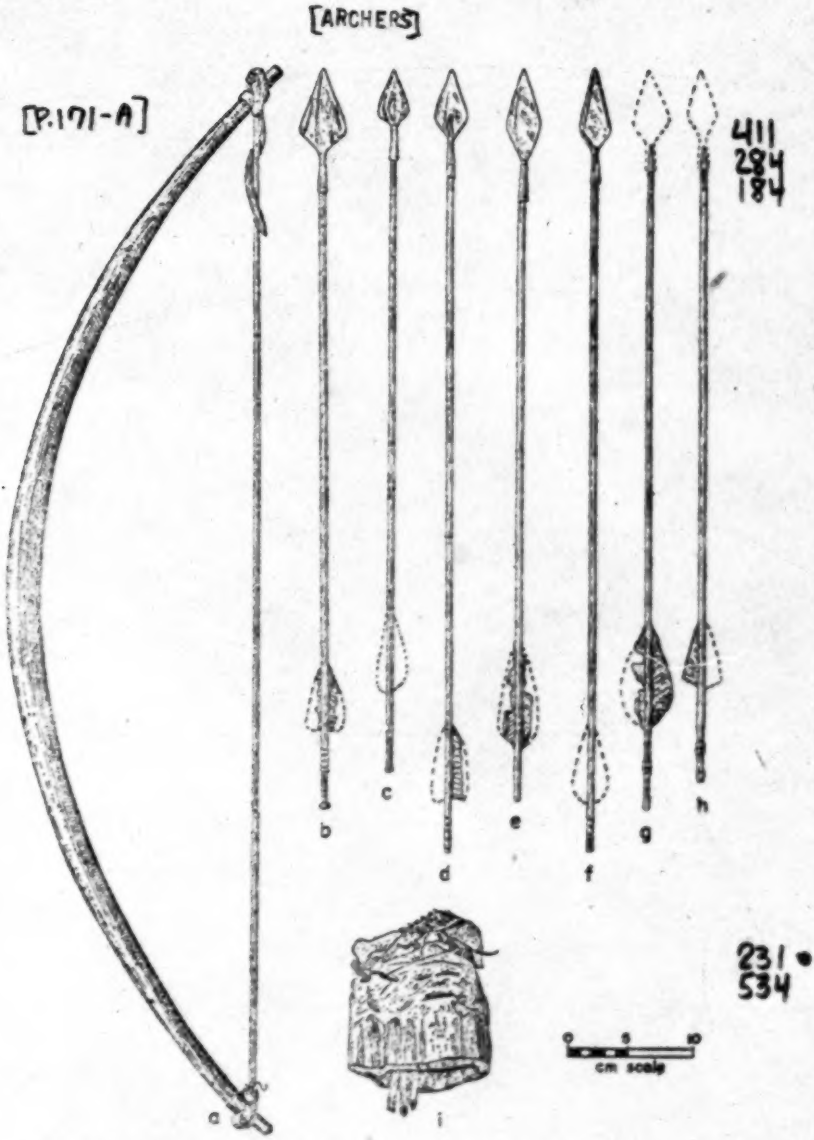


FIG. 7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Nduye District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. i. Dog bell.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-A]

Care of Body

515 According to the Putnams, the net hunters
302 take much greater care of their bodies than
[184] Schebesta's archers. They bathe frequently in the shallow streams near the camp, inspect each other carefully for bugs and lice (acquired inevitably when sleeping on the ground), and shave their heads for purposes of cleanliness rather than for esthetic satisfaction. Oil, when available, is rubbed into the skin. On ceremonial occasions, when they visit the Bantu village, palm oil is used, often mixed with *nkula* paste to add to its natural deep red color.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The only domestic animal, as with the arch-
184 ers, is the hunting dog, but this, although highly prized, is not so important to the net hunter as to the archer and tracker. Even among the larger net-hunting bands there may be only one or two dogs.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Most of the legends extolling social behavior are told in a matter-of-fact way and are not infrequently related to incidents in the lives of members of the community. Again, only one legend in the collection deals directly with anti-social behavior. It concerns a man who constantly maltreated his hunting dog. In net-hunting groups, such as the one in which these legends were collected, anything that concerns hunting concerns the entire society. This particular individual fed his dog only on the genitals of other animals. The dog saw that other dogs were being fed on more dainty morsels, such as liver; so one night when his master was sleeping he got his knife and killed the Pygmy. The Pygmy's wife woke up so the dog killed her also. The dog then disappeared.

Even a brief glance at the legends reveals that the one quality to which these Mbuti attach the greatest importance is cleverness, a term that in certain circumstances also means trickery. Conversely, while selfishness, greed, laziness, and gossiping women are mildly condemned in a number of legends, the sin of sins is stupidity. These two qualities are so overriding that cleverness can make crime pay, whereas stupidity can bring death and disaster to the

[P 263-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pretending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the ensnarement of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the villagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry. 857 224 868 [231]

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision. 857 868

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out at 857 571 561 857 868

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula,* had tried to fight its way through Moke's net. 224 [136]

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekianga with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back. [114] [825]

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and 825 [223] [231]

881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P. 190-D]

Mate-
• 237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his [789] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by [252] Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [262] states that he has never known these Pygmies to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 41 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which [184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P.165-B]

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and
• 237 vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of ~~fire itself~~ is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light.
[373] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry
[416] firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows
[114] (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped
[P.169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 173-A]

411
• [237]

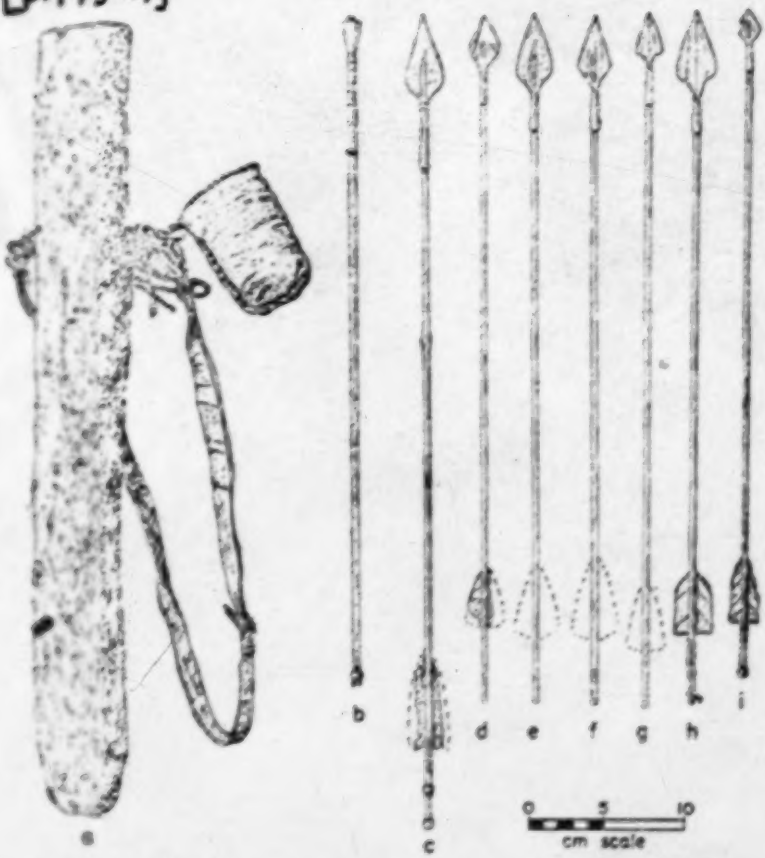


FIG. 9. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver. b–i. Arrows. Quivers are not generally carried by either archers or net hunters; by both groups the arrows are usually held in the left hand, together with the bow.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
287 only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
412 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those of the archers; the beating ends may have one of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[462] [476] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity calling for cooperation between men and women.

[P.197-B]

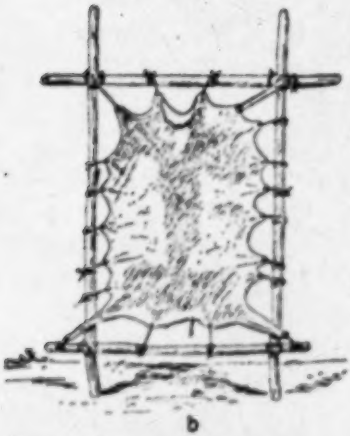
1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pvgmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.202-A]

281

a



b

FIG. 32. Methods of stretching hides to dry, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Hides, little used by the net hunters except as baby slings and, more rarely, as quivers, are good trade items that are needed by villagers, among other things, for drumheads.

[237]
[439]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 205-B]

Elephant hunting is important in the Epulu District. Certain bands of Pygmies are specialists. Among the local net-hunting band from which the most detailed information is available, however, four out of 12 or 15 hunters are elephant hunters. Putnam says that the present form of elephant hunting is a recent development in answer to the needs of the villagers whose plantations were continually being ravaged by elephants and who encouraged the Pygmies to kill them off. In the early days the villagers had little use for the tusks, other than as barkcloth beaters, but with the advent of 224 [178] [237] [439]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 206-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Arab traders ivory became a most precious
[237] commodity, and the Pygmies were doubly in-
[439] couraged to kill elephants. For the Pygmies themselves, a slain elephant was a source of great satisfaction, providing them with meat ample enough to obviate the necessity of hunting for several days.

[157] The killing of the animal was, and still is, a matter that inspired the normally audacious M'buti with some caution. Putnam says that elephant hunting is a specialist occupation; not every Pygmy is brave enough, and the tech-
[171] nique itself takes great skill. The villagers use spear-falls and elephant pits (dug so as to trap

[P 206-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

292
237
824

[535] [575] [171] FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

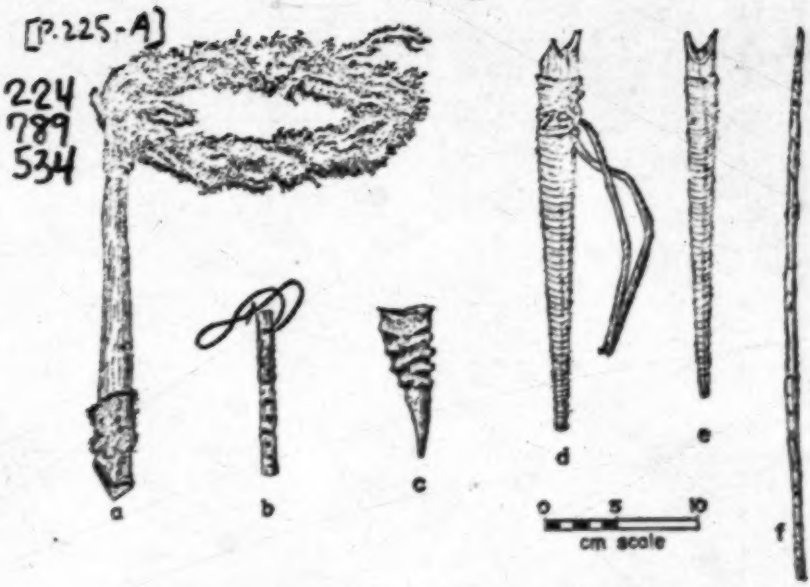


FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akbelea*, attached to fur headband; worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbelu*. c. Antelope horn, *anjo*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, *madé*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madé*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyongé*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing in the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[237]
[828]
[222]

[NET HUNTERS]

789 224 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *segbe* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Segbe* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 534 222 *Segbe* are not to be confused with *madé* (Fig. 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the honey season.

789 821 372 Rain magic involves the covering of the campfires with leaves but evidently without much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P 240-3]

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
• 237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

531 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/
386 A

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P.297-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *ensumba*, *isumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *ensumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Tungana, a grandfather many times over, in a genet-skin cap.

[P 72-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 *Opposite:* A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

Old Moke (in a sloth-skin hat) listens as Cephu tells a legend.

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[P 72-L]

224 4% 28 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [482] [251] [372] The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 777 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away [237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted [412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either [386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of 287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in 462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the [516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Trade

The bare facts only are known. The Mbuti supply the villagers with meat and with certain forest products, such as roofing leaves or lianas, in return for plantation products. The villager invariably tries to enforce some service as well, with varying degrees of success. Either extreme can be found: cases in which the relationship is formal and binding in fact as well as theory, and those in which the theory is held only by the villagers and does not correspond to the fact, i.e., the Pygmy maintains his side of the trade relationship only so long as it suits him. In my experience the latter is the situation far more often than otherwise.

Then again we must emphasize that trade is not necessary on either side. The villagers could perfectly well hunt if they had to, and the Pygmies could equally well gather all their vegetable needs from the forest. Further, contrary to Schebesta's (1952, 112) assertion, the Mbuti are perfectly capable of cultivating, given a

[P 249-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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[D.250-A]

clear space. Some of the net hunters in the Epulu area have tried, and with success, but quickly lose interest and revert to their old nomadic ways.

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The fact that there is no attempt to equate the supply of meat and the supply of plantains is also significant. Either side gives what it feels like giving, except that the Mbuti believe themselves free to take what they want if it is not given. There is also the Bira custom mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) of giving the first fruits to the Pygmies. The Mbuti seem to have control of this situation. The villagers have no means of preventing the Mbuti from returning to the depths of the forest whenever they wish. When the Pygmy hunting camp is some distance from the village, the villagers may send in to ask for meat, or the chief may even come himself.

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Sometimes the villagers try to gain control of the situation by supplying nets and claiming the appropriate share of a net owner. The Mbuti accept the nets, but see to it that only such game falls into them as they think fit. They eventually contest the ownership of the net, claiming to have added to it themselves and thrown away the damaged, village portion.

At most, it seems possible to regard the trade relationship only as one of mutual convenience. By itself, it is far too unformalized and unstable to provide the basis for the remarkably close relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to-date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4458, Music of the Ituri Forest

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 Chase as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1], both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" ("*bachei ba bo*"), "for elephants are like villagers" ("*bambongu bua sopilabatu*"). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 186 825 245 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They began to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 186 825 245 776 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He walked with two spears.[9] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 186 829 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [9] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rite-pages of the molimo, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the molimo trumpet into the camp is often marked.

[P.308]

THE LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

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mosu bonu bambuti nduu'ini eboko. mosu mu batu bonji.
In olden times we Mbuti had bananas, before the people of the village.

batu bonji baku biai eboko ndonu. su kongio'i.
The people of the village stole the bananas from us. We shared them.

bonu bambuti nakonia ekuu, bakpuru bua'i poko. Seyuma mayoli bendo.
We Mbuti took the leaves, the *kpuru* took the roots. That was their trickery.

sombu ndano ndo mosu bindoritia. akini bombongu pikiai dongunu.
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Our plantations of old were good. But the elephants came and troubled us.

bomodongia'inu. bo bumia'i tiko su.
They troubled us. They killed our plantations.

bambuti bolofa'i, "su asmabo? bombongu bonu dongibé, bobomisu tiko ndonu."
The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants trouble us so and are killing our plantations."

mungwi, mungwi mungbo, ofofa'i, "bombongu bapiké su lofua nabé."
An elder, a very old man indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them."

bachabwa bolofa'i, "se asmabo?" mungwi a lofa'i, "se sipa, bomiki."
The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man said, "You wait, children."

bombongu bakidi. bowunji a loa'eboko bokbu. bo wunjia'i bonu tiko.
The elephants came. They began to eat the bananas. They began to destroy the plantation.

bachabwa bachi'i aka mungwi, bolofua'i, "ombo, epa, bombongu bkidi; bo bumia tiko ndonu."
The youths were afraid and ran to the old man, saying, "Oh! Father, the elephants have come; they are destroying our plantation."

"ndonua. me mua ko totiambino, bewingbokbu mu likuru; nakobi anamungu."
mungwi a ko d'i na tiko.
"Good. I shall go to chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."
The old man went to the plantation.

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

221 CP. 1CC-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter. 352 417 251

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers. 415 412 177 [439] 412 177 [439]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Honey Gathering

Honey gathering is of particular importance 222 [221] and is seasonal. The equipment consists of fire,

[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 175-B]

251 • 417

Fig. 12. Meat-drying rack, archers, Central and East Ituri. Meat drying takes place only when the [439] Mbuti intend to trade with villagers and is by no means a part of every hunting camp.

[P. 174-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Putnam describes a ceremony that takes place at that time. A man other than the hunter cuts off a section of the skin, a little at a time, distributing it for all to eat. When he has cut down to the inner wall of the abdomen and everyone has had a piece, he stands aside for the youngest son of the successful hunter to bite through the wall, whereupon the bloated ele-
[262] phant bursts. Putnam says that this ceremony is repugnant to the Pygmies, who dislike raw meat, and particularly repugnant to the child, but he does not explain the practice.

• 251 Following this ceremony, the animal is
252 quickly and completely butchered, and the
26 meat is cooked. The Pygmies eat as much as they can. They partly boil and partly dry some (the only form of preservation of foodstuff ever practiced by them) and take this to the village.

224 In 1951, Putnam gave me another version of this form of hunt, in which the Pygmy thrusts the spear into the bladder of the elephant, and, if he sees that the urine is released, he returns to camp knowing that it will die within a few days. The procedure is then as above. Anne Putnam (1954, 93) mentions a net hunter who tracked and killed an elephant at a time when there was no shortage of food, simply because he felt the urge to do so.

Schebesta (1941, 106 ff.) mentions two types
[P. 207-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 208-A]

1: Turnbull F-4.5 (1961-1965) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

PLATE 36 1/A

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

322 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
• [251] drunk.

1/A, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe 685
named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given 157
a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it 685
had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of 157
the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, 578
a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, [251]
and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated [627]
as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly [554]
respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, [627]
Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, 685
brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, 627
saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if 578
he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and [152]
saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was 627
brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most fre- 431
quently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nip- 685
pold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African 157
pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. 421
It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only [114]
obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *singula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each [284] about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *awjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

Tt Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

224 796 everyone has had a taste of the raw skin.

Then a small male child, squalling and screaming, is thrust on the elephant's side; he is told to bite, which he does, and the balloon bursts.

This ceremony is repugnant to the pygmies, as they do not like raw meat; it is especially repugnant to the child, who does not enjoy having the whole rotten insides of the elephant burst in his face.

[611] The child is the youngest son of the man who killed the elephant. If the man has no suitable son, it may be his nephew; or, if he has several young sons and the youngest is too small, either to understand the order or to bite, it will be the next older son.

224 Now that the elephant has burst, the ceremony is over, and a free-for-all takes place; the men cut the sides open, pull out the entrails, and climb inside to hack away at the meat. Other men rush to the head and chop away the tusks. The women take the pieces of meat which their men hand to them, and boil them. As soon as they have cooked one chunk, they will start to boil another. [251] Everyone eats as much of the boiled meat as he is able, and they spread out the rest on drying racks; when it has dried they will take it into the village to the Negroes, who keep it and eat it gradually, for the combination of boiling and drying serves as a means of preserving it, the only food preservation the pygmies practice, and then not for themselves. The tusks go to the special patron of the elephant hunter, and the patron sells them to the Greek or Hindu trader; the patron gives the pygmy a small share of what he receives.

Division of meat.—The need of giving some of the meat to their Negro hosts, and the knowledge that no one will starve as long as they can get bananas, makes the problem of meat di-

[P. 332-A]

177 574 [206] may come in every evening. They will leave a couple of old men to stay behind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[203] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home [535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 [361] Sometimes the pygmy camp is as much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 439 571 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Negroes.**—The pygmies consider themselves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it into the village. They never preserve [251] or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his [989] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [252] [362] states that he has never known these Pygmies to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 411 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to [301] cover the back, but he does not specify to which [184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P.165-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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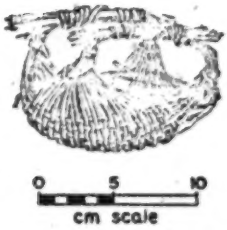
Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.194-B]



285
252.

FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is provided almost exclusively by women. First place goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and peanuts acquired from the villagers in return for meat or service. But the forest itself provides an abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses. Schebesta gives no details as to the exact proportions of these various foodstuffs consumed, so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics of this group. He also mentions the place of snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk catch crabs and small fish in the shallow streams, using their hands or small nets.

262 [462] [439] [226]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [373] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand torches. Campfires are always made the same [252] way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam [463] is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Putnam describes a ceremony that takes place at that time. A man other than the hunter cuts off a section of the skin, a little at a time, distributing it for all to eat. When he has cut down to the inner wall of the abdomen and everyone has had a piece, he stands aside for the youngest son of the successful hunter to bite through the wall, whereupon the bloated ele-
[262] phant bursts. Putnam says that this ceremony is repugnant to the Pygmies, who dislike raw meat, and particularly repugnant to the child, but he does not explain the practice.

251 Following this ceremony, the animal is
• 252 quickly and completely butchered, and the
261 meat is cooked. The Pygmies eat as much as they can. They partly boil and partly dry some (the only form of preservation of foodstuff ever practiced by them) and take this to the village.

224 In 1951, Putnam gave me another version of this form of hunt, in which the Pygmy thrusts the spear into the bladder of the elephant, and, if he sees that the urine is released, he returns to camp knowing that it will die within a few days. The procedure is then as above. Anne Putnam (1954, 93) mentions a net hunter who tracked and killed an elephant at a time when there was no shortage of food, simply because he felt the urge to do so.

Schebesta (1941, 106 ff.) mentions two types
[P. 207-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 208-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

PLATE 36 1

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

222 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
• 252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
[251] drunk.

1, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
• 252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
* 177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
* 177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
* 177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322 vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
324] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.108-D]

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4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

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512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

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mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are frequently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the *elima* songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity,

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It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east. 221 222 533 535 [372] [534] [192]

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives. 222 [114] 221 481

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect. 222 [192]

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish. [415] 262

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled 262 252

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Mbuti

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this prac-
[184] tice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[825] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

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meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly. 627 578

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal. 252 152 578 [626]

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave. 224 578

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur- 224 626 [578] [821] [152] [166] [648]

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Mbuti

[P. 228-A]

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[412] [439] 21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 578 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonetheless concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P. 72-K]

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

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607
593 the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself
595 and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time,
853 and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening
578
[252] meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu
595 continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange
411 eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end,
578 Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He
607 looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives
595 were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's
578 wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her
607 brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

221 [p. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148--149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their material culture (and indirectly their social structure) but also, to some extent, their social behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more properly in the field of psychology than social anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the probable importance of the environment in this respect, as it becomes especially significant when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Putnam describes a ceremony that takes place at that time. A man other than the hunter cuts off a section of the skin, a little at a time, distributing it for all to eat. When he has cut down to the inner wall of the abdomen and everyone has had a piece, he stands aside for the youngest son of the successful hunter to bite through the wall, whereupon the bloated ele-
[262] phant bursts. Putnam says that this ceremony is repugnant to the Pygmies, who dislike raw meat, and particularly repugnant to the child, but he does not explain the practice.

251 Following this ceremony, the animal is
252 quickly and completely butchered, and the
261 meat is cooked. The Pygmies eat as much as they can. They partly boil and partly dry some (the only form of preservation of foodstuff ever practiced by them) and take this to the village.

224 In 1951, Putnam gave me another version of this form of hunt, in which the Pygmy thrusts the spear into the bladder of the elephant, and, if he sees that the urine is released, he returns to camp knowing that it will die within a few days. The procedure is then as above. Anne Putnam (1954, 93) mentions a net hunter who tracked and killed an elephant at a time when there was no shortage of food, simply because he felt the urge to do so.

Schebesta (1941, 106 ff.) mentions two types

[P. 207-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 208-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 148]

CHAPTER 10

The Economy

THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 613 602 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 439 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 *seq.*), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 439 261 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri, except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152 The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[533 534 431] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
536 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
[261 789] One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy. 224 46 626 578

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp. [535] [482]

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly. 578 [261] [857] [883]

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows: 626 578 224

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his [789] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [252] states that he has never known these Pygmies [262] to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 411 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which [184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P. 165-B]

[ARCHERS]

224 [824] stems in a special way they form cylinders which, when struck on the ground, make an effective clap. The women then go ahead and by the loud beating of their petards put up game for the men to shoot with their metal-tipped arrows. This form of hunt is usually successful in killing a number of animals, which are shared among the various hunting bands that took part in the beat.

Elephant hunting takes place only among those Mbuti who use spears (Fig. 10; Schebesta, 1941, 106); bows and arrows are quite incapable of doing more than blind an elephant, despite the reports of imaginative travelers to the contrary. Those archers who use only bow and arrow do not hunt elephant. Wild boar, similarly, are killed only with spear, especially when they appear near the camp. Monkeys and [P262] chimpanzees, considered as delicacies, are pur-

[P. 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

sued and shot with bow and arrow whenever the opportunity arises but are never the object of organized hunting. Other smaller animals and birds are hunted individually; those that take refuge in holes in trees are smoked out. 224 [262].

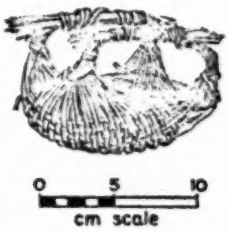
Schebesta's account suggests that, despite his proficiency at the hunt, the Pygmy takes care to protect himself against its attendant dangers and disappointments by securing the cooperation of the God of the Forest, and of his ancestors, and by making use of magic. He carries charms, observes various taboos, and performs certain rites—mostly sympathetic. It is not clearly stated, however, exactly which rites and charms are used by which particular Pygmies; there is obviously a great deal of variation. Schebesta clearly indicates, however, that among the archers there seems to be a considerable amount of hunting magic and ritual, witnessed by their use of the special whistles (Efe: *segbe*), magic formulas, invocation, and ritual practices he describes. 224 789 [776] [769]

[P. 173-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-B]



225
252

FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is provided almost exclusively by women. First place goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and peanuts acquired from the villagers in return for meat or service. But the forest itself provides an abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses. Schebesta gives no details as to the exact proportions of these various foodstuffs consumed, so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics of this group. He also mentions the place of snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk catch crabs and small fish in the shallow streams, using their hands or small nets.

262 •
[462]
[439]
[226]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 175-C]

way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants

276

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-A]

•262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433 439 177 22 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
[784] serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé*-
[262] brother. The totem is always taboo for the Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[753] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[761] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[778] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *meghe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

MAGIC

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[p. 192-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Putnam describes a ceremony that takes place at that time. A man other than the hunter cuts off a section of the skin, a little at a time, distributing it for all to eat. When he has cut down to the inner wall of the abdomen and everyone has had a piece, he stands aside for the youngest son of the successful hunter to bite through the wall, whereupon the bloated ele-
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Schebesta (1941, 106 ff.) mentions two types
[P. 207-8]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 208-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 211 - A]

276 lagers, but the net hunters also make a pipe by twisting a bark strip into a cone, lining the end with fire-resistant leaves (Fig. 31b).

Food Restrictions

• 262 614 [184] Putnam's information on food restrictions differs from that given for the archers. While there are clan names and clan totems,[1] opinion among the net hunters themselves seems vague as to the exact extent of the restrictions arising from these totems. Probably, if the occasion arose (though the commonest totem animals in this particular group are the leopard and the chimpanzee, not important features of the local diet), a hungry Pygmy would turn a blind eye to the rules of totemism. Putnam says that these rules call for avoidance not only of the animal as well as of its flesh, but also of its favorite food. The animals are not regarded as representing the ancestors themselves but are associated with them in some myth.

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal [825] of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

Trade

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by 177 Putnam on the present dependency of the net [184] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent val- [571] ues other than mutual satisfaction. But the villager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.

[P. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 562 [262] The second kind of taboo mentioned by Putnam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this [825] [823] difference is probably connected with the association between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patriclan or gens.

[P. 239-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

A fourth factor might be added: While the 184
net hunt quickly scares animals away from the 182
area around the hunting camp, necessitating 224
frequent changes of site, the archery technique 361
neither depletes the game so quickly nor frightens it away. An archer band can therefore remain confined to a smaller area, near the village, while the net hunters sometimes must wander several days' march away from their patrons. The more nomadic group also has [262]. constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is apparently felt by the more settled archers, for plantation products.

Thus at once we can see the possible eco- 184
nomic, social, and political implications of the 182
difference in hunting technique and how these 12
implications follow in fact. 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of 222
social and economic importance in each type of 184
community. It is regarded primarily as the 462
work of women, though, wherever it calls for tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among
[P. 244-D]

[p. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
22 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

PLATE 36 1

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

222 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
[251] drunk.

1, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
262
222

/Plate 36-B/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P.305-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
• 262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
* 177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
* 177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
* 177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[824] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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bull, 1960[1]), I shall keep the description here to those essentials 881
concerned with the structural implications of the *elima*.

The fact that it is not an individual family affair, to be concealed with shame as best possible, is doubly emphasized when two girls in a band, of quite different lineages, "see the blood" within a few days of each other. There will then be a joint *elima*. And there is also the selection by the girl or girls of the *bamelima*, the friends she likes and wants to accompany her for the duration of the festival, living with her in the *elima* hut. They will be drawn from her female age mates, [561]
and may or may not already have had their own *elima*. If they have not yet seen the blood, participation in their friend's *elima* will excuse them from having one of their own when the time comes. If a girl sees the blood, and a close friend thinks she is about to see it as well, the *elima* will be delayed, perhaps for several weeks.

As with birth, this life-cycle crisis does not evoke any sense of need 881
for urgent ritual action, protective or otherwise. Its significance is of 182
a different order. It is regarded as essentially natural and therefore good. Also as with birth, the personal importance of the occasion [778]
leads to an establishment of personal contact with the forest, a reification of the direct bond between the individual and the forest world; but the social importance of puberty for the band is recognized, so the band as such takes certain measures, both social and ritual, to mark the occasion.

The girl or girls with blood are expected to keep to their homes and 881
an extension may be built onto one of their huts, or onto that of any friend or relative who is willing to house the *bamelima*. Every *elima* girl with blood has to choose a personal assistant, and the choice is left entirely to her, and again may fall on a relative, though more often it is a very close friend, of the same age group. They then invite other friends to join them in the *elima* hut, when it is ready. The assistants share such restrictions as are placed upon the *elima* girls, except that they are more free to leave the hut unaccompanied. There are few restrictions anyway, it seems, and they are mainly concerned with maintaining adherence to the schedule of instruction and activities. There are some minor food prohibitions, based on the 881
personal taboos of the *elima* girls and their assistants, which in turn 262
are based on their individual reactions to these foods as young children. If a certain food makes a child sick it may be forbidden to him until puberty, when he may try it again and abandon the taboo if it no longer affects him adversely. Sometimes, but not always, there is 881

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

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spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[614] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

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222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

• 262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

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It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

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Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

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and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

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is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: *"Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, looking in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from another fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground.

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was sus-
pected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground,
they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and
imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled
the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it
sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing
as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Sur-
rounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around,
faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men
who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing
in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was 361 that they would be independent because they would no longer have 829 to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village 177 foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of 152 all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the 177 forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, 178 to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few 185 days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always hap- [533] pened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we 533 heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the 825 Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies 222 the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, dif- 262 ferent kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

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gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing. It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest. A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan. The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said, and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

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825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation. 262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain

[P. 338-A]

262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 773 The animals of the forest, which symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting; flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

776 [771] Both pygmies and Negroes believe in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

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the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net
hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

[ARCHERS]

593 861 Both parents have an equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively, 514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from 264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimination takes place close by, 361 two factors favoring the frequent moving of camp.

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are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one
• 264 perse[illegible]ting alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to
[576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even
[868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko,* a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
• 264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
539 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
• 264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was sus-
pected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground,
they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and
imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled
the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it
sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing
as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Sur-
rounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around,
faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men
who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing
in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *uda* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulozi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulozi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *lozi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulozi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled. 761 754 886 [192]

In legend the *lozi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *lozi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *lozi* is not seen at his (or her) 761 754 266 [773]

[P. 240-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself
754 awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing
• 266 him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 This belief seems associated with death and
754 with people who are near to that particular
177 crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 The Putnam material does not support any
114 theory of a celestial God such as that described
[184] by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

Z 186 563 581 ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

P 581 The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that they ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

P Z 186 266 291 173

. . . .

Z 563 581 In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

P 199 581

Z P 561 The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

[P. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
221 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way. 484 [858] 484 482 883

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women. 484 [372] [264] 482 484 [595]

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko,* a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal. 484 [272]

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484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[177] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-
tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village. 361

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake. 857 152 883 177 152

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine 883 177 521 273 [836]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

883 would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and
52 buy themselves beer."
[1273] "And where will you get the money?" asked young Kasya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who
52 was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself
[152] up and shouted across the camp. "You, Telesbo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo
[765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Telesbo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been.
533 The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it
[535] with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life. 734 481 123 [152]

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day. 222

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects. 222 262

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny [273] • 222 527 517 [533]

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[206] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[207] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home
[535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire. Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.

[P.341-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 175-C]

way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276.

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

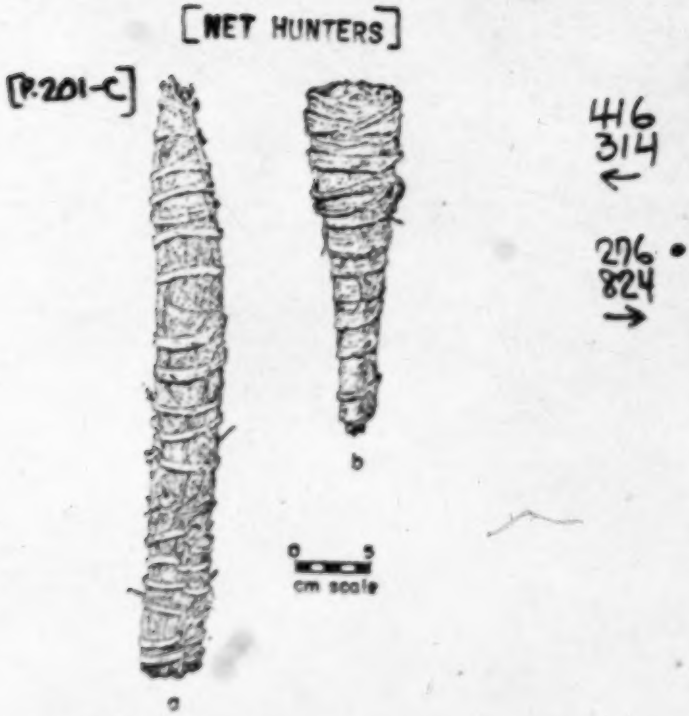

FIG. 31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, made of *kasuku* resin and wrapped in leaves; used when necessary to move from the hut at night. b. Bark pipe, *mbende*, used when village pipestems and bowls are not available.

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276 •

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P 210-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 3 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 211 - A]

276 lagers, but the net hunters also make a pipe by twisting a bark strip into a cone, lining the end with fire-resistant leaves (Fig. 31b).

Food Restrictions

262 614 [184] Putnam's information on food restrictions differs from that given for the archers. While there are clan names and clan totems,[1] opinion among the net hunters themselves seems vague as to the exact extent of the restrictions arising from these totems. Probably, if the occasion arose (though the commonest totem animals in this particular group are the leopard and the chimpanzee, not important features of the local diet), a hungry Pygmy would turn a blind eye to the rules of totemism. Putnam says that these rules call for avoidance not only of the animal as well as of its flesh, but also of its favorite food. The animals are not regarded as representing the ancestors themselves but are associated with them in some myth.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

764 [184] [768] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [561] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[p. 222-B]

In Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [289]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

578 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and
607 knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only
• 276 wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take
576 offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to
[152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should
593 never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This
578 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier
276 than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tear-
152 lessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed. 593 578 276 152

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was positively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he 593 578 152 [41] [536]

765 534 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud beaten from walls.

765 533 781 [513] There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their dancing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house. 765 781 535 534 372 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire. It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliberately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it. [276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[206] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

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177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
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[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

165 After this come the various diseases
164 which kill the pygmies. Pneumonia and dysentery are the greatest killers; infection is rare. Far less important
136 than disease even is the action of hostile
165 animals—elephants, buffalo, or leopards. Once in a while an old leopard, too old to catch antelope, will dare run the risk of sneaking into a pygmy camp at night. The pygmy houses have no doors, and the leopard may slink into a house and grab a pygmy. At the noise so created, other pygmies will wake up and attack the leopard with spears or firebrands. Sometimes the leopard wins completely and carries off his victim's body, to munch at leisure. Sometimes he drops the mangled corpse, and at other times the pygmy may survive. I have seen one pygmy woman who had most of her face bitten away by a leopard and who
165 still lived. The pygmy resistance to
164 wound infections is incredibly great, although they will die like flies from pneumonia.

165 Another occasional cause of death is
372 burning. Pygmies are unusually restless during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire. [276] Here he will often light up his pipe and take a deep puff of tobacco, apparently to get the maximum effect of the nico-

[P.341-A]

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire. Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

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[P.341-B]

[P.165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The Mbuti make great use of various species of *Ficus* for the manufacture of barkcloth, and certain vines are used to make string and hunting nets. There are also trees that give a sap
[314] which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another, can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of effective medicines prepared from plants and roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no culture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to their remarkable adaptation to the forest environment. The level of their culture may not be high, but, even though primitive and "conservative," it is distinctly a forest culture and distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw material is abundant. The striking thing is the minimal extent to which they utilize this material. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the environment itself which, making minimal demands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

[ARCHERS]

with metal points. Schebesta believes that a 411
number of different poisons are used, apart from
the poison described in detail by Parke (1891).
The poisoned arrows are used against tree- [224]
dwelling animals, particularly monkeys, and
hardly ever against antelopes or larger game.
Schebesta contradicts, in the light of his own [114]
experience, Stanley's (1890) assertion that
Mbuti hunt buffalo and elephant with poisoned
arrows.

Mbuti use of antidotes is not known to 278 •
Schebesta (1941, 65).

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting 224

Schebesta (1941, 86 ff.) describes the various hunting techniques used throughout the Ituri. The Efe among whom he did his most detailed work are primarily archers. They do not know the net hunt and seldom practice the communal beat (Efe: *beghe*). Schebesta (1941, 86) ranks the ambush as most important. This method of hunting is used by the older men no longer able to track game successfully. They lie in wait and imitate the call of the game, attracting it until it is within range of their iron-tipped arrows.

The daily hunt, however, is the track hunt

[B 169-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 171-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187-A]

802 speaking archer bands in the northeastern part of the Ituri, near Gombari. He finds the only common characteristic to be the habit of counting in pairs and the use of the term "many" for anything over five. Finger signs for numbers up to five and a separate sign for 10 are used also by the Mamvu villagers. Thus 15 arrows would be "many times two arrows and one." Some of the examples that he gives show either the disinterest or lack of skill of these archers in exact numeration—such as the woman who for totals of four and seven arrows (the article used by Maes for his tests) gave, respectively, the numbers 40 and 10.

278 824 The use of effective poisons is well attested. Geil (1905), who reported reliably on other aspects of the life of Efe archers, mentions their knowledge of antidotes. Schebesta (1941, 65) denies having come across these. He (1941, 228 ff.) does, however, give details of various effective medicines prepared from forest plants. In some instances these medicines, or the methods of application, have magical significance. They seem unable to cure such afflictions as certain types of fever, leprosy, advanced dysentery, and gout.

[755] [757]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 205-A]

224 hit the target. At tracking, however, the Mbuti
411 are excellent, being able to move swiftly and silently through the forest. They can, in Putnam's estimation, catch game with their hands, and often do so, as successfully as by using their bows and arrows. Iron-tipped arrows are used on larger game, and untipped, poisoned arrows
[278] are used mainly for monkeys and birds. The poison is prepared individually, strophanthus being the vital plant acting as a heart stimulant.
224 Hunting dogs are used both during the net hunt and by individual owners for hunting wild boar.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti have effective medicines against poisonous snakes. 165 132 [278]

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *tebee* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to produce abortions. For ailments that they are unable to cure and that are foreign to them, some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency. 757 [847] [755] [177]

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent. 763 [761]

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P 231-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.232-A]

278 411 their arrows but seldom achieved the same effect. The ingredients were known to him, and he concluded some special skill was used in the actual preparation. There is no mention of antidotes to these poisons.

278 Putnam knew of the existence of effective medicine among the net hunters, but no details survive in the notes. Anne Putnam's notes, however, mention a number of cases in which she observed the use of indigenous medicines and treatment.

752 757 During a fight a boy was knocked unconscious by a blow from a piece of wood. He was immediately propped up; the main concern seemed to be to prevent him from lying flat on the ground. Even when semiconscious, the boy was not allowed to lie down. This possibility seemed to frighten the Pygmies more than anything else, and for a while no other treatment was given. Then some incisions were made on his chest, and a leaf was applied.

757 Against toothache a certain leaf (not identified) is chopped fine and mixed with water. This mixture is poured from a leaf cup down each nostril.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 232-C]

inch thick, packed tight. The top layer of dry leaves and kindling are soaked with oil and set on fire. The fire is kept going for about four hours, then the patient is taken out and hot leaves are applied. This treatment may be followed by hot baths, scarification and insertion of herbal medicine into the wounds, and resting on a bed, but none of this is said to be absolutely necessary. 757

A young man, given to being seized with trembling fits, is calmed by having incisions on his stomach rubbed with a black powder. A liquid is poured down his nose from a leaf funnel.

A certain type of bark, *ikanya*, extremely poisonous, is used to procure an abortion by making a decoction from it and giving it to the pregnant woman to inhale. It appears that even inhaling the dry bark might be effective, but is not certainly so. 847 278 824

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[3]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[3] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Abeti's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masini said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28 •

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 [342] [45] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.202-A]

• 281

FIG. 32. Methods of stretching hides to dry, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Hides, little used by the net hunters except as baby slings and, more rarely, as quivers, are good trade items that are needed by villagers, among other things, for drumheads.

[237]
[439]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

281

FIG. 33. Prepared antelope hide, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 202-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 621 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[p. 204-8]

2t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, *"N'yama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!"* (Animal there! Animal there! Come at once, you, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekiangs and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masini spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu *did* so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hut. He looked peaceful and concerned.

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Mbuti

[Get Hunter]

FIG. 28. a–c. Belts, *mokaka*, for barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Plaited by women from strips of vine around a vine core.

[P. 199-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 200-A]

red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth, either a finger or a twig may be used. The designs vary considerably, and one piece of barkcloth may have three of four distinct patterns. This is possibly in imitation of the local villager practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtaposition of different designs.

The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *epala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 200 - B]

mausa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 324 [285] [84] 324 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [322] 291 301 [177]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the pri- 512
mary concern of daily life among the net hunt- 22
ers. The net hunt is considerably more reward-
ing than the other form of hunt, although it
probably occupies as much time. Care and [286]
maintenance of the nets are also laborious and
time-consuming. Women gather not only as
they accompany the hunt, but also on those
days when the hunt stays behind in the camp.
The children make a not inconsiderable contri- [857]
bution to the family food quest. A common 512
occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and 283
women to assist each other in the making of
twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used pri-
marily in the repair of hunting nets.

As with the archers, elimination takes place 364
not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried 514
away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. [184]
These practices not merely create an unpleas-
ant smell after some weeks, but also attract
armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, how- 515
ever, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and
the favorite recreation of the children is playing
about in the shallow streams. The men assert [481]
that they can all swim but are never seen doing [823]
so; they are certainly much afraid of deep wa-
ter.

561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 823 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufactures, [463] without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 732 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

156 852 dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. 816 Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate [842] decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, 156 and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed 832 her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black 302 juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked [361] just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

765 During the afternoon Amabou, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the [283] entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabou tied the other in a [842] noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut 765 the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket 392 was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

765 I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this 522

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and simplicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

[P. 327-B]

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [197] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

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Ituri
[ARCHERS]
[P.170]
411
284
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FIG. 6. Hunting equipment, archers, Kile District, East Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. These are typical of the eastern archers and similar to the bows and arrows of the neighboring Nyari villagers.

FIG. 7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Ndaye Dienles, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. i. Dog bell.

Ir Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Bira PO11

[ARCHERS]
[9.174-A]
B
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FIG. 19. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a–b. Spear, of village origin and villager hafted; probably Bira. c. Spear, hafted by Mbuti. All blades for spears come from the villagers, though Mbuti frequently rehaft spear, ax, and adze blades, to suit their needs.

I: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.175-A]

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412
412
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FIG. 13. Adze, Bira villagers, rehafted by Mbuti archers, Central Ituri. A villager utensil, useful but not indispensable to the Mbuti, for the extraction of honey from hives in tree boles.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

412
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824

FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner. [512] [356]

[P. 194-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
287 only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
412 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those of the archers; the beating ends may have one of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kalu*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[462] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity
[476] calling for cooperation between men and women.
[P 197-B]

Ir Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 197-C]

289
412
[284]

FIG. 23. Types of grooving found on ivory bark-beater heads, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

mond grooving being the commonest. There are only about two bark beaters to a camp.

There are two main ways of preparing the cloth. Strips of the bark of *Ficus* are peeled off the trunk between two horizontal and one vertical slit. Before the beating, the outer bark is scraped off, then the inner bark is softened either by being soaked in water from half an hour to 12 hours, according to the type of bark, or by being heated and smoked over a fire. 287 [284]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

catch it with their hands, put it in a basket, and 224
continue beating. Their main object is to put up game and drive it toward the nets. There, the men are in readiness, motionless until some animal is tangled in the meshes. Then they seize it, and the owner of that particular net kills the

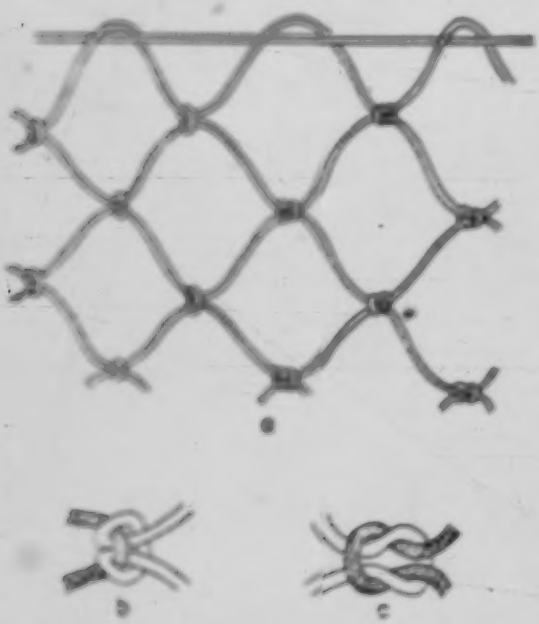

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FIG. 36. Details of knotting used in hunting net, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 203-D]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.207-C]

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FIG. 40. Spear, *ekenge*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Used throughout the Ituri, except possibly in parts of the north, primarily as a weapon of defense and secondarily for the hunting of large game, including elephant. Mbuti hafeing. [84]

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [845]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

[284] Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

765
ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides 533
she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of 765
nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old 533
woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so 824
that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt [284]
to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or 765
because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evi- 881
dently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether 881
the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger 177

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and all. He splits this with his knife, at
[284] one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles are added. The women use these for
[462] many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.
412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

[P. 326-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-B]

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FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent 262
of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' [462]
staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is provided almost exclusively by women. First place [439]
goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and peanuts acquired from the villagers in return for meat or service. But the forest itself provides an abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses. Schebesta gives no details as to the exact proportions of these various foodstuffs consumed, so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics of this group. He also mentions the place of snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form [226]
only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk catch crabs and small fish in the shallow streams, using their hands or small nets.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy hin self, and certainly the arrow shafts are
285 Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are
439 made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

291 Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to
[789] that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne
287 Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and
286 repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
[177] cloth may have three of four distinct patterns. This is possibly in imitation of the local villager practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtaposition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

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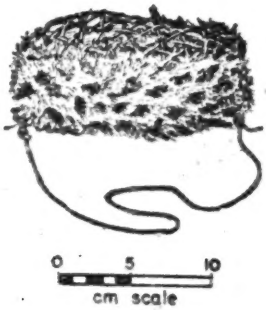

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] 84 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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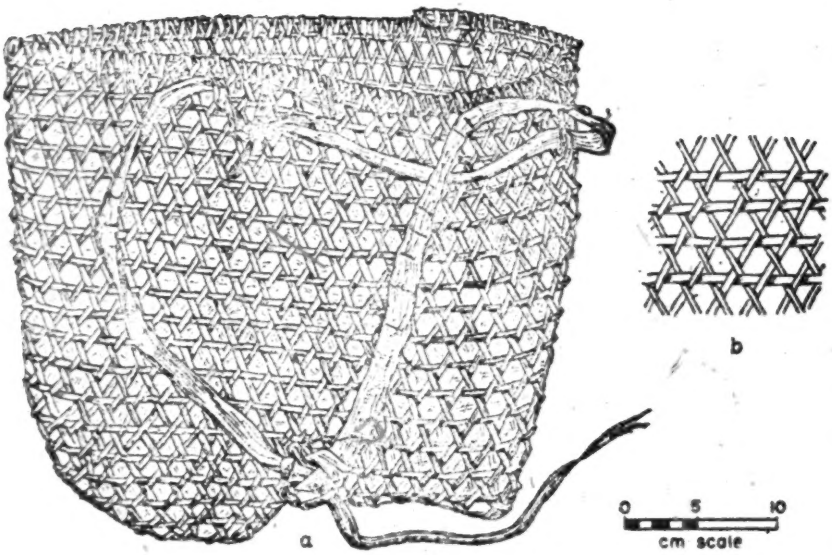

FIG. 41. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Basket, *so.* b. Details of construction. Open-mesh baskets, of strips of dried vine, are made and used by Mbuti women among both net hunters and archers.

[184]

[P 208-C]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P209-A]

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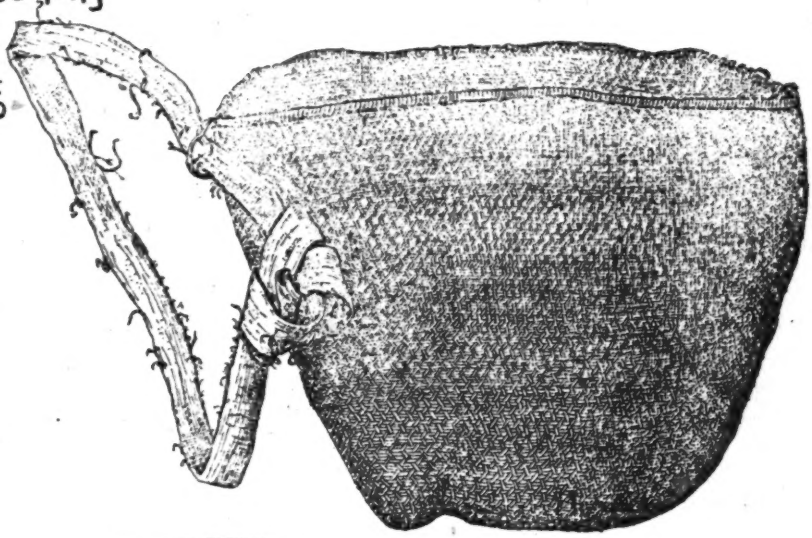

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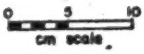

FIG. 42. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a–b. Baskets, *so*. Close-mesh baskets are obtained from neighboring villages and may be offered by villagers in exchange for forest produce.

[439]

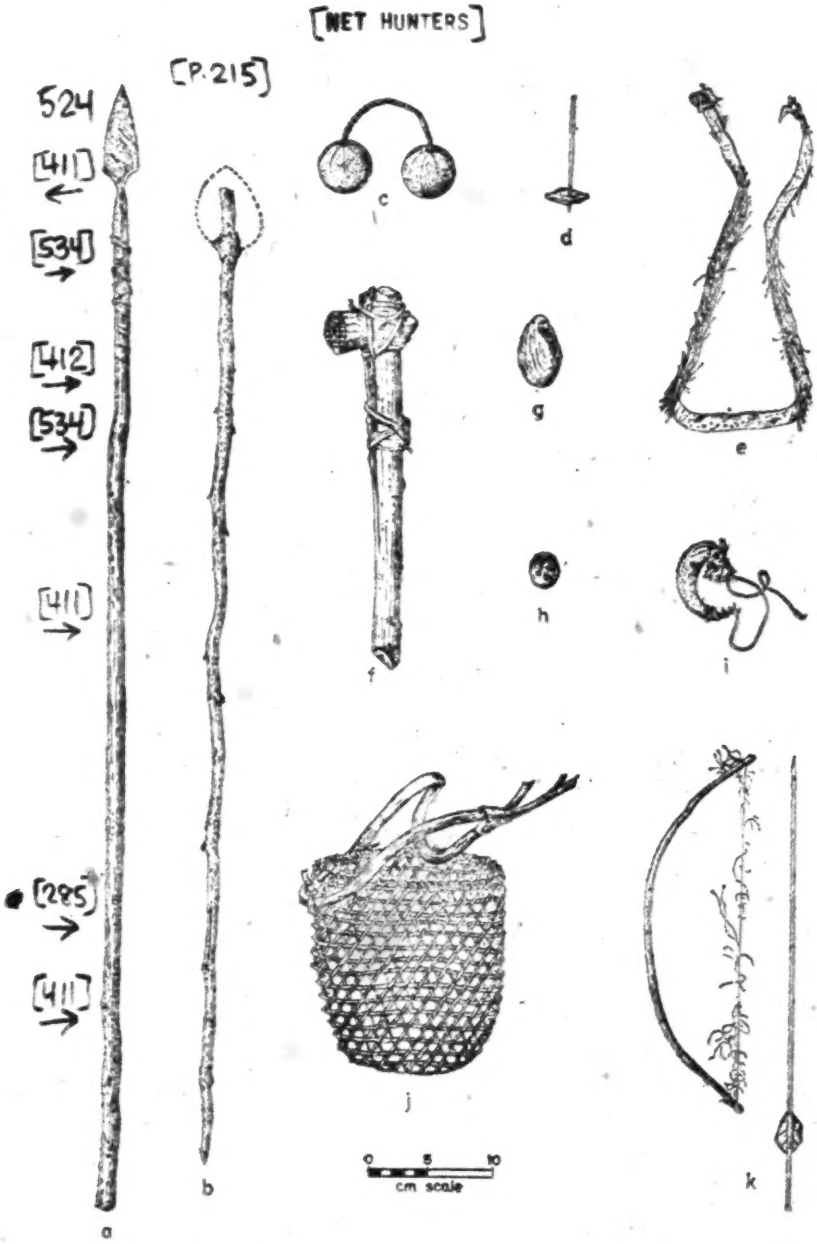

FIG. 45. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ekonga*. b. Fire spear, *iswakamaboki*. c. Castanets, *kolokbenje*. d. Top, *tokiya*. e. Baby sling, *koko*. f. Bark beater, *kolea*. g–h. Seed whistles, *pho'u*. i. Wrist protector, *asuba*. j. Basket, *so*. k. Bow, *mange*, and arrow, *api*.

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [461] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts. [P. 327-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are
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DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.203-A]

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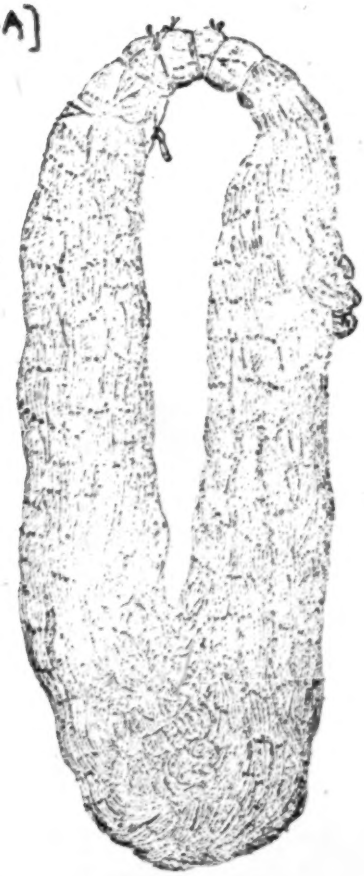

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FIG. 34. Hunting net, *kuya*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Coiled and bound for carrying over the shoulders.

: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

catch it with their hands, put it in a basket, and 224
continue beating. Their main object is to put up game and drive it toward the nets. There, the men are in readiness, motionless until some animal is tangled in the meshes. Then they seize it, and the owner of that particular net kills the

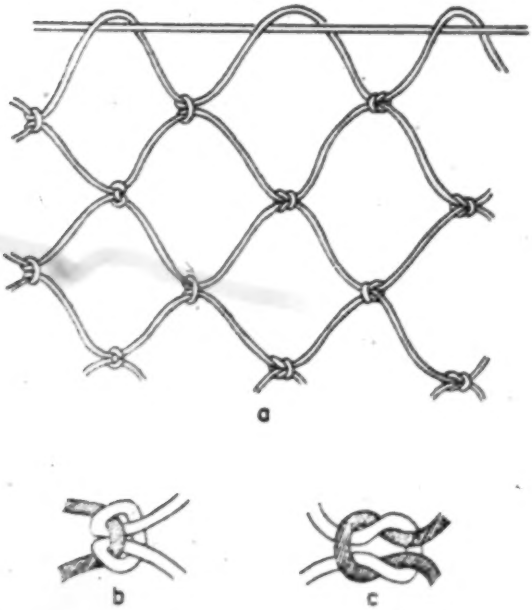

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FIG. 36. Details of knotting used in hunting net, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 203-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets. 512 22 [286] [857] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water. 364 514 [184] 515 [481] [823]

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 496 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, 286 nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by [482] which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case [251] the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from [372] the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart [237] and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 777 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which 386
may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. 287
If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made 462
from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby 283
a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend 294
hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and sim- [511]
plicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it 286
has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or [462]

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [197] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are
285 Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are
439 made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

291 Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to
[789] that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne
287 Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and
286 repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
287 only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
412 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those of the archers; the beating ends may have one of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

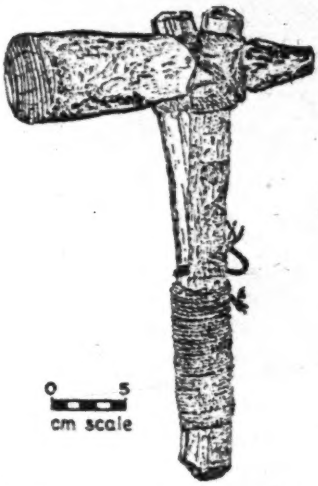

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[462] [476] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity calling for cooperation between men and women.

[P. 197-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-C]

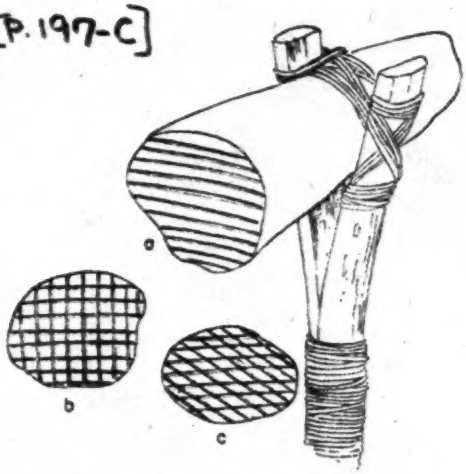

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FIG. 23. Types of grooving found on ivory bark-beater heads, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

mond grooving being the commonest. There are only about two bark beaters to a camp.

There are two main ways of preparing the cloth. Strips of the bark of *Ficus* are peeled off the trunk between two horizontal and one vertical slit. Before the beating, the outer bark is scraped off, then the inner bark is softened either by being soaked in water from half an hour to 12 hours, according to the type of bark, or by being heated and smoked over a fire.

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[824]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

or by being heated and smoked over a fire. The resultant barkcloth may be worn in its natural color, dyed red or blue, or be painted with simple designs (Figs. 25–27), The dyeing and painting are done by women, using a special mud for an over-all blue dye, the juice of a citrous fruit for blue line designs, and *nkula* (elsewhere *ngula*) bark, scraped with another piece of bark (Fig. 24), with water added while scraping, for

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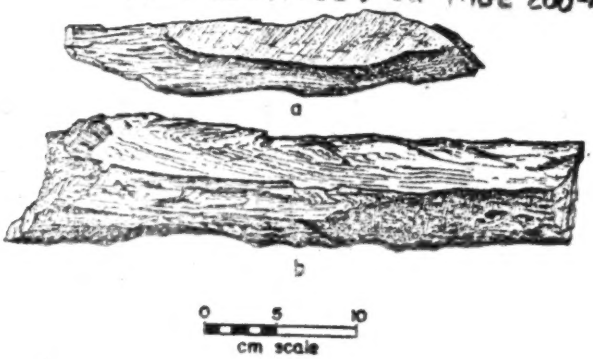
[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 200-A]



[412]

FIG. 24. Block and scraper of wood, ***nkula*** (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri; used with water for the extraction of the red dye most commonly employed in the decoration of barkcloth.

[P 197- D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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[P.198-A]

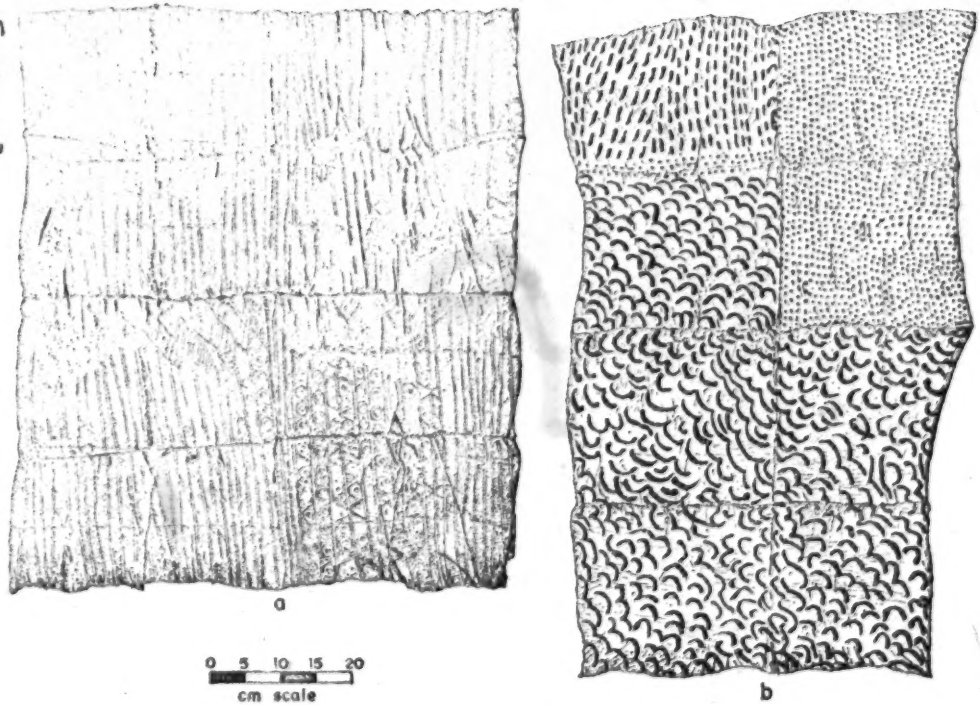

FIG. 25. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *epo'u* vine. b. Made of *esele* vine.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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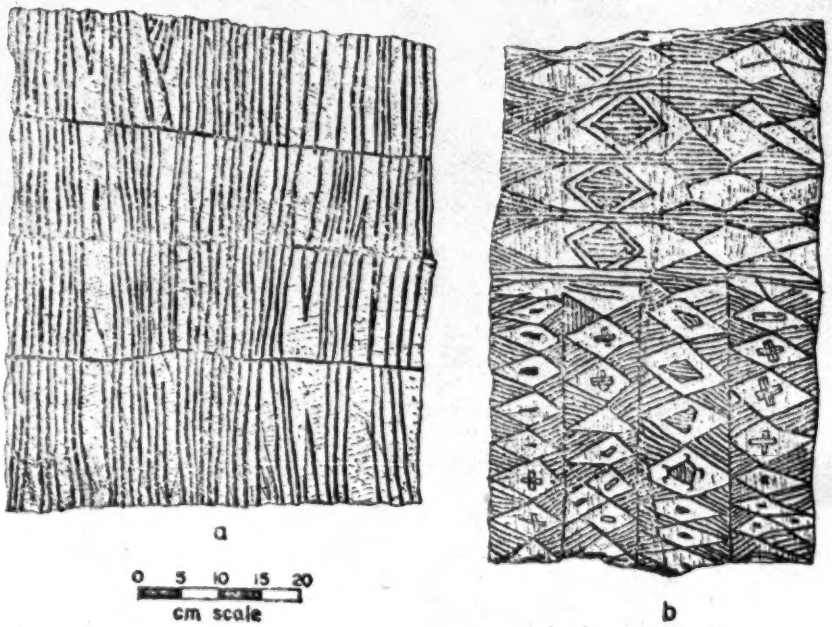

FIG. 26. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *akoko* vine. b. Made of *esele* vine.

[P. 198-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

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[P.199-A]

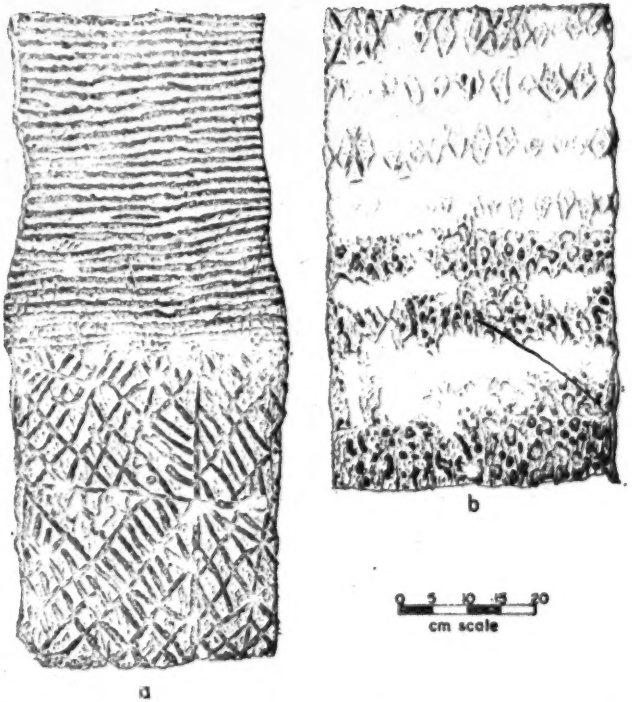

FIG. 27. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *le'enghe* vine. b. Made of *akbanda* vine.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtapo-
sition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
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FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

CP. 240-C

leaves to cover fires is an effective way of keeping them burning during a rainstorm, is not always accompanied by the production of smoke (thought by some to be an offering), and is never described as being accompanied by any invocation. As far as the descriptions and my own observations go, it could be a simple precautionary measure taken to preserve the all-valuable fire. 789 82 372

Mrs. Putnam was told that barkcloth should not be beaten if it is going to rain, but this may also be for purely practical technological reasons. She once saw an old Pygmy blow a *segbe* pipe a number of times, looking at the sky, in an avowed attempt to avert the rain. When it rained the old man simply shrugged his shoulders and took shelter. 789 82 [287]

On another occasion, when it threatened to rain and spoil the dance one evening, the young men and boys all seized leaves and ran down to the stream and back, beating the leaves on the ground. They evidently did not wait to see if this magic would work, and all retired to their huts.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 31 $\frac{1}{4}$

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1,/Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 31/

[p 295]. /Caption appears on p. 294/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

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386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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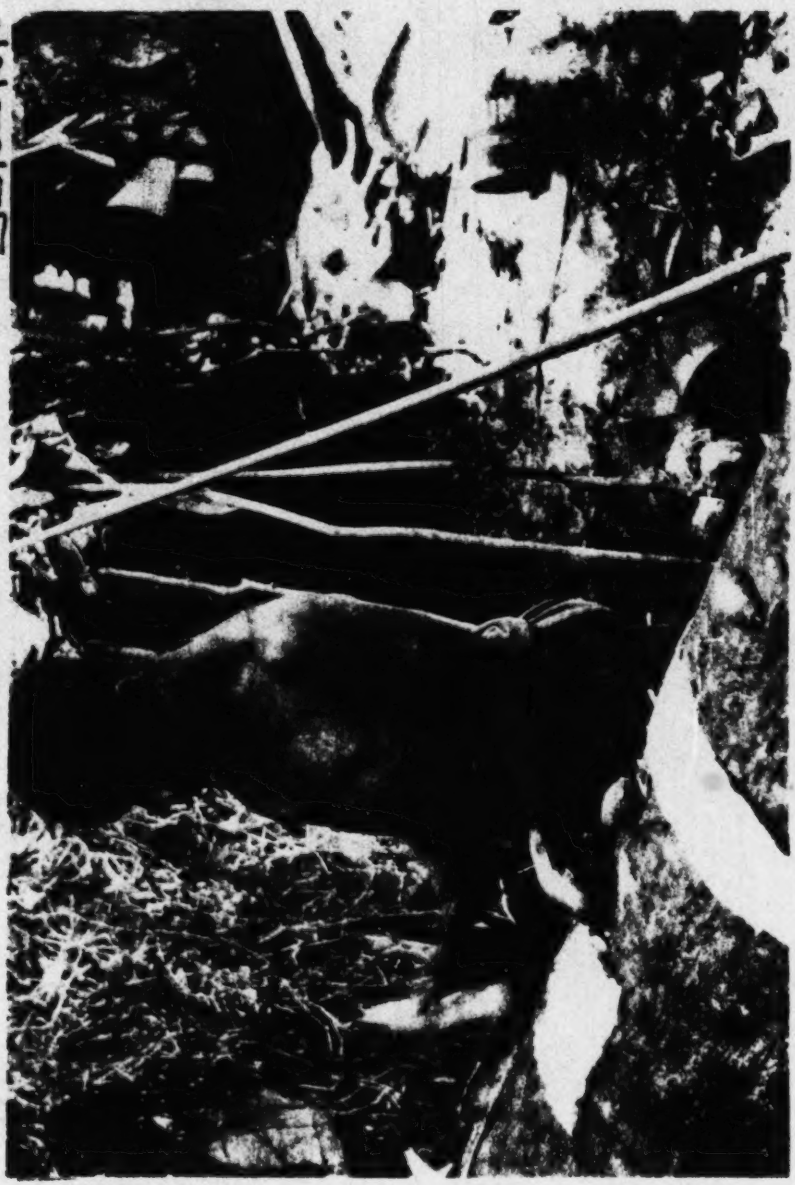

/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P.297-A]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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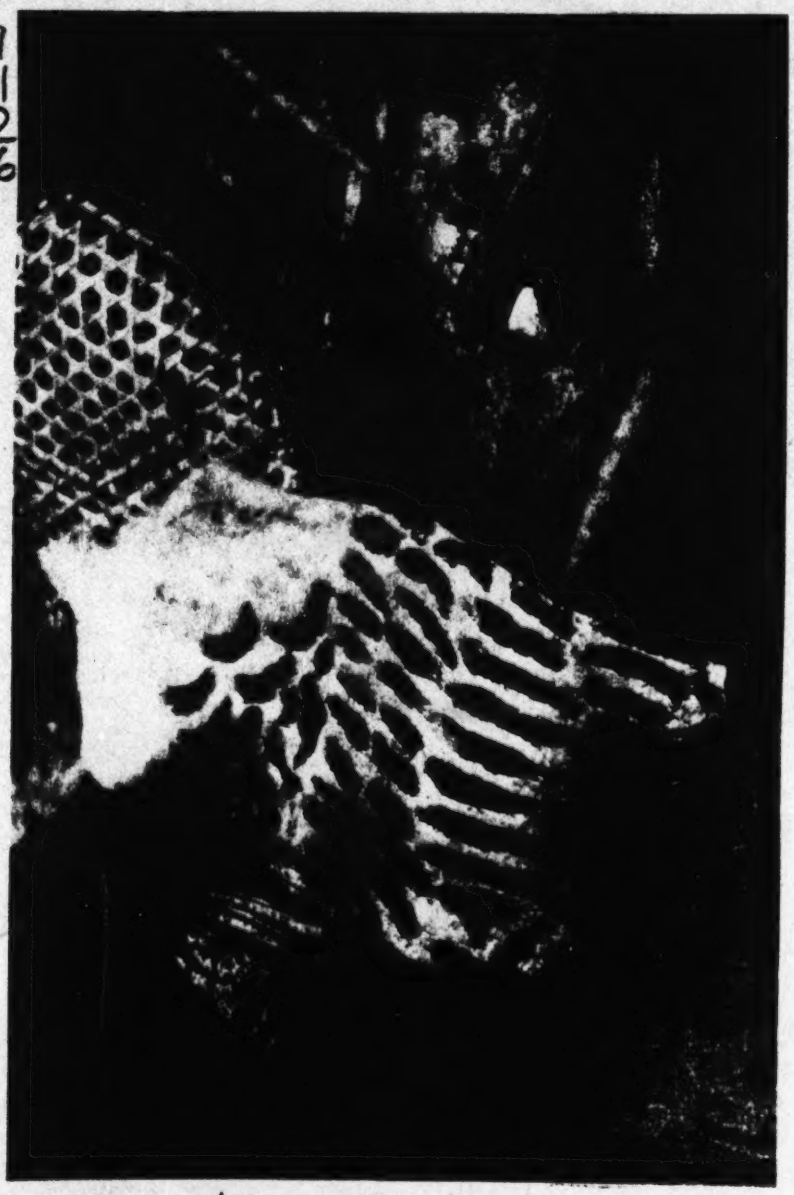

/Plate 32-B/

/Caption appears on p. 296/

[P.297-B]

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

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23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

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512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

• 287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away [237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted [412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either [386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of 287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in 462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the [516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and simplicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his [789] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [252] states that he has never known these Pygmies [262] to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 411 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which [184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P.165-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291 •

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are
285 Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are
439 made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

• 291 Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to
[789] that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne
287 Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and
286 repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

[NET HUNTERS]

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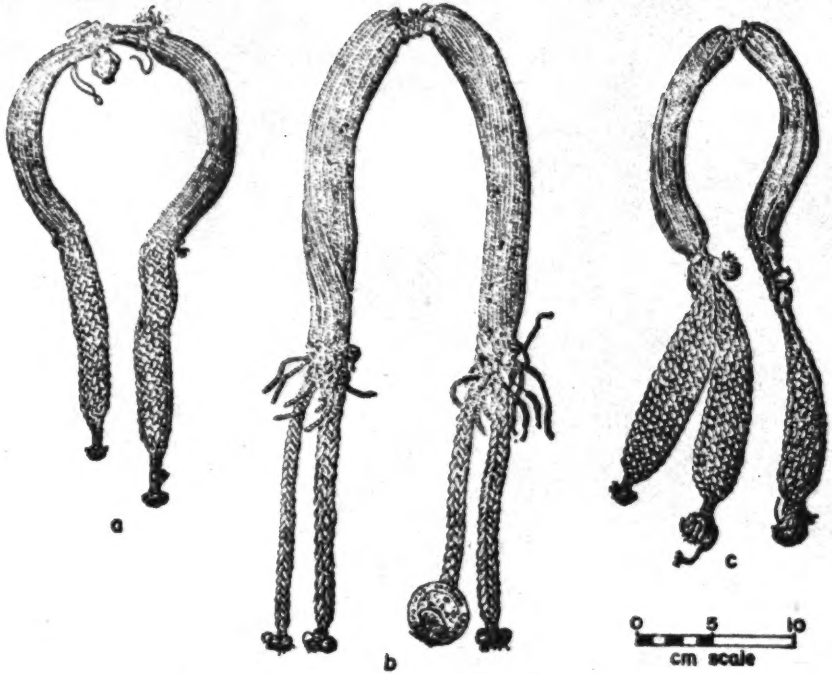

FIG. 28. a–c. Belts, *mokaba*, for barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Plaited by women from strips of vine around a vine core.

[P. 199-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtapo-
sition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

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285

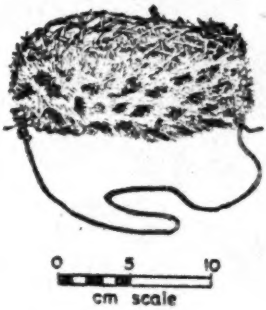

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] [84] 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
462
482
415
392
291
301

[P 299]

/Plate 33/
/Caption appears on p. 298/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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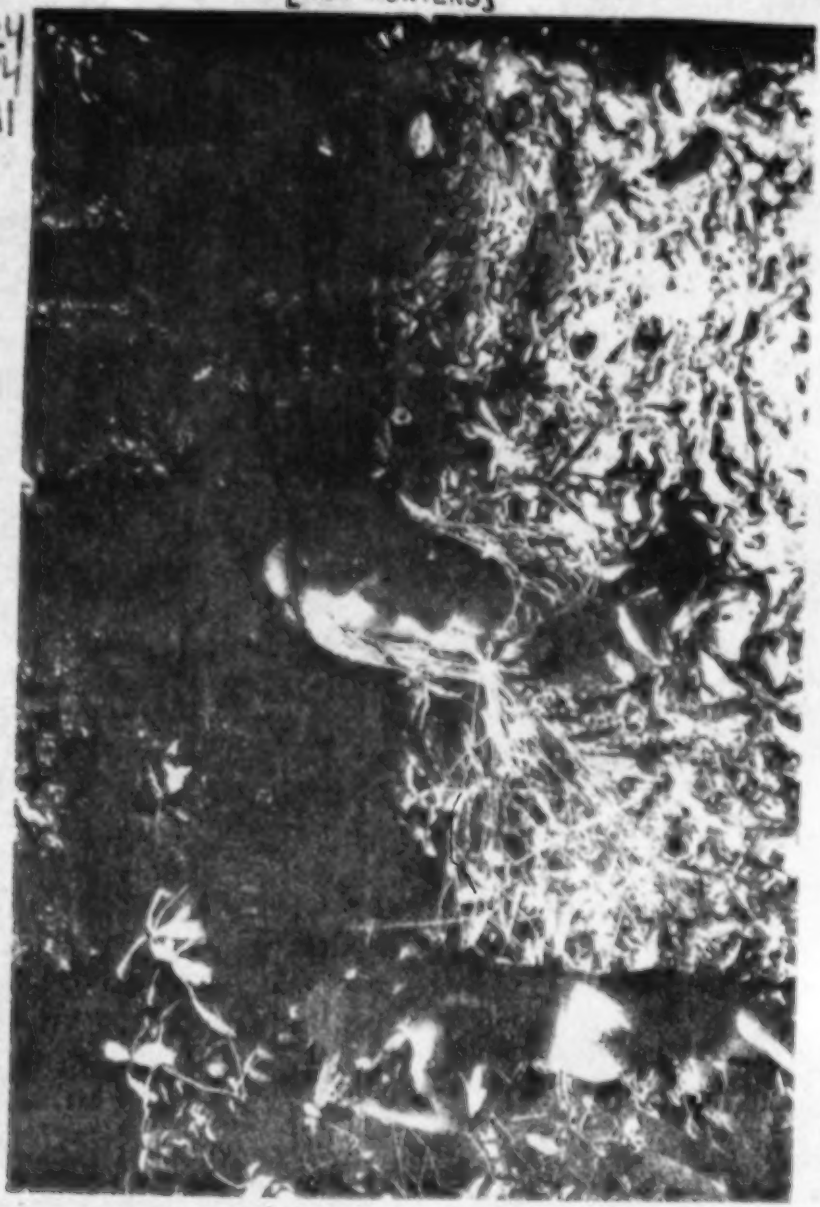
484
• 291



/Plate 34-B/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224
• 291

/Plate 35-A/
/Caption appears on p. 302/

[P. 303-A]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
• 291
222
412

/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P. 305-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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796
881
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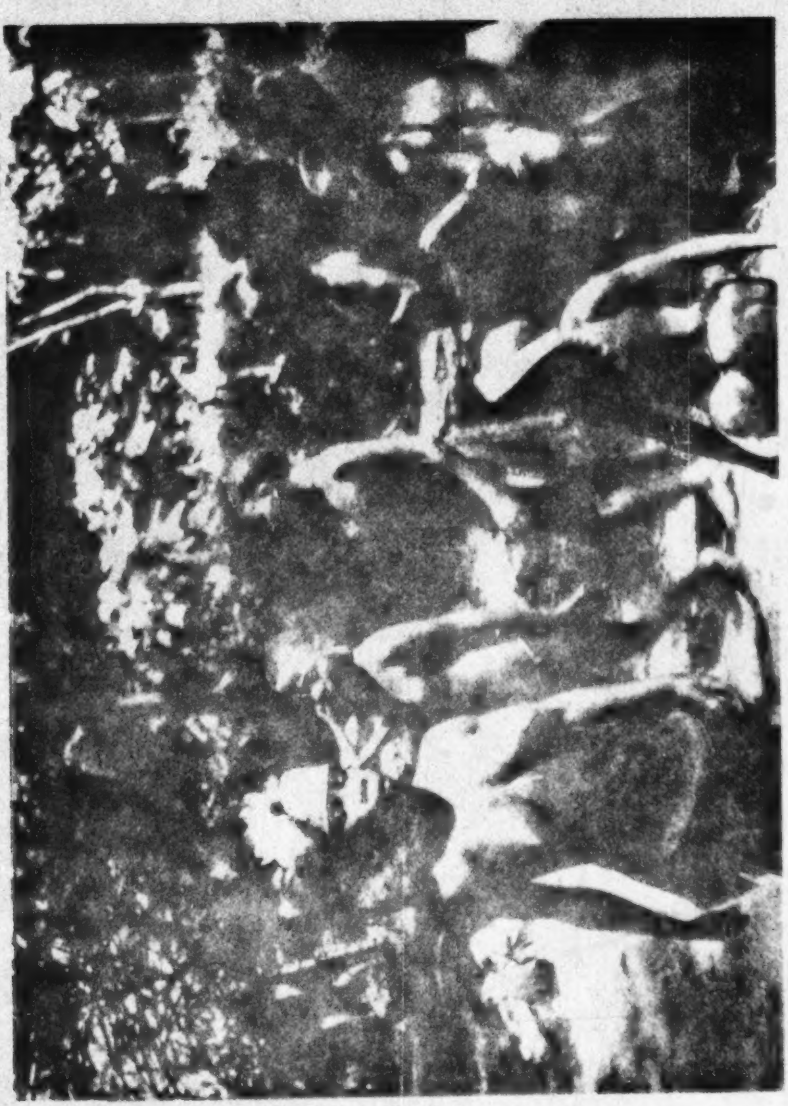

/Plate 38/

[P309] /Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R108-B]

E
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344
352
291
516

2. The village headman's *baraza*, used for receiving visitors and holding public discussions.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

PC
137
252
291
571
412
142
415

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-E]

142
516
342
302
291
854

5. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring [illegible] long [illegible] into village for village houses.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-F]

PC
242
767
291
571
142

6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their kpara, are fed as part of their "payment."

PC
571
465
464
291
142

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

361
344
352
142
291
516

9. The Mbuti village baraza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

142
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412
415
853
482

10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-J]

P
535
142
291

*P
[177]

12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

P
[302]
[586]

C
585
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P
142
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*177

13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Makubasi. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her *kpara*'s sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-C]

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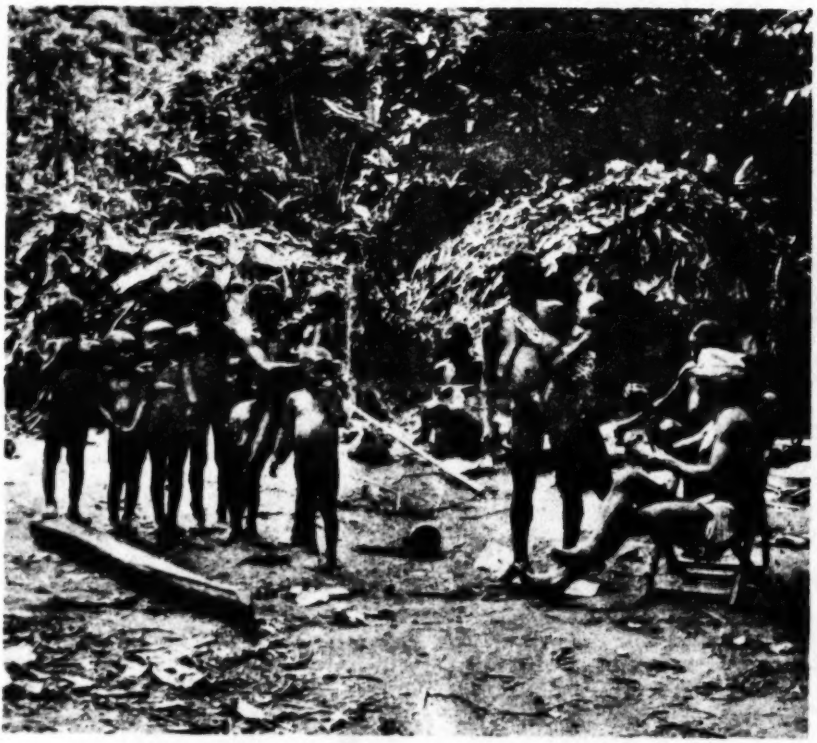

[164]

19. In one of Cephu's camps, Aberi talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

224 626 [821] [152] [166] [648] ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of friction).

There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 621 221 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 593 152 291 621 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 593 621 166 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 626 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its members. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting [221] should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-A]

142
516
252
291
302

[412] [439] 21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.228-B]

142
302
291
251
342
417

22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

142
302
412
287

23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

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287

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-D]

142
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881
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25. Akidinimba celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage during an *elima* dance.

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26. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to fondle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-A]

142
291
516

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

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593
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

142
302
291
415
516
372

29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-E]

142
301
291
482
372

31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
462
[222]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-G]

142
302
291
883
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34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[881
885
593]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-H]

224
291

35. When an animal falls into the net it is quickly caught by the hunters and carefully extracted before it damages the netting. A youth stands by for the kill.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P·276-I]

142
302
291
202

36. When the kill is assured, a youth signals back to the camp and to other hunters, to let them know what kind of game has fallen into whose net. Relatively complex messages can be signaled in this way, variations in rhythm combining with variations in pitch achieved by flexing the elbow, which forms a sound box when clapped with the other hand.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-J]

222
142
302
291
412

37. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

38. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemoké's uncle, Masalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

222
142
302

ing the power, small as they were, to kill elephants. The Pygmies 000
today still kill elephants single-handed, armed only with a short- 224
handled spear. And they blend so well with the forest foliage that
you can pass right by without seeing them. As for their having tails, 291•
it is easy enough to see how this story came into being, if the Pyg- [175]
mies seen by the Portuguese dressed as they do today, as is more than likely. The loincloth they wear is made of the bark of a tree, softened and hammered out until it is a long slender cloth, tucked between the legs and over a belt, front and back. The women particularly like to have a long piece of cloth so that it hangs down behind, almost to the ground. They say it looks well when dancing.

Some of the accounts of nineteenth-century travelers in the Congo 175
are no less fanciful, and it was George Schweinfurth who first made known to the world, in his book *The Heart of Africa,* that Pygmies not only existed but were human. He was following in the path of the Italian explorer Miani, who a few years earlier had reached the Ituri but had died before he could return. One of the most curious of little-known stories about the Pygmies is that Miani actually sent two of them back to Italy, to the Geographic Association, which had sponsored his trip. The president of the association, Count Miniscalchi of Verona, took the two boys and educated them. Contemporary newspaper reports describe them as strolling the boulevards, arm in arm with their Italian friends, chatting in Italian. One of them even learned to play the piano. From the present Count Miniscalchi I learned that both Pygmies eventually returned to Africa, where one died and the other became a saddler in the Ethiopian army. He last heard from the latter, who must then have been an old man, just before the outbreak of World War II.

Stanley describes his meetings with the Pygmies in the Ituri, but 175
without telling us much about them, and indeed little was known 114
beyond the actual fact of their existence until a White Father, the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
291
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Tungana, a grandfather many times over, in a gennet-skin cap.

[P. 72-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000

Opposite: Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with *kangay* juice for a wedding.

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Akidinimba (in hat) celebrates her forthcoming wedding with the other girls of the *elima*.

[P. 72-G]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P
C
137
252
142
291
571
412
415

A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P. 72-K]

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

36 this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the
[103] BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here
[101] there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the govern-
621 ment-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the
622 right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian
648 government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The
439 Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

622 Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically
554 ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the
[648] eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on
622 other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a
554 Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers
• 291 came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by
[648] ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

Z
186 ever, a one-way process; no Negress
563 could endure the pygmy way of living,
581 and none of them ever marry pygmies.
P
581 The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

P
Z
186
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. . . .

Z
563 In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form
881 the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction,
P there is another activity which helps to
177 cement their relationship. The Ne-
881 groes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

Z
P
561 The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

Z P 881 534 [114] [575] Z P 881 Z P [532] [292] P 881

[P 218-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 ●
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217 A]

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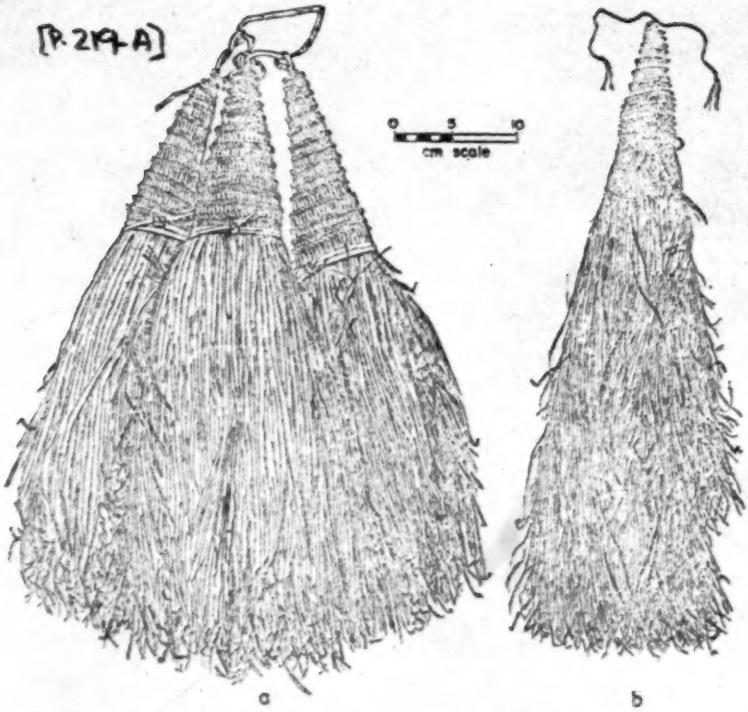

FIG. 47. Initiation items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Raffia armbands, worn by "doctor" during *nkumbi* dances; at other times, hung from the roof of the initiation hut. b. Grass skirt, worn by initiates at final presentation dance.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

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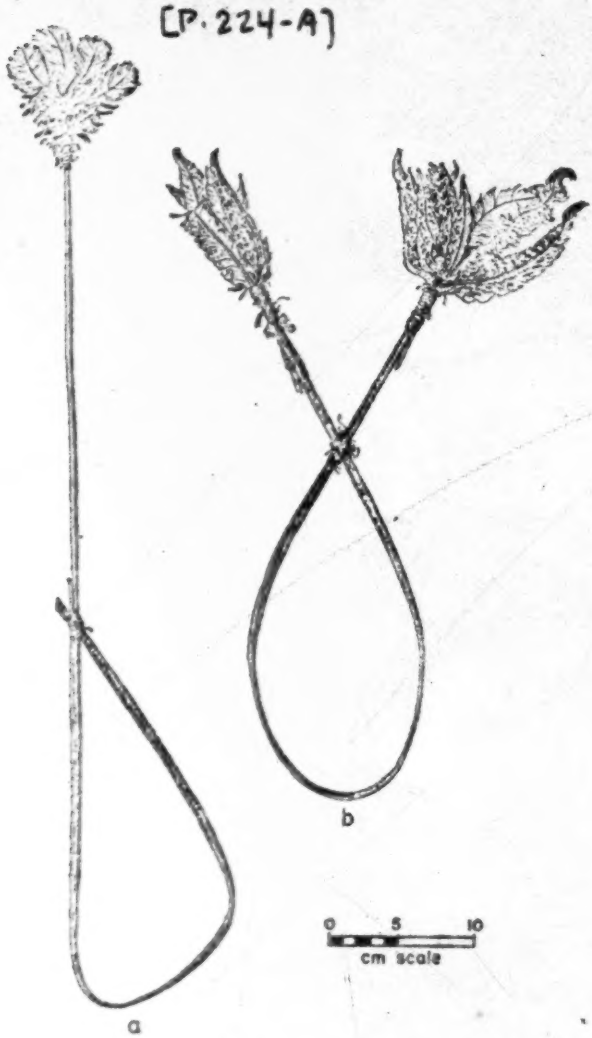

[535] [575] [171] FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses [illegible] occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam 575
material. Once a meeting is begun, it may con- 796
tinue nightly for as long as a month. It is ob- [533]
ligatory for all members to attend, and those [534]
who are away visiting return to take part. Visi- [574]
tors in the camp also take part if they qualify
as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, [292]
sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and
feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs 575
that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplica- 796
tory but are mainly repetitions of one or other 533
of the names of the God of the Forest, or affir- 776
mations of his goodness and omnipotence. The
songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is un- [182]
doubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 26 1/A

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat [292] is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [301] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

1/A /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[p 284]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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302

/Plate 26-A/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P. 285-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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14. The *nkumbi* initiation is another means by which villagers attempt to control the Mbuti. The initial dance here, with the sacred *makata* sticks, is led by the traditional doctor, Sabani, at the village of Eboyo. Mbuti and villagers take part jointly in the festivities, but the Mbuti are excluded from all ritual roles.

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Kondabate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end. They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat: chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night. It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

585 179 He did not seem particularly interested, because after listening to the argument for half a minute he yawned and went back into his hut without saying a word to anyone.

We all trekked back to the village, and there, under the watchful eye of the villagers, the wedding began. Masisi had refused to come, saying the Babama villagers were the worst savages of all, so Mambunia came in his place. He supervised as all the wedding gifts were placed on the ground, and he watched as various villagers, each in the hopes of improving his chances of getting some meat from the young couple, came forward and added either money, ax-blades, or small pieces of cloth. There were already several pots, quite a number of arrows, and a few trinkets given to the party at Katala village. The villagers who claimed Maliamo felt that this treasure belonged to them, but Mambunia denied this strongly. He pointed out that in any case, according to their own village custom, the gifts should sleep with the couple that night. Reluctantly the villagers agreed, and Mambunia promptly scooped the gifts up and brought them into the wedding house.

Taphu was supposed to put in an appearance at this point, but he could not be found. It was two hours before he was discovered, asleep, and dragged to the spot where we were all sitting around, eating and drinking and singing. He arrived in his tattered village clothes 585 292 but was promptly taken inside and made to change into a new cloth, put on a woven straw hat decorated with feathers, and arm himself with a new bow and a sheaf of arrows. Arrayed like this he appeared at the doorway in the late afternoon. Yambabo looked up and actually smiled. Taphu looked very handsome and imposing, if somewhat uninterested, and having made his duty appearance he went back inside and fell asleep again.

585 179 That night the wedding party stayed at Babama, all sleeping in the wedding house, feasted royally by the villagers. The next day the [574] rites were completed in a ceremony which consisted largely of the

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and simplicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or

excellent effect. They flaunt themselves in public, to the increased dismay of the villagers.

The villagers regard the appearance of menstrual blood as a disaster, and as the inauguration of a time of great danger for the girl, her family and, by extension, the whole tribe. She is considered as unclean, and is rigorously secluded and abased. Her family has to undertake a series of purification rituals ending in a feast (the part of the ceremony for which the Mbuti solicit "help"). They also have to discover the cause of the blood, which is believed by the Plains Bira and still by a number of the Forest Bira to be due to intercourse. The girl is questioned as to who caused the blood, and she names the youth on whom she has set her heart. He may acknowledge the blame, whether or not he ever had intercourse with her, and can then resolve the unclean situation by marrying her. If his wishes are otherwise he can deny her accusation and she will have to try elsewhere. The girl's parents will guide her accusations as they think necessary, but the actual extent to which the village *elima* leads thus directly into marriage seems to vary. Sometimes it is sufficient to secure admission of guilt and payment in lieu of marriage. But the villagers seldom try to follow an Mbuti *elima* through its full course; their major concern is that the impurity of the *elima* girls should not touch them. The provision of the final feast gives them an opportunity, which they do not always take, for supervising the ritual purification of the girls by bathing, the cleansing of the *elima* house, and the ritual disposal of all clothing and bedding and utensils used by the *bamelima*. The latter they do generally supervise, as the Mbuti are notoriously loath to part with perfectly good clothing or bedding for such *bulé* reasons, and will try to avoid having them destroyed.

If anything, the *elima* sets the villagers and the Mbuti apart, rather than offering any means for drawing them closer together. This is perhaps because while the *nkumbi* involves the village ancestors and is in honor of them, and secures their blessing, the village *elima* involves malevolent spirits more than it involves the ancestors. And as far as the villagers are concerned, evil spirits emanate from the forest. The *elima* offers no opportunity to the villagers for placing Mbuti girls under the control of the ancestral spirits; at the most, it offers them a responsibility for freeing them from contamination by the evil spirits. They sometimes voice the opinion that the Mbuti are in league with those spirits emanating from the forest, and rigorously avoid any contact with an Mbuti *elima*.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296] •
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way
across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen
tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was ~~still open~~ and friendly, as soon as you reached the top
of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only
paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride.
He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food
and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-
clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they
turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Many-
alibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting
as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down
their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their
houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets
down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with
bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been
examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night
before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest
behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his
[189] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by
[252] Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further
[262] states that he has never known these Pygmies to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that
411 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by
237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of
[291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion-
• [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which
[184] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P. 165-B]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]
•301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] 847 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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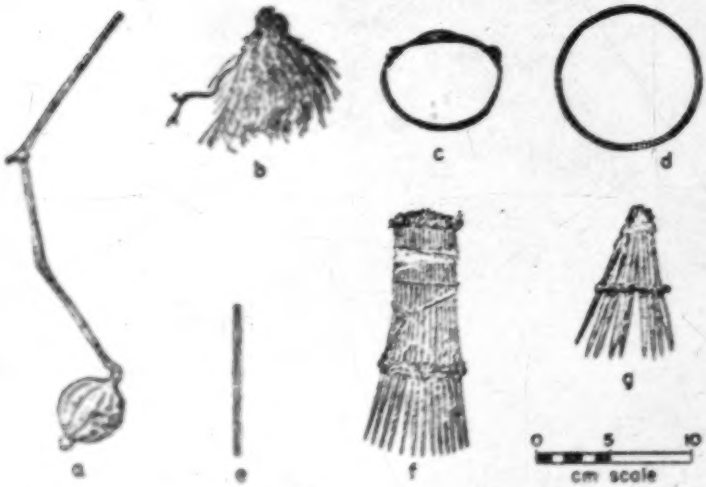

FIG. 30. Personal adornment. a. *Kangay* (gardenia) seed, used by women for extraction of a black dye for painting the body, also for painting designs on barkcloth; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Hair decoraton, *mongele* antelope hair; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. c–d. Bracelets; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. f Comb, *kisanoa;* Bira villagers, Central Ituri. g. Comb, *kisanoa;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. As everywhere among the Mbuti, metal objects are of villager origin. Many of the wooden objects of personal adornment are made in imitation of vilager artifacts (compare f and g).

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[177]

[P.200-c]

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's mate-
[184] rial and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta
[114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison.
881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl,
[346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this
[302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At
[P. 216-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

[P 217-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 219 A]

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FIG. 47. Initiation items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Raffia armbands, worn by "doctor" during *nkumbi* dances; at other times, hung from the roof of the initiation hut. b. Grass skirt, worn by initiates at final presentation dance.

J. Turnbull E-4.8 (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 27 [1]

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

688 30 197 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.

854 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding, fondling, and even nursing the child.

1/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P 286]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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301
888
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302

/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/
[P. 287-A]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P 299]

/Plate 33/

/Caption appears on p. 298/

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing. 578 649 578 152

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin. [264] [534] [765] [533]

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered. [301]

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention. [593] [372]

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest. 578 152 593 [626]

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

685

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled. [177] [183]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-E]

142
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31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[227]
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[227]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the molimo and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

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40. Bakimoto, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long molimo festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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824

Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end.
They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night.
It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

222 527 617 [583] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [828] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] [821] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 608 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]
301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (Efe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

mkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 324 [285] [84] 324 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [322] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 201-A]

Care of Body

515 According to the Putnams, the net hunters
• 302 take much greater care of their bodies than
[184] Schebesta's archers. They bathe frequently in the shallow streams near the camp, inspect each other carefully for bugs and lice (acquired inevitably when sleeping on the ground), and shave their heads for purposes of cleanliness rather than for esthetic satisfaction. Oil, when available, is rubbed into the skin. On ceremonial occasions, when they visit the Bantu village, palm oil is used, often mixed with *ukula* paste to add to its natural deep red color.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The only domestic animal, as with the arch-
184 ers, is the hunting dog, but this, although highly prized, is not so important to the net hunter as to the archer and tracker. Even among the larger net-hunting bands there may be only one or two dogs.

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's mate-
[184] rial and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta
[114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison.
881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl,
[346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this
[302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At

[P. 216-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [326] [324] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 [194]

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 26-A/

[P 285-A] /Caption appears on p. 284/.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

885
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201
302

/Plate 26-27

/Caption appears on p. 281/

[P 285-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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177
516
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/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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142
302

/Plate 27-B/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P 287-B]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Plate 28-A/

/Caption appears on p. 288/

[P289-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
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882
885
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/Plate 28-B/

/Caption appears on p.288/

[P.289-B]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P 291-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
M'buti

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/Plate 31/

[p.295] /Caption appears on p. 290/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

[P 297-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.8 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 36-B/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

[P.305-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1966 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 37/
[P 307] /Caption appears on p. 306/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 108-E]

142
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302
291
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5. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring roofing leaves into village for village houses.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

[R108-J]

12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop-dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Mokohani. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her kpare's sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

Z: Turnbull E-8 (1931-1994) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger
Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and
so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even
when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken sap-
lings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the vil-
lage camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the
forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with
the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few
yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby
and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have
left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off
in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find them-
selves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and
stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around
looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women
then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to
go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is re-
ferred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality
were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense
personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its char-
acter as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But
it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is sim-
ply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girls' activities are, on the whole, less co-
operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly
formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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• 302

[P.156-D]

so. Cephu the troublemaker[5] but also Cephu the great storyteller.

[5][see pages 101-109; 184-190 -- Analyw]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-A]

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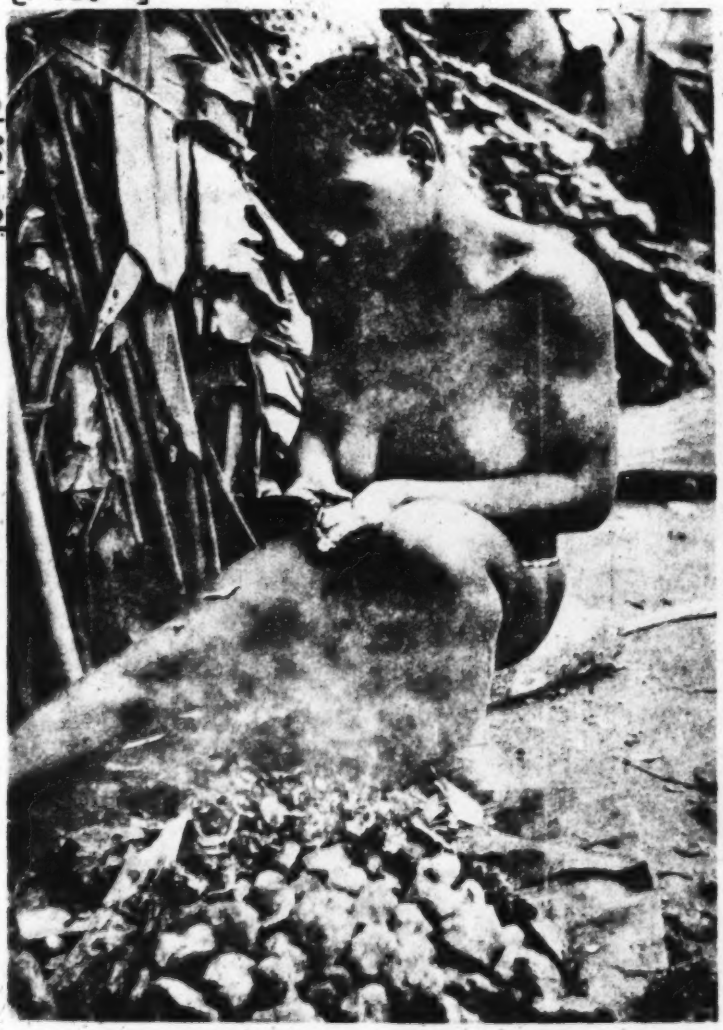

[412] [439] 21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.228-B]

142
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22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

142
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23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

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2; Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

142
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29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-G]

142
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34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P·276-I]

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36. When the kill is assured, a youth signals back to the camp and to other hunters, to let them know what kind of game has fallen into whose net. Relatively complex messages can be signaled in this way, variations in rhythm combining with variations in pitch achieved by flexing the elbow, which forms a sound box when clapped with the other hand.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-J]

222
142
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412

37. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

38. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemoké's uncle, Masalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the *molimo* and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

40. Balekimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long *molimo* festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
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Tungana, a grandfather many times over, in a gennet-skin cap.

[P. 72-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.

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Ageronga's wife prepares a bundle of *mongongo* leaves for thatching her hut.

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[P. 72-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.
[P. 72-E]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Masalito comforts the young Kaoya during the *nkumbi* rites at a Negro village.

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[P 72-I]

3 Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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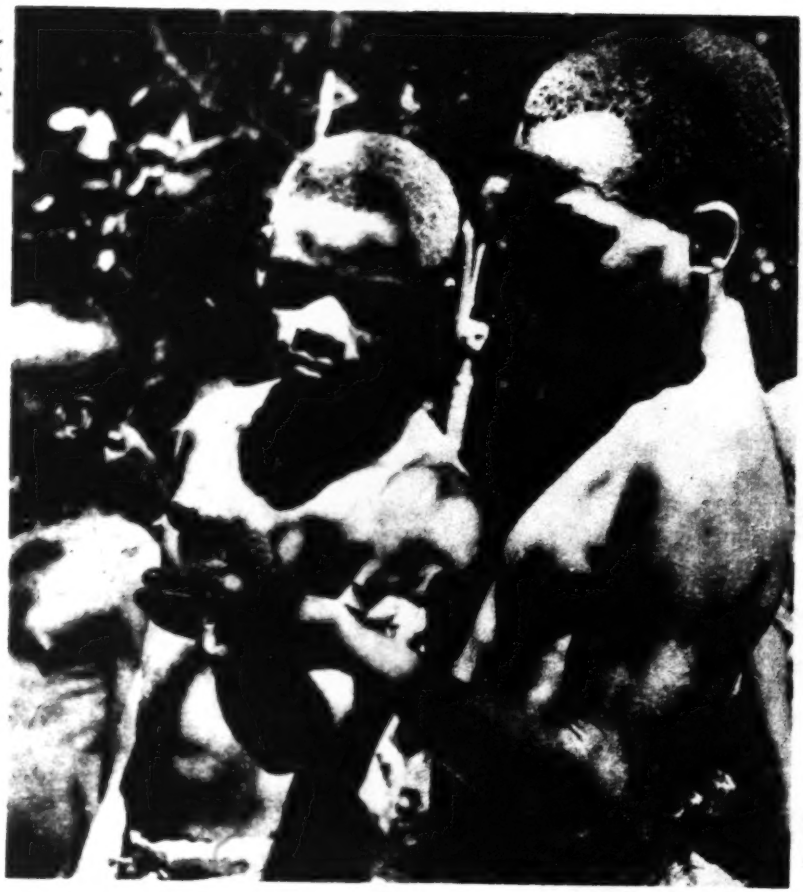

Kelekome and his uncle, Masalito, examine a piece of honeycomb to see if the hive is ready for raiding. Honey is probably the most prized food in the forest.

[P.72-M]

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302] •
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end.
They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night.
It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

ELIMA: THE DANCE OF LIFE

During this time the older women paid more and more attention 881
to what was going on and gathered almost nightly outside the house to join in the singing. But one evening was different in that almost every woman in the group was there. There were even some women from Cephu's group, which had temporarily detached itself and was now some miles away. They gathered early, before it was fully dark. The bright blue sky was deepening without any of the wild tinges of color that so often come at dusk, and the tiny puffs of cloud that drifted across remained a shining, fluffy white, even when the sky was almost black.

The women brought sticks of fire with them, and some of them cooked and ate their evening meal right there outside the elima house; others just sat around and gossiped, huddling close to the fires from habit, though in the village it was still warm. Inside the house the girls were singing, but the women outside did not join in. The men sat before their huts, watching and waiting. Finally the 881
door opened and the girls trooped out. The younger ones came first, 302
their bodies decorated with modest blobs of white paste made from clay; then came Akidinimba and Kidaya and their attendants, resplendent and magnificent, yet strangely shy. They must have spent hours working on themselves and one another, for they were covered with elaborate patterns skillfully drawn with fingers and thin sticks, also using the white clay. Akidinimba had taken particular trouble to paint her breasts with intricate circles of lines punctuated with blobs, something like a grapevine gone to seed, whereas the more demure Kidaya had concentrated on her buttocks, and these were covered with a hundred carefully painted little stars. Each girl had her favorite style, and each was different. They looked around coyly, to make sure they were being admired, and sat down at the edge of the group of women.

They began singing then, together with the women, much more 881
seriously than they had ever done before. They sang as though they 533

881 533 *were* women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires. 881 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but 885 which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs 533 sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She 885 was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as 157 flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat 533 with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped 415 on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya. 881 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. 152 She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing 302

herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes.

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it.

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov-

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however, sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi, who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mambasa.

The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masisi, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sansiwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sansiwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *boloko* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

Sansiwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sansiwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sansiwake was left outside.

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]
301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-A]

P Z 575 346 534 P [304]

times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All these instruments, he claims, however, produce sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of a leopard's claw.

P Z 575 [346]

A further inquiry made among the archers in 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta, 1952, 279) and added some supplementary facts. The *toré* hut is to be found near or in the camp itself. Women and children may attend the *toré* ceremonies organized by the men. The "presidents" are an old man and an old woman. The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, implored for help in the hunt. The society, Schebesta concludes, has a religious aspect. This same study revealed the use of three wooden trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodzo*), in fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through which the performer sings into it (*luma*); and three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

P Z [176]

P Z [534]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] [84] 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

P Z 881 304 177 [346]

Z P [759] [301]

P Z 881 177

[P. 217-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do
[575] not participate fully in the proceedings of the *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and
[304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkumbi*
199 serves merely to give status in villager society.
17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation
[554] into the religious associations of their own men and women; the *molimo* and *elima*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

854 Newborn infants are scarified on the stom-
304 ach, chest, and leg, and the wounds are
757 treated with herbs, often mixed with goat manure if the net hunters are near a village.

757 The Mbuti in this area claim to have a method which they have practiced for a long time for the treatment of paralysis. Examples given, however, describe this treatment as being given to villager or Pygmy children by villagers. The treatment can also be given to an adult. For paralysis of the legs, it consists essentially of standing the patient in a pit, filling it, and stamping the earth down hard. Only the upper part of the patient's body, which is continually washed with warm water, is left above ground. The stem of the *atumba* (a small plant resembling a dandelion) is cut and cooked with manioc and rubbed into a light incision in the affected limb. The patient may be kept in the pit for four hours a day for a week; each time he is taken out he is washed with warm water. It is claimed that after this treatment the patient will be able to walk, however crippled he was beforehand.

A similar treatment is reported for sprained back or arm. The patient is laid flat in a shallow pit. He is covered from knees to chest with a mixture of earth and leaves, about one

[P 232-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 177

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[P. 258-A]

881 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I
885 have never witnessed nor been told of any for-
224 mal rite introducing the new hunter to the asso-
575 ciation, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only
881 act that might be regarded as a formal token of
885 initiation is the cutting of three sets of three
304 vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each
575 side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R 108-L]

C
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15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching *nkumbi* during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

P
516
142
881
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152
C
[152]

16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult, but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time [533]
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551]
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same
when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
628 site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
621 shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] 84 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these re-
[186] spects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

• 312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 camp to hear his stories. But none of his stories fascinated the Pyg-
361 mies as much as those of the model Pygmy villages we had passed
177 on our way home. He was made to repeat these accounts over and over again, giving every detail. While the younger men and women laughed until they could laugh no more at Kenge's description of the distribution of beans for planting, and how most of them ended up in the cooking pot, the older people were less amused. "But are they actually living in those villages?" they asked. And when Kenge answered that some of them were, the next question was "What if there is no game nearby?" Kenge could only tell them what the administrator had said: "You are welcome to hunt so long as you continue to look after the plantations." Everyone knew that to be impossible. Hunting is a full-time occupation, and it could lead a group away for months on end. It called for the co-operation of men, women and children. Who was to stay to look after the fields?

Other questions brought equally unsatisfactory answers, even so far as the younger people were concerned. There were no trees in the "model" villages—every last one had been cut down, exposing the huts to the full heat of the sun. The Pygmies were to be supplied with free seeds to plant, but they would be expected to produce a definite yield, and they knew that villagers who failed to come up to the mark were fined, and if they were unable to pay their fines they
[317] went to jail. Every village had been placed near a supply of fresh water, tested by the administrator himself (by looking at it—he was horrified when I drank some). But the Pygmies knew that however clean it might be to start with, it would soon be polluted; and in any case there was no guarantee that it would continue throughout the year.

361 Far from being "liberated" from the villagers, the Pygmies felt
829 that in these model plantations they would be in greater danger than
177 ever. In the forest they knew that they were safe, because the forest was theirs, but once out in the open they were subject to all the evil

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

[312]

Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P. 323-A]

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy 313 •
never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch
in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows,
arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women
use saplings of no greater size to construct the
frames of the huts.

The material used by the Mbuti throughout 28
the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they
make the barkcloth that is their only clothing;
the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets;
the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and
tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by
Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125)
that he has also seen basketry quivers.

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phryn- 824
ium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing [342]
their huts, though when near a village planta-
tion they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium [415]
leaves are also used in default of villager-manu-
factured or trade utensils, for carrying water,
as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of [386]
certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration
of body and of barkcloth.

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no ad- 221
verse repercussions, as they move camp fre- 361
quently. Among the net hunters every month 184
or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336).
[P. 165-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
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circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [765]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

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Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

000 Chasse as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. 361 241 512 [313] And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

361 177 621 In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

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[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
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Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles are added. The women use these for
[462] many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

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Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

[P. 326-B]

[P. 165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The Mbuti make great use of various species of *Ficus* for the manufacture of barkcloth, and certain vines are used to make string and hunting nets. There are also trees that give a sap
[314] which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another, can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of effective medicines prepared from plants and roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no culture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to their remarkable adaptation to the forest environment. The level of their culture may not be high, but, even though primitive and "conservative," it is distinctly a forest culture and distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw material is abundant. The striking thing is the minimal extent to which they utilize this material. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the environment itself which, making minimal de-
ooo mands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [373] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [252] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam [463] is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

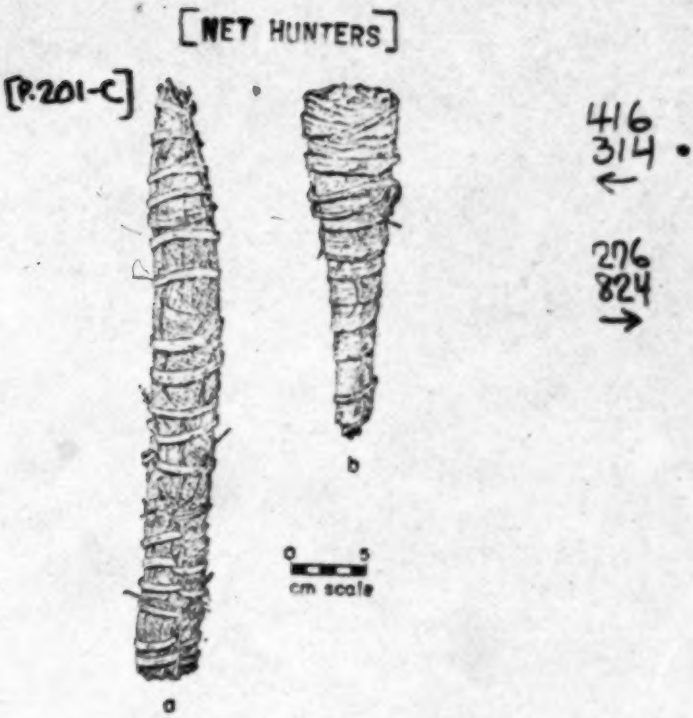

FIG. 31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, made of *kasuku* resin and wrapped in leaves; used when necessary to move from the hut at night. b. Bark pipe, *mbende*, used when village pipestems and bowls are not available.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height. 621 423 121 131 [222] [314]

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently 423 222 314 476 621 423 131

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

314 and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far
114 edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle
123 had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they
went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did
[222] they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

361 As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we
114 heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

361 The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had ar-
342 rived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the
342 path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for
[123] her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and
[122] leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she
[516] squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [965]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.

000

Ageronga's wife prepares a bundle of *mongongo* leaves for thatching her hut.

462
342
516
302
314

[P 72-D]

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 317 316 177 411 412 439

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

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[P. 326-B]

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
* 177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
* 177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
* 177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
• [322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[824] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 534 123 177 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo, which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional materials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] [533] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Ausu, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night. 765 534 123 177

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up. 765 123 481

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Ausu said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway." 765 534 123 [322]

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Ausu took the end of the 765 534

765
know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765 534
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting 322

765 they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from
534 the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be
322 bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twist-
[824] ing them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had
534 originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights be-
422 longed to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off,
534 he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet.
123 He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost
[487] on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mon-
[137] gongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick
[824] bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about
[784] three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765 534
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765 when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534 123 for old men to talk about these things. 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888 outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322] talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411] Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115 him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157] shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[p.169-c]

B
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323

B
415
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FIG. 5. Household utensils made from clay, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Pipestem and clay bowl. b. Cooking vessel. The Mbuti obtain their major pottery artifacts, as luxuries, from their villager neighbors.

P
[439]
323

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the *molimo*, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the huts and the shafts for spears; the ax is used for enlarging the 412
holes in which bees make their hives, so that the honey can be extracted more easily. Younger Mbuti do not know what they would do without the machete for cutting saplings. Both they and the older men realize that the ax is not absolutely essential, and I have seen ax-shaped clubs used for breaking away the wood from around a hive, where the wood is rotten, as it frequently is. The older men say that [324]
if they did not have machetes for cutting saplings they would use stone tools, but they have no knowledge at all of how to make such tools, and are probably prompted to make this remark by the presence in the forest of early stone axheads.

Accepting, for the moment, that the Mbuti in their forest world are 121
not in any position of necessary dependence upon the villagers for food 177*
or material, or technological skill, and admitting that in the village context they are dependent, the question arises as to why they choose to place themselves in that position of dependence. It is certainly not out of economic necessity. The truth of the matter is simply that the village offers, for a brief while, an agreeable change of pace, an opportunity for a relaxation that is not always possible in the forest, and, one might say, better hunting, on occasion. An Mbuti band or an Mbuti family or an Mbuti individual may descend upon a village either because of sheer whim, or because of laziness if the forest hunting gets too strenuous, or because of dissension, or indeed for almost any reason except necessity. Whatever the reason, and most commonly it at least involves an expressed desire for relaxation and freedom from care, the reason is on the side of the Mbuti, the choice is theirs, and the dependence that follows is as voluntary as it is temporary.

ECONOMIC RECIPROCITY

We then have to ask what the Mbuti offer in return for the food and metal products that they receive, and to determine at least the economic structure of the relationship. In so doing we are inevitably led to consider the domestic, political and religious aspects and their interrelationship with the economic system, and it is in these interrelationships that inconsistency and conflict emerge.

Even in terms of sheer economic reciprocity the relationship is in- 121
herently unstable. Continuing to grant, for the moment, the fact that 177*
no economic necessity is involved on the part of the Mbuti, and that 439
their dependence is voluntary and temporary, the forest world remain-

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
* 179 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
* 179 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
* 179 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

• 325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[824] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

[ARCHERS]

613 A number of lineages are associated into
614 clans, but these are widely dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 The huts are built in a circle around a clear-
342 ing by the womenfolk of the individual families.
[462] Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to
[341] form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy 313
never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch
in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows,
arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women
use saplings of no greater size to construct the
frames of the huts.

The material used by the Mbuti throughout 28
the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they
make the barkcloth that is their only clothing;
the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets;
the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and
tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by
Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125)
that he has also seen basketry quivers.

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phryn- 824
ium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing [342].
their huts, though when near a village planta-
tion they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium [445]
leaves are also used in default of villager-manu-
factured or trade utensils, for carrying water,
as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of [386]
certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration
of body and of barkcloth.

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no ad- 221
verse repercussions, as they move camp fre- 361
quently. Among the net hunters every month 184
or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336).

[P. 165-D]

[ARCHERS]

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[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the trading is carried out. He says that there is,
[613] however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

[312] In the choice of a situation for a camp, the main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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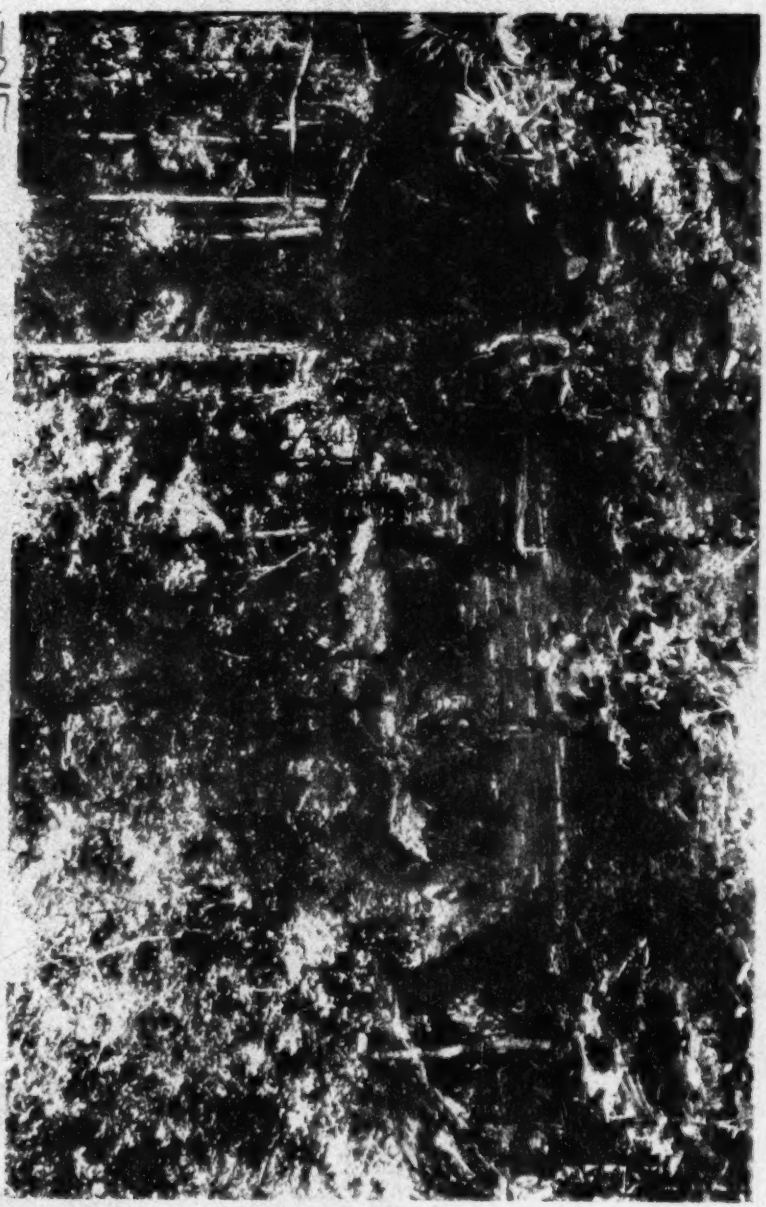

/Plate 29-A/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P 291-A]

PLATE 30 2/A

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.
824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women,
but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
571
352 1/A,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
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824

/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P.293-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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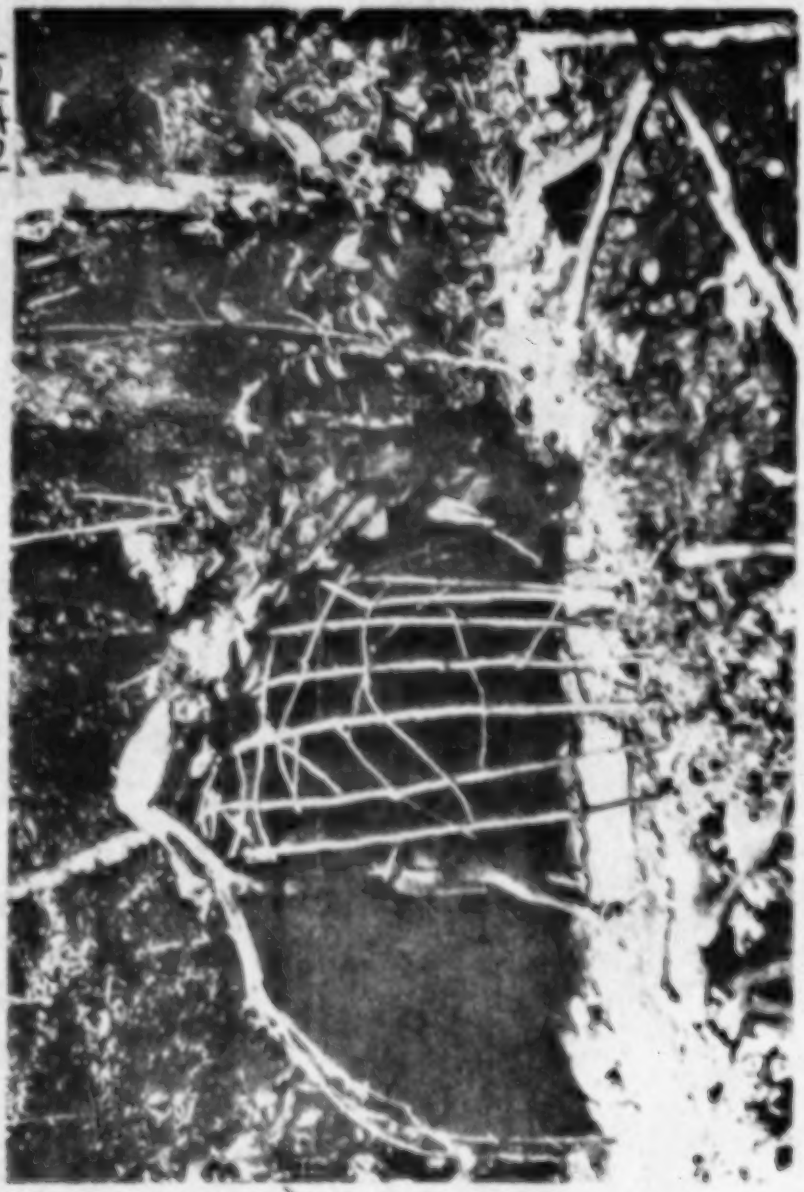

/Plate 30-B/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P 293-B]

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[672 low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
314 of the huts themselves.
613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
• 342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE VILLAGE WORLD

[P.108-A]

PC 361 342 137

1. The village of Epulu, shady but constantly threatened by the encroachments of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 108-C]

P
C
342
139

3. An abandoned village, overgrown in a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 108-E]

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516
342
302
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c. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring roofing leaves into village for village houses.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

[P.108-F]

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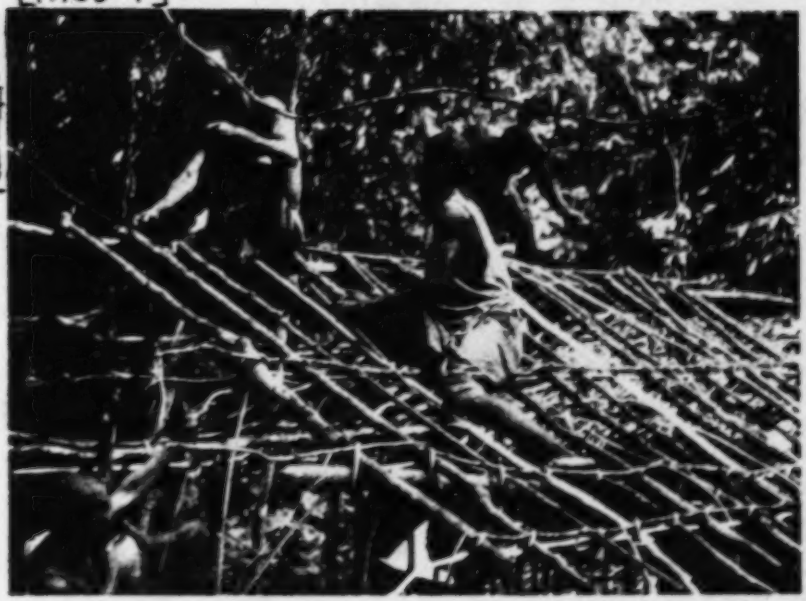

6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their kpara, are fed as part of their "payment."

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 108-6]

8. This village camp of the Mbuti at Epulu was built in imitation of the main village. It soon became fouled and was abandoned, succeeding village camps being built in the forest at the edge of the plantations.

535
Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 624 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[R. 156-A]
THE FOREST WORLD

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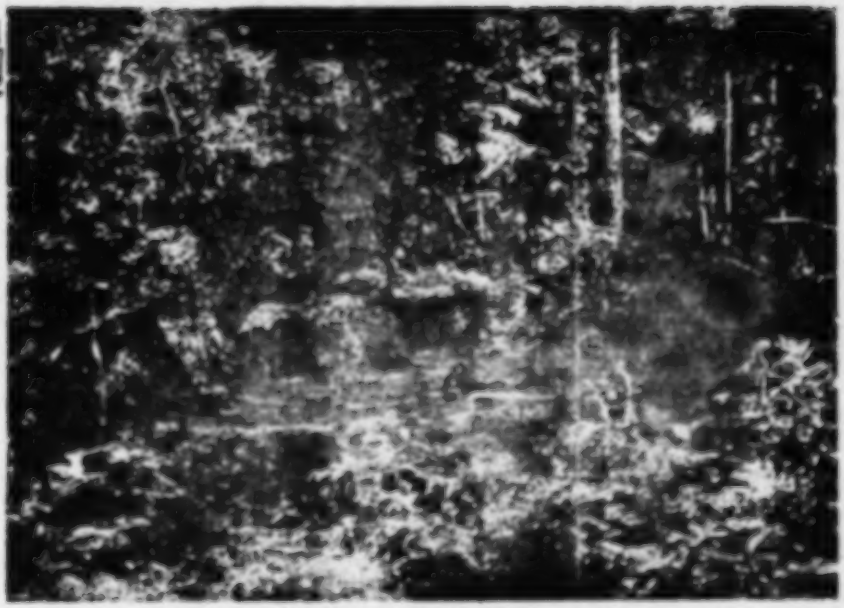

17. A forest camp (a corner of apa Lelo) is far removed from the dust and dirt and heat of the village. When the Mbuti tire of the village, they can escape to the forest and build a camp such as this in a matter of a few hours.

[166]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.156-B]

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[595]

18. Apa Kadiketu, showing Ekianga's village-style hut, where he lived with his controversial youngest wife.[1]

[1][see pages 102-103 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-C]

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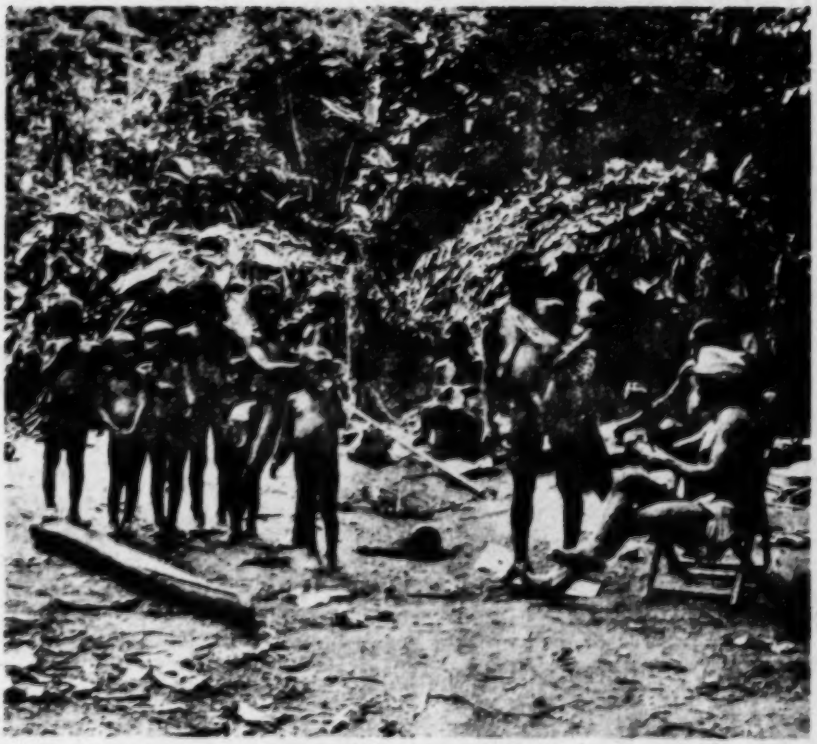

[164]

19. In one of Ccphu's camps, Aberi talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-B]

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22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*sfa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative—to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was different, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
[184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
522 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started sing- 765
ing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the [342] •
Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle [177]
of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered en- [36]
tirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The 765
sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with 534
the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group 533
and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4489, Music of the Ituri Forest

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[546] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
[825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and 361
leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that 342
she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we 412
would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and [123]
Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could 342
tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a 314
large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we 48
hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, 114
looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had 123
long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I [821]
would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and [487]
the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cut- 314
ting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about 114
four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The 123
others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so [412]
they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had arrived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342 476
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their [522]
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
589 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
462 had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
[578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.

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Agtronga's wife prepares a bundle of *mongongo* leaves for thatching her hut.

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[P. 72-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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A Pygmy camp. This one is Cephu's.

[P.72-J]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled *"Ayiiiii?"*—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

15

The Dream World

OUR RETURN TO EPULU found most of the Pygmies, except for Cephu and his group, down in the village. Hunting had been exceptionally good and over the past weeks they had dried a quantity of meat which they were now busy trading for village produce. Their roadside village camp had long been abandoned, and only my house there was still standing. They all seemed to have agreed that they did not want any more mud houses, and they had made a temporary camp just inside the forest. It was not far from one of the plantations, and close to a stream of crystal water.

Kenge had a hero's welcome; even the villagers came to visit the

415 177 439 Also obtained from the Negroes are the cooking pots that all pygmy women own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 462 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman [824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 462 476 This technique is not easy; it is much easier if two women work together, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[A327-A]

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [461] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433

Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

[P. 327-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P 108-B]

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1. The village headman's baraza, used for receiving visitors and holding public discussions.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

361
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142
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9. The Mbuti village house was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing. They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped. They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

P Z 575 P Z [PX]

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam), which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

P Z 575 114 [562]

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

P Z 575 346 534

[P 183-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-A]

times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All these instruments, he claims, however, produce sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of a leopard's claw.

A further inquiry made among the archers in 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta, 1952, 279) and added some supplementary facts. The *tori* hut is to be found near or in the camp itself. Women and children may attend the *tori* ceremonies organized by the men. The "presidents" are an old man and an old woman. The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, implored for help in the hunt. The society, Schebesta concludes, has a religious aspect. This same study revealed the use of three wooden trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodu*), in fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through which the performer sings into it (*luma*); and three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a
religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

Camps are moved every month or two be-
[514] cause in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 The first difference between Putnam's mate-
[184] rial and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta
[114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison.
881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl,
[346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this
[302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At

[P. 216-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

P 8 1 3 4 1 7 7 [346]. Z P [759] [301] P 8 1 1 7 7

[P. 217-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to 000
Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in 356
front are kept clean. 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes 52
in which children and adults may take part, the [535]
dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *paliengbe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well.

The dance takes place on every possible 53
occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes.

Legend telling and mime are other important 538
means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta 536
(1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that 513
the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo.

[ARCHERS]

613 614 A number of lineages are associated into clans, but these are widely dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 342 [462] [341] The huts are built in a circle around a clearing by the womenfolk of the individual families. Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

• 352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter. 352 417 25

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers. 415 412 177 [439] 412 177 [439]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352 •

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 412 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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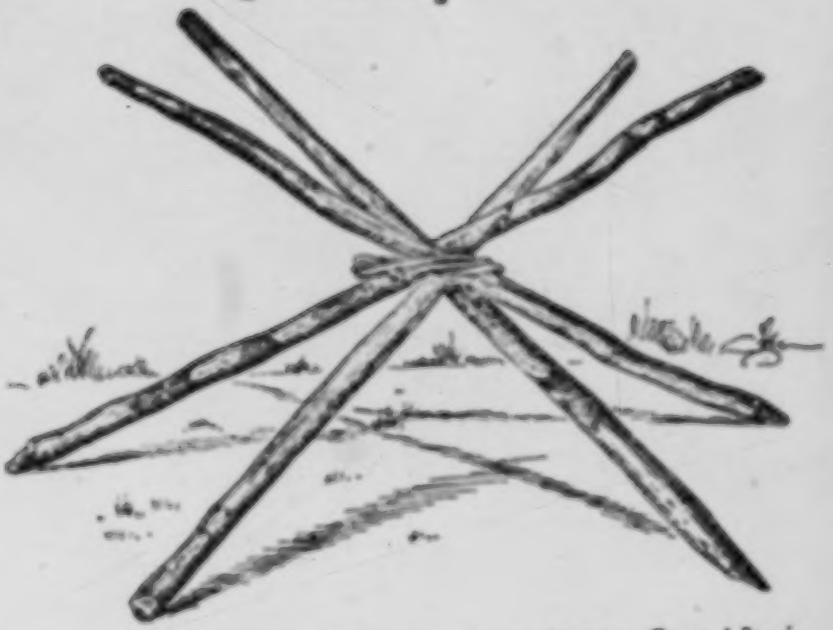

FIG. 19. Chair, *ngéanga*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 195-C]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

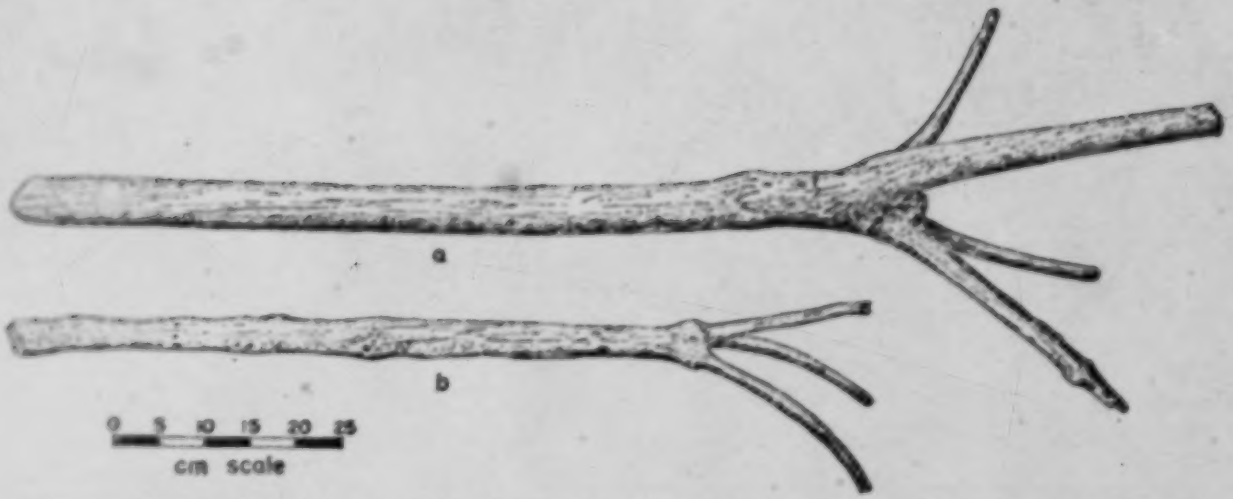

FIG. 20. Household furniture, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a–b. Benches, *mbakati*. Such forked branches are used for reclining as well as sitting, possibly in imitation of the large versions used in nearby villages.

[P.196-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 30 $\frac{2}{A}$

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
573 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.

824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women,
but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
571

• 352 $\frac{1}{A}$,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

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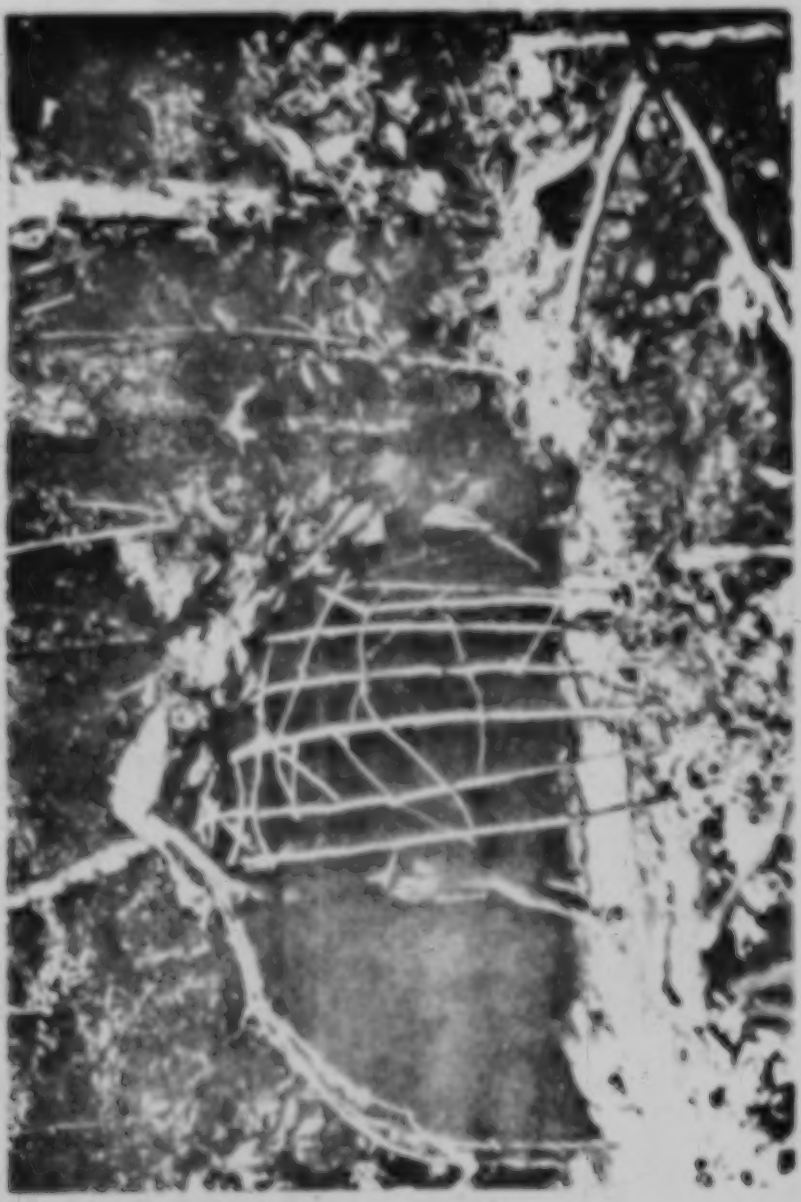
462
824
• 352



/Plate-30-B/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P 293-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[F 108-B]

E
622
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352
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516

2. The village headman's *barza*, used for receiving visitors and holding public discussions.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

361
344
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142
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516

9. The Mbuti village house was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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415
852
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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-I]

P
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593
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352

11. An Mbuti hunter amuses himself in the village by playing a village-made zither.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-C]

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854

[164]

19. In one of Cephu's camps, Aberi talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
177 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
881 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco, palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested, but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions; on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
[352] the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between us by all the discomforts we had shared together as well as by all the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
199 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others ~~lay~~ around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 519 discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521 they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512 showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [533] [854] I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512 properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887] sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224] the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [965] to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313] were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314] camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352 one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284] selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513] Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

[284] Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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A Pygmy camp. This one is Cephu's.

[P 72-J]

me and finally brought us down to a swampy region, dark and dank. 114
A stream flowed through the middle, fed by innumerable tiny rivulets from the hills all around. We picked our way across, balancing on fallen tree trunks and jumping from log to log. As we began to climb a steep hill on the far side I heard the telltale sound of bark cloth being pounded into shape, the cheerful shouting of women as they called to each other while they finished the building of their huts, and an occasional outburst of song, sung for no other reason than that this was the honey season, the season to be happy, the season to rejoice. Kenge gave a loud whoop of pleasure and darted [152] among the trees like a young antelope, leaping and bounding out of sight. When I reached the clearing he was already sitting down, his face buried in a sticky mongongo leaf dripping with rich brown honey. He looked up and laughed.

The camp was called Apa Toangbe, the *toangbe* being a special 361
kind of honey tree. It was built halfway up a fairly high hill, on a [192]
patch of ground that was not quite level. Masisi's house was at the highest point of the tiny clearing, with Asofalinda to one side and Maipe's mother to the other. Masamba had built a house that virtually joined onto that of Masisi. Mine was halfway up the slope on the other side, facing across to Maipe. It was all ready when we arrived, the only one completely finished. Masisi proudly led me to it and inspected it with me. He had built the bed himself, carefully [352] refraining from turning the ends of the branches up sharply as Pygmies seem to think should be done, so that the bed becomes the shape of a hammock without any of its back-saving resilience.

It was not thirty feet from one side of the camp to the other, and 000
the forest closed in a protective wall all around us. Kenge and I set off to see what the surrounding country was like, and soon we were far beyond the sounds of any voices other than our own. Everywhere we went we saw mushrooms and nuts and berries, and we collected

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
627 and morally, beyond the forest.
[578]
[156]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with
[152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to 000
Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in 356
front are kept clean. 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes 52
in which children and adults may take part, the [535]
dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *paliengbe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well.

The dance takes place on every possible 53
occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes.

Legend telling and mime are other important 538
means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta 536
(1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that 513
the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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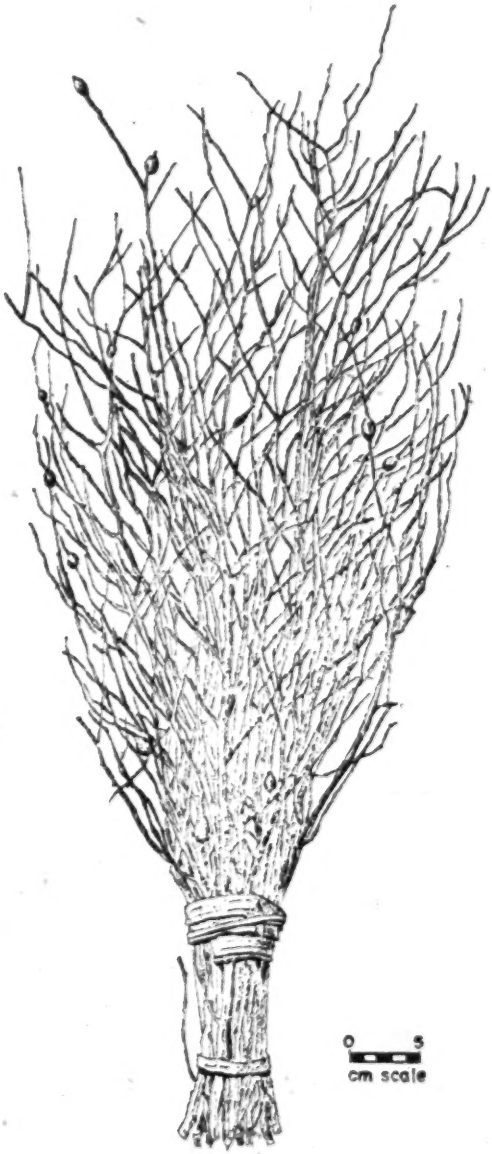

FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner. [512] [356]

[P. 194-D]

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
• 356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 123 177 648 C 648 123

chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

C [583]

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

P C 123

C P 123 462 356 593

Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

P C 123 593

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 593 blanket, no matter how annoyed with me he was. These villagers—they were just animals.

When I awoke in the morning I hardly dared open my eyes, but a tentative exploration proved that the other half of the bed was empty. I thought all was well after all. Amina had cut her losses and left at dawn. But when I had put my trousers on and stooped through the low entrance of the hut into the camp, there she was. She was sitting on a log beside the hut, quietly fanning the fire and cooking my breakfast, just as every other wife was doing for her husband. Kenge was making it very obvious to everyone that he was eating with the bachelors, who were making it obvious that they had not slept in my hut that night. Everyone else studiously ignored my appearance, except old Moke, who was walking past on his way to the stream to bathe. He looked at me sideways, shook his head and gave a little knowing old laugh. And as he walked on he shook his head all the more vigorously and laughed all the louder.

I was about to go after him, thinking that at least I could ask his advice, but Amina caught hold of my trouser leg and said, "There is no need for you to go to the stream to bathe. I have brought you water—behind the hut." So I went behind the hut and washed, and then sat down and had breakfast, while Amina went to join the other women and chat with them. While she was gone Kenge strolled by and elaborately asked me if the food was all right. He also asked me, rather loudly, if I had slept well. Amina answered from across the camp, "Yes, he told me to mend the leak in the roof!" This proof of domestic bliss brought howls of mirth from all around, the more infuriating because I could not see what was funny about it. Then Kenge told me that this was what men always said to their wives when they wanted to be allowed to sleep in peace.

P C 462 356

C P 123

That night, Amina and I came to an agreement. She was to stay with me and cook my food—and mend leaks in the roof every night.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tic or racial differential. It might be well to define how certain other terms are used. P 121 128 104 361

CAMP: This term distinguishes the settlement of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There may be hunting camps, those situated in the forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

BAND: This refers to the total Mbuti hunting population, regardless of kinship, that recognizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. The band may occupy a single camp or split into several camps within the same territory. P 121 128 104 621

VILLAGE: The settlement of the Bantu and Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the forest. Such a village is likely to have a much more clear-cut kinship composition and political identity than an Mbuti band. Z 121 128 104 621

VILLAGER: This term, unless otherwise stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cultivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that Z 101 128 104

[P. 147-D]

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 [342] [45] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

221 [P. 166-A
361 From Schebesta (1952, 148–149), it would seem
[184] that archer camps are very much more variable
both in size and duration. Although their time
[261] is fully occupied by the requirements of their
[251] hunting and gathering existence, the Mbuti
never have any fear of shortage and conse-
181 quently have no need to store. Theirs is a
182 strictly diurnal economy. This fact, and the
abundant way in which the forest satisfies their
basic needs, not only directly affect their ma-
terial culture (and indirectly their social
structure) but also, to some extent, their social
behavior and their religious thought.

182 The present report is not the place to pursue
121 the question of the effect of environment on
personality and behavior, a study more prop-
erly in the field of psychology than social
anthropology. But it is worth emphasizing the
probable importance of the environment in this
respect, as it becomes especially significant
when we study the religious life of the Mbuti.

[ARCHERS]

613 A number of lineages are associated into
614 clans, but these are widely dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to the Mbuti.

• 361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 The huts are built in a circle around a clear-
342 ing by the womenfolk of the individual families.
[462] Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to
[341] form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

593 Both parents have an equal responsibility in
861 the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively,
514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from
264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimination takes place close by, two factors favoring
361 the frequent moving of camp.

[P. 177-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

62 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

• [361]

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patriclan, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

621 group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by
361 Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20
and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man,
[592] his wife or wives, and a few children, so the
[162] total number of Pygmies to an average camp is

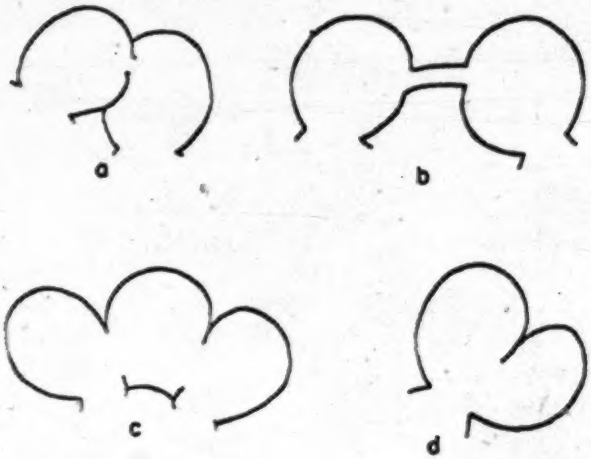

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 194-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

• 361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628 between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families.

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628 form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each

[P. 228-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 476 361 578 621 [P 229-A]

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

P Z [428]

Z [628]

A fourth factor might be added: While the 184
net hunt quickly scares animals away from the 182
area around the hunting camp, necessitating 224
frequent changes of site, the archery technique 361
neither depletes the game so quickly nor
frightens it away. An archer band can therefore
remain confined to a smaller area, near the
village, while the net hunters sometimes must
wander several days' march away from their
patrons. The more nomadic group also has [262]
constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at
its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is
apparently felt by the more settled archers, for
plantation products.

Thus at once we can see the possible eco- 184
nomic, social, and political implications of the 182
difference in hunting technique and how these 12
implications follow in fact. 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of 222
social and economic importance in each type of 184
community. It is regarded primarily as the 462
work of women, though, wherever it calls for
tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among
[P 244-D]

P [P. 251-A]
Z
535 ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held
177 only during the *nkumbi*.
[881] Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band
P is visiting a village, it may come down to the
535 main meeting place in the evening and dance.
177 The villagers expect it and regard it as one of
[517] their forms of entertainment, though they say
Z they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The
177 Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and
[86] is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

P When the two groups meet on both festive
361 and ordinary occasions they keep apart from
571 each other. There is no leisure activity in which
177 they participate together, only a few ritual ac-
Z tivities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti
361 camp beside the village, on the edge of the plan-
177 tation where the forest begins. This physical
571 disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

PLATE 29[1]

A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

361 184 571 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 602 887 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

[1], /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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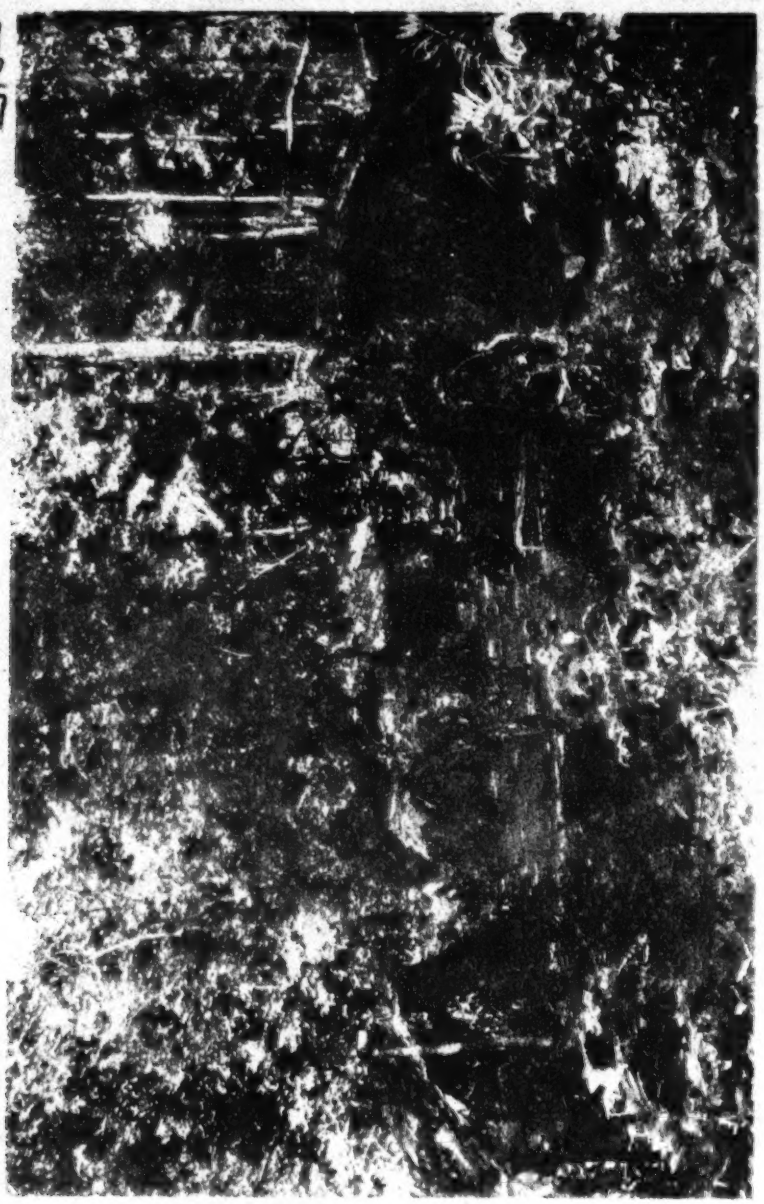
342
137



/Plate 29-A/

/Caption appears on p.290/

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
221
621

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

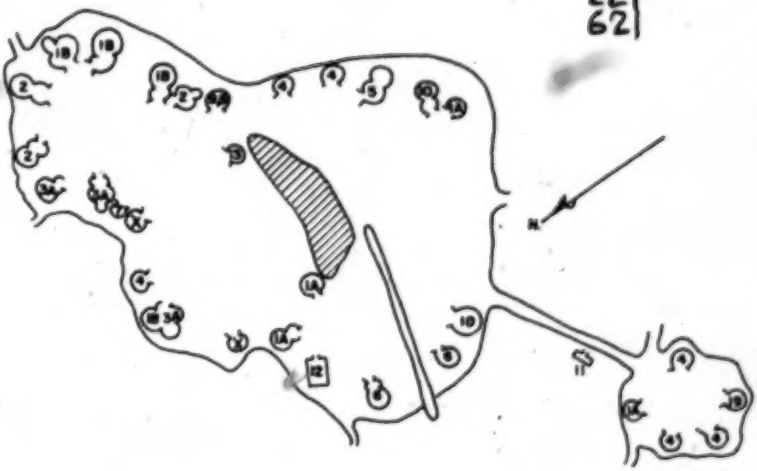
Chart of Positions of End Chart 1 (Plan 11).
[facing End Chart 1]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

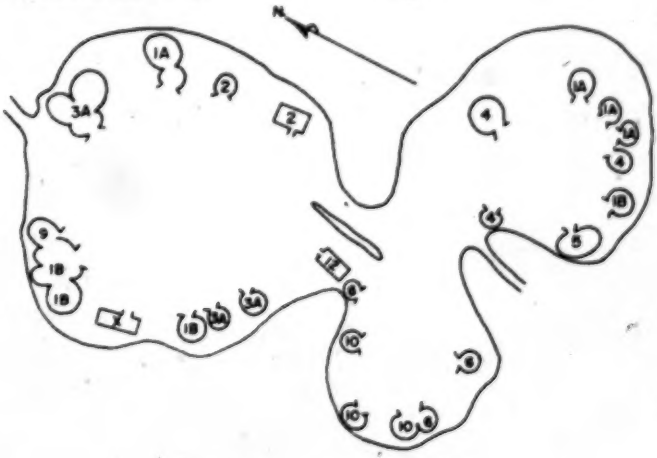
361
221
621

PLAN 11

11A
AUGUST 1957

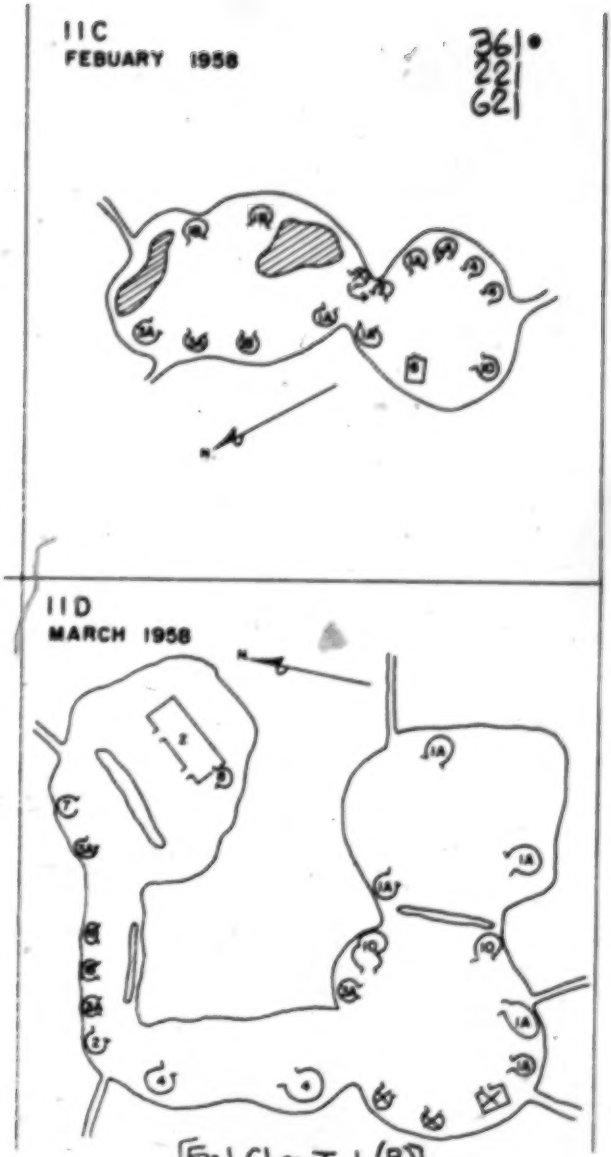


11B
NOV./DECEMBER 1957



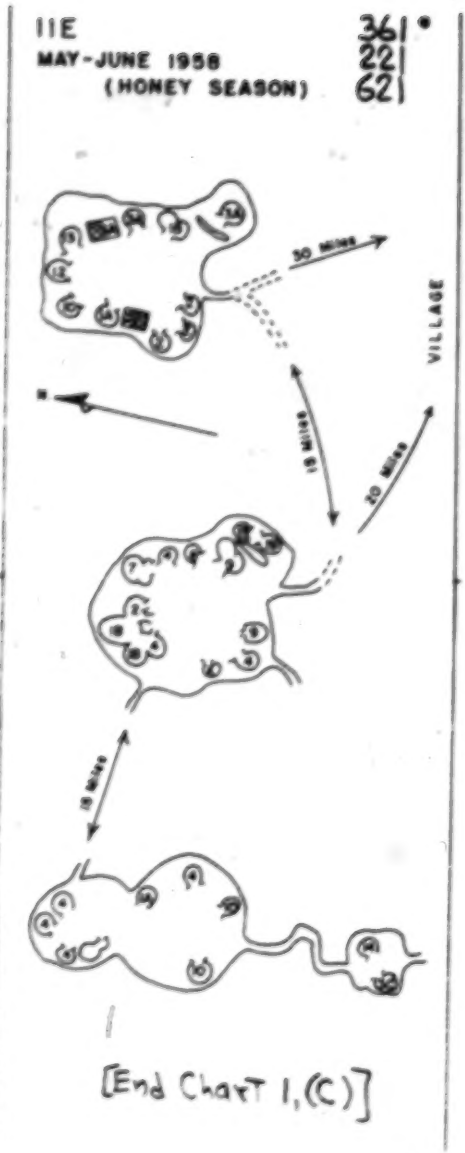
[End Chart 1, (A)]

2:Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



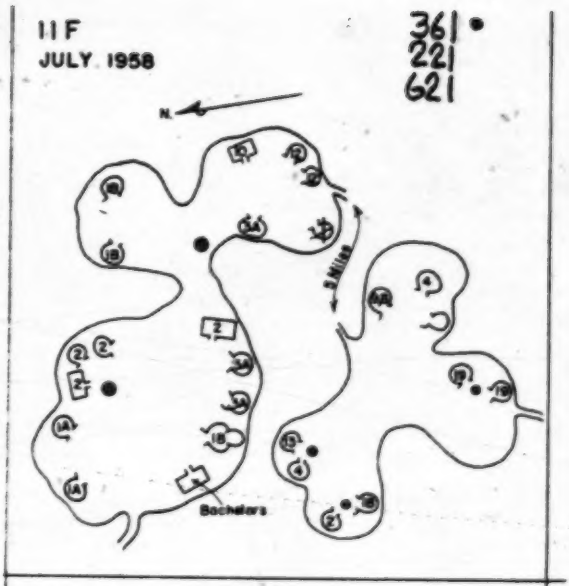
[End Chart 1,(B)]

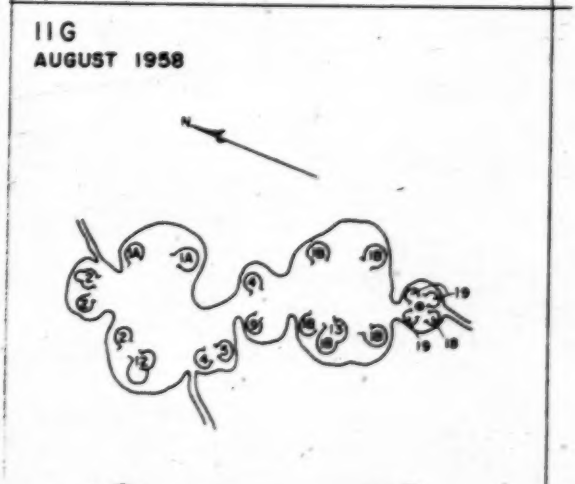
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 1,(C)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti





[End Chart 1, (D)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

11 H
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1958

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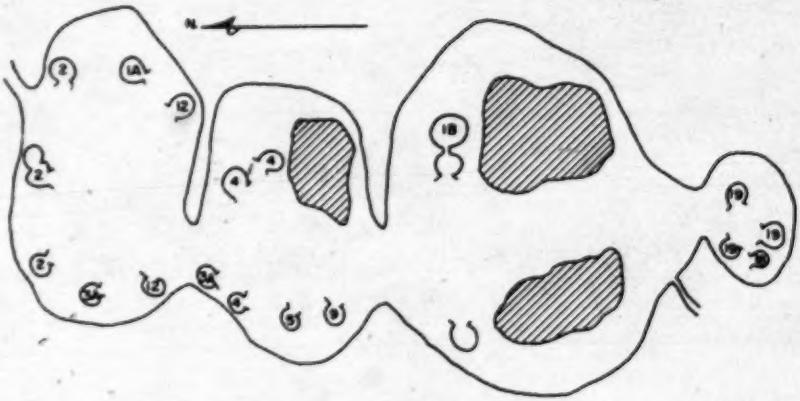
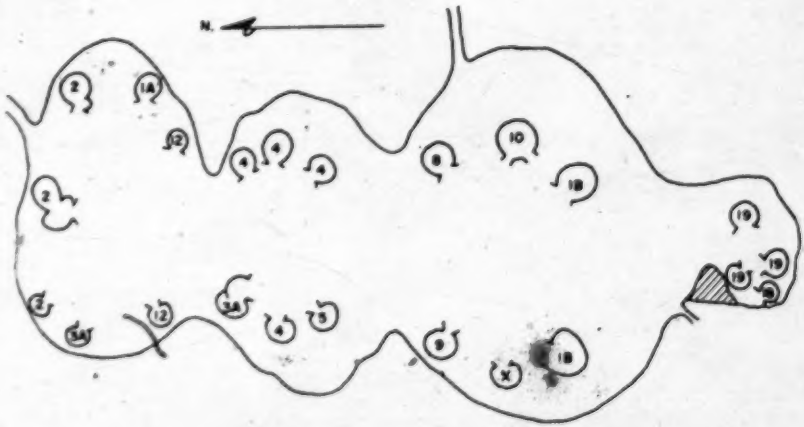
221
621



11 I
NOVEMBER 1958



[End Chart 1, (E)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal relationship with the forest, but a very different one. The forest surrounds them on all sides, but they do not live in it or by it, only despite it. Their initial act is one of destruction, the cutting down of the forest to make way for village and plantation which in turn are destroyed in the final act. The hostility is mutual, as the villagers see it. They have to fight not only the forest itself, but also the creatures that live in it. Elephants, leopards, baboons and Mbuti, all are a menace to life and livelihood. A whole plantation can be destroyed in a few hours by even a modest sprinkling of elephants. The excessive and sometimes erratic rainfall can cause hunger for a whole season. Baboons and Mbuti come in the night and steal the ripening fruit. Leopards prey on the few scrawny goats and chickens the villagers manage to raise.

As for the Mbuti, so for the villagers is the forest an entity to be reckoned with, upon which life and death depend; it is also an entity that is natural and supernatural. But instead of acceding to the natural, the villagers with their superior technology combat it; and instead of respecting the supernatural in the sense that the Mbuti respect it, the villagers oppose it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate. They people the forest with evil spirits, and they fill their lives with magic, witchcraft and a belief in sorcery.

The forest achieves the establishment of two virtually irreconcilable systems of values. It further determines, for both Mbuti and villagers, a certain degree of nomadism, and it tends to fragment large populations into small, relatively isolated bands or villages. For the Mbuti the forest merely indicates natural boundaries, such as valleys, ridges, rivers, caves and so forth, within which a band can conveniently roam at will throughout the years, economically self-sufficient. Within that nomadic framework there is an enormous sense of permanence and of territory. But for the villagers the forest announces, at the end of every three years or so, that the village must pack up and move, it does not much matter where. The move will inevitably bring the village into renewed conflict with the forest, and may well bring it into conflict with a neighboring village which has also been forced to move. In spite of the vast size of the forest and its small population, the villagers are unwilling to go off entirely on their own. At the present time they move up and down the long road that connects Stanleyville with Irumu, or Wamba with Nia-Nia and Mambasa. Formerly it seems that villages were similarly stretched out along recognized trails, and seldom moved away from them. On any given trail, or road, the number of suitable sites for a semi-permanent village is limited, but fric-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 361 628 754 tion between villages is due only in part to rivalry for territory. It is also due to suspicion of witchcraft and sorcery, a suspicion that seems to increase as the distance of separation decreases. This, of course, C 628 609 754 can also be interpreted as an expression of territorial friction, but it is conceived in personal rather than territorial terms, and is accompanied by a general dislike and mistrust of strangers.

C 361 765 P [361] Nor must we lose sight of the fact that whereas the Mbuti, even with their nomadism, in which hunting camps are shifted every month, have a strong sense of basic territorial permanence, the villagers have none, and this gives rise to further instability. To mention only one example, it is believed among the Bira that the dead should be buried according to a prescribed ritual, and that the grave should be cared for in a prescribed manner. The burial is always carried out but it is a constant source of conflict having to care for a grave that may be some miles away. Every time a village moves the villagers have to face the fact that they are abandoning their dead, to some extent, and they are unpleasantly reminded of the uncertainty of their own future. We do not know what the original burial practice was before the Bira moved into the forest; undoubtedly changes have been made, but they have not adequately met the new situation.

P *177 648 It is only in light of the relationship between each of these peoples and the environment in which they live that we can understand the relationship between the people themselves. It is in part ignorance of this factor that has led to the gross misunderstanding of Mbuti/Villager relationship, and indeed of Mbuti society itself. Before considering either the Mbuti or their relationship with the villagers, however, a certain amount of further ground-clearing is necessary.

MBUTI, BAMBUTI, BAMBUTI

P 101 A certain amount of confusion concerning the Mbuti arises out of conflicting terminology, some of it totally inapplicable or lacking in significance. First we have to be clear why we group together, under any one name, all the pygmy hunters of the Ituri Forest, even though they speak different languages and use different hunting techniques.

P 101 105 [144] Racially, they are clearly one people, quite distinct from any of the surrounding Negro tribes. They form a strongly, visibly distinct unit. Culturally, they are equally distinguished from their neighbors as a unit, being hunters and gatherers, and not cultivators, with a consequently totally distinct social structure. Differences in hunting techniques do not affect the basic structural unity.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

P 685 648 571 121 C 648 571 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp P [361] [621] of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

P 829 648 571 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and P [224] fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the P [825] villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

C 439 648 121 Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

			Male Members		Female Members	
621	Camp 3a – in	26 huts, there were	13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
614	3b –	22	10	5	10	6
613	3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

			Male Members		Female Members	
	Camp 3d – in	9 huts, there were	5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
	3e –	9	5	3	6	3
	3f –	6	4	4	4	3
	3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)A indicate the extent to which the
613 lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If
361 we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is
[578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m).
621 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly
114 verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe-
[614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

A [see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	Members Male	Members Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] [361] [184]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analyst]

621 this in mind we shall go on to discover the nature and extent of lin-
613 eage participation in band activity, but the nonlineal nature of the corporate unit—i.e., the band or sub-band—has first to be examined in another context.

FRAGMENTATION, FISSION AND FUSION

We have already mentioned that the band may be large or small, that it may be established in a single large camp or in a number of smaller camps. In examining the process of fission and fusion, it is plain that lineage considerations are by no means paramount, but that, if anything, there is some effort to maintain nonlineal composition even in the smaller camps. That is to say, there is at least a consciousness of lineage and an apparently felt need to maintain some kind of balance between lineages. Whereas the process of fission and
621 fusion—the division of the band into small segments, each with its
• 361 own hunting camp within the hunting territory, and the eventual realignment of the band as a single unit—is systematic, it is not without an element of the less systematic process of fragmentation that takes place within any single camp, large or small, and which starts the day the camp is first established.

The whole shifting complex is best understood by looking at the camp plans at the end of the book. As each hut represents a married
[613] couple with or without unmarried children, Plans 5 and 6,[1] respectively, show the lineage groupings according to male and female membership for the camp named *apa* Lelo. *Apa* Lelo was one of the larger camps and is as typical as any. Plan 7[2] shows the significant changes made in the direction in which the huts faced as the camp took shape, day by day.

On looking at Plans 5 and 6 it is evident that not only does the shape of the natural clearing lend itself to the division of the camp into sections, but that these sections show as much consideration for affinal as for consanguineal ties. Plan 7 shows how the natural divisions offered by the clearing were made plainer by the addition of screens to hut entrances, or by rebuilding huts so as to face them in different directions. The fallen tree trunk and a clump of undergrowth are also utilized, and in other camps such undergrowth was eventually cleared if the reason for making use of it disappeared.

When we examine the camp, section by section, it will be seen
[613] again that lineage is only one of many factors in determining the social groupings within the camp.

1,2 [see pages 355-357 respectively -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
/Mbuti

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[672 low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
614 of the huts themselves.
613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 577 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224 184] other factor.

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE VILLAGE WORLD

[P.108-A]

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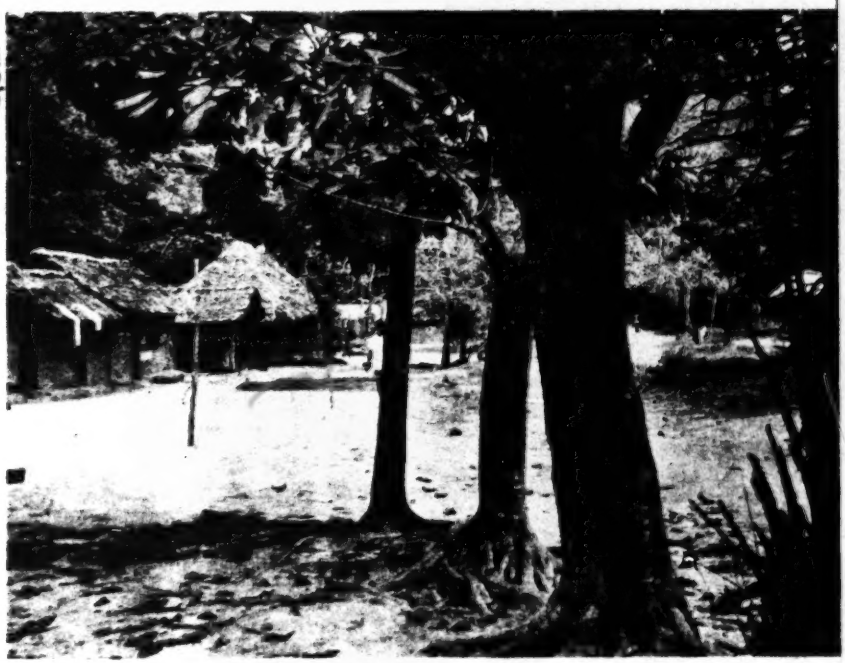

1. The village of Epulu, shady but constantly threatened by the encroachments of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P.108-G]

8. This village camp of the Mbuti at Epulu was built in imitation of the main village. It soon became fouled and was abandoned, succeeding village camps being built in the forest at the edge of the plantations.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

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9. The Mbuti village baraza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 156-A]

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17. A forest camp (a corner of apa Lelo) is far removed from the dust and dirt and heat of the village. When the Mbuti tire of the village, they can escape to the forest and build a camp such as this in a matter of a few hours.

[166]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.156-B]

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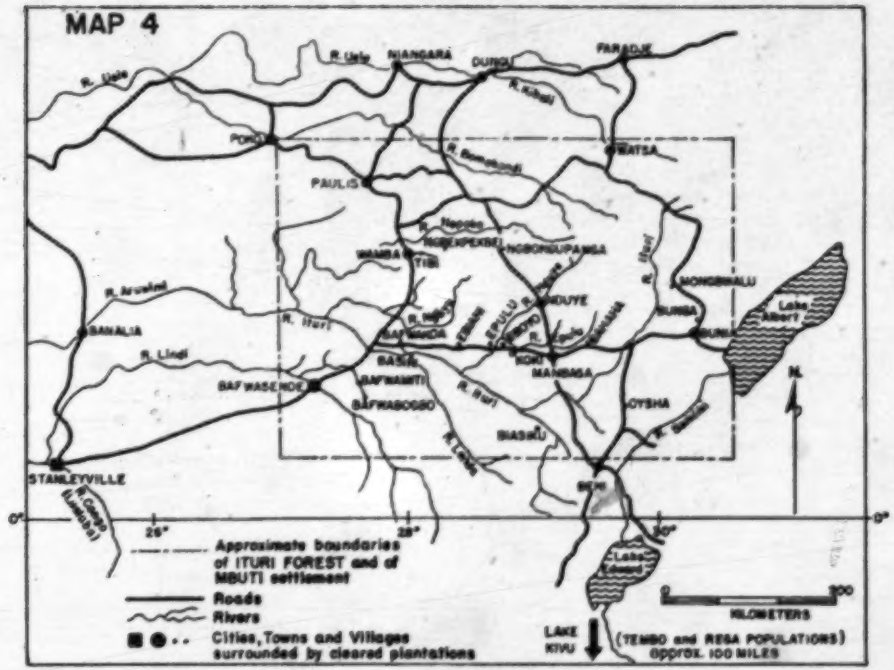
[595]

18. Apa Kadiketu, showing Ekianga's village-style hut, where he lived with his controversial youngest wife.[1]

[1][see pages 102-103 -- Analysis]



Boundaries of Ituri Forest and of Mbuti settlement.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C
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Plan Ib

EPULU VILLAGE

Camp of Pygmies
(About twice scale of Plan Ia)

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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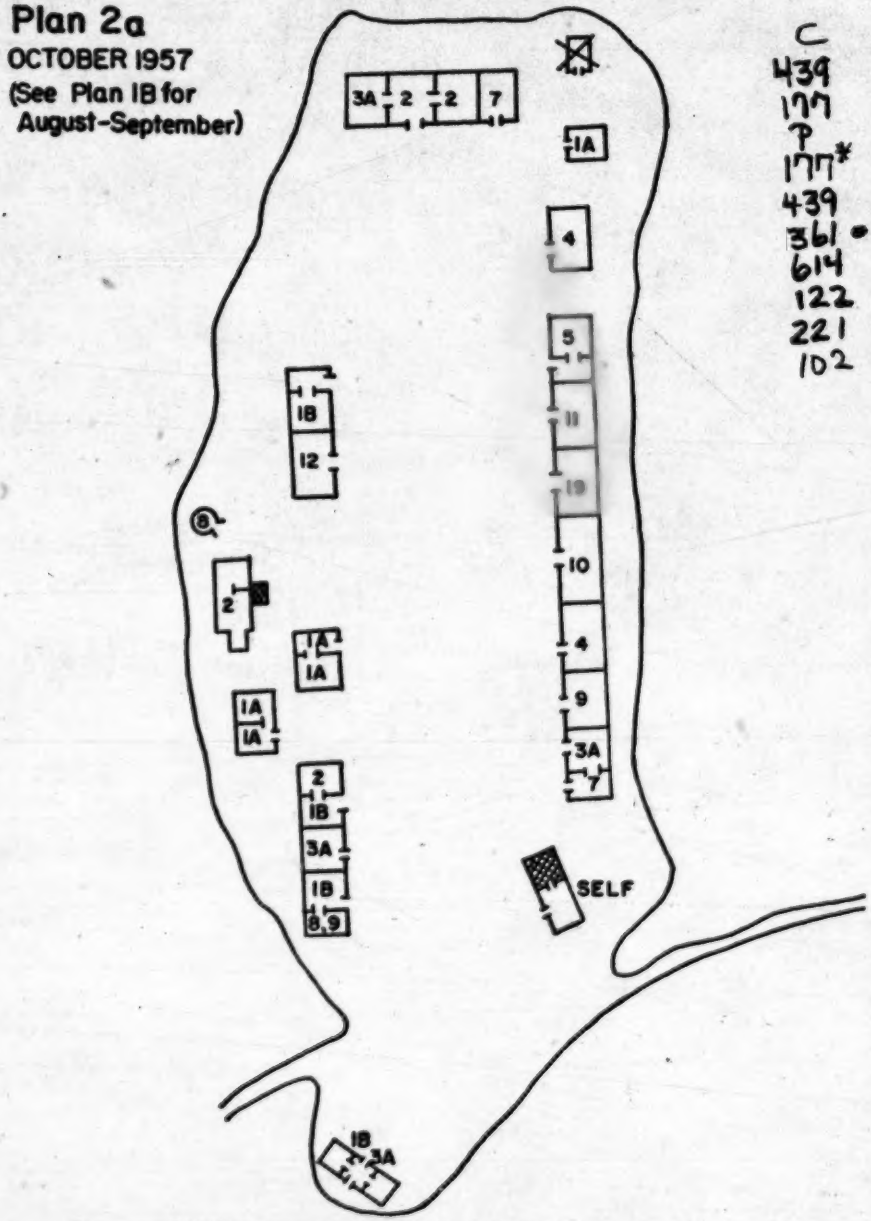

PLAN 2a–d *Village camp of Epulu Mbuti, October 1957–March 1958.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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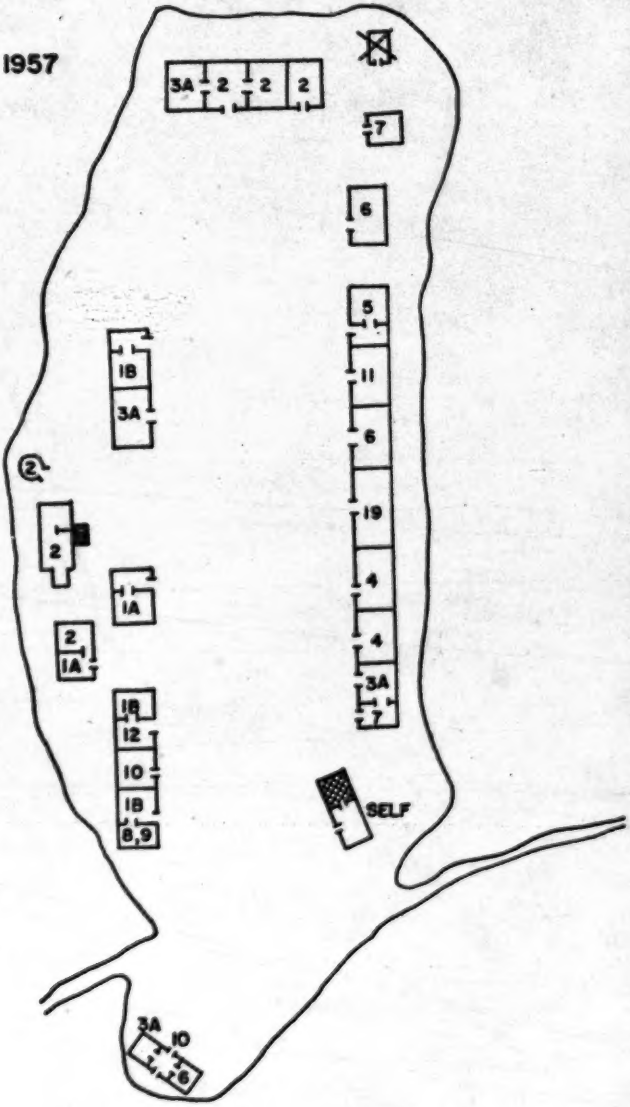
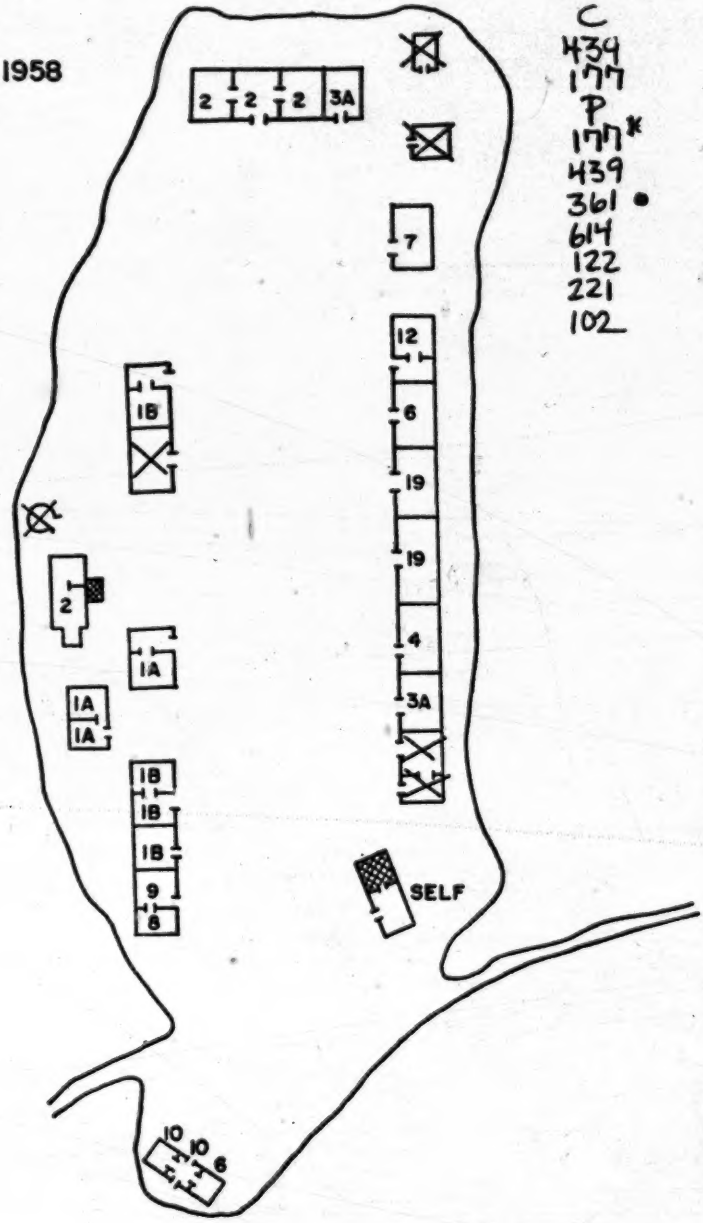
Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958



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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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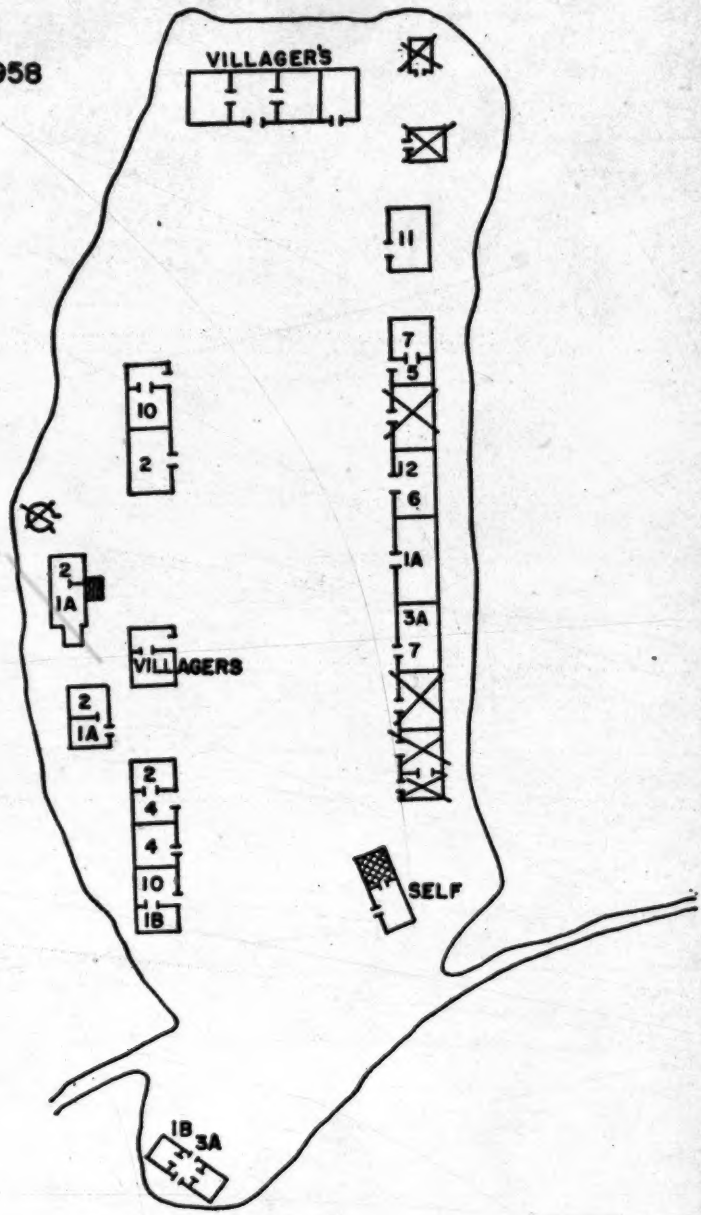
WAYWARD SERVANTS

Plan 2d
MARCH 1958



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 3a-g: KEY

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▩ = Baraza (meeting veranda)

C, D = Hut

= Abandoned hut

= Living but not in camp

⊛ = Hearth, used by more than one nuclear family

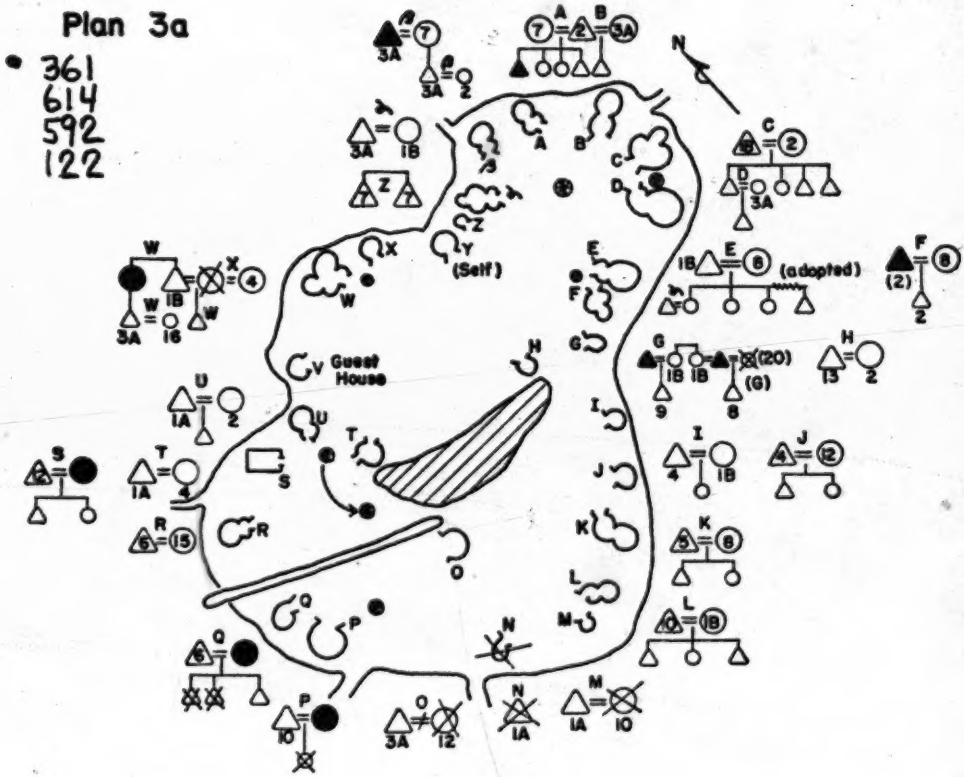
= Brush and tree trunks that effectively divide a camp

	CLAN	TOTEM		CLAN	TOTEM
1A,1B	PUEMI	2	11	NGAMO	1
2	BOMASUA	1	12	BANDOHWA	2
3A,B,C	BOKELÉ	3,1,6	13	POYA	4
4	BAMBAKA	6	14	MOLOMBA	4
5	BWANGO	1	15	POTOLA	1
6	UNGBAUSU	2	16	PASAMA	5
7	MEKI	4	17	PONGWANA	2
8	POKBAYA	1	18	PUKENA	1
9	POKAMA	6	19	PUSA	7
10	POTEBA	1	20	PUMA	4

TOTEMS: 1 LEOPARD
2 CHIMPANZEE
3 BUFFALO
4 SNAKE
5, 6, 7 } Different kinds of rare antelope

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/



PLAN 3a–g *Composition of hunting camps cited p. 98 for large and small camps of Epulu band.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

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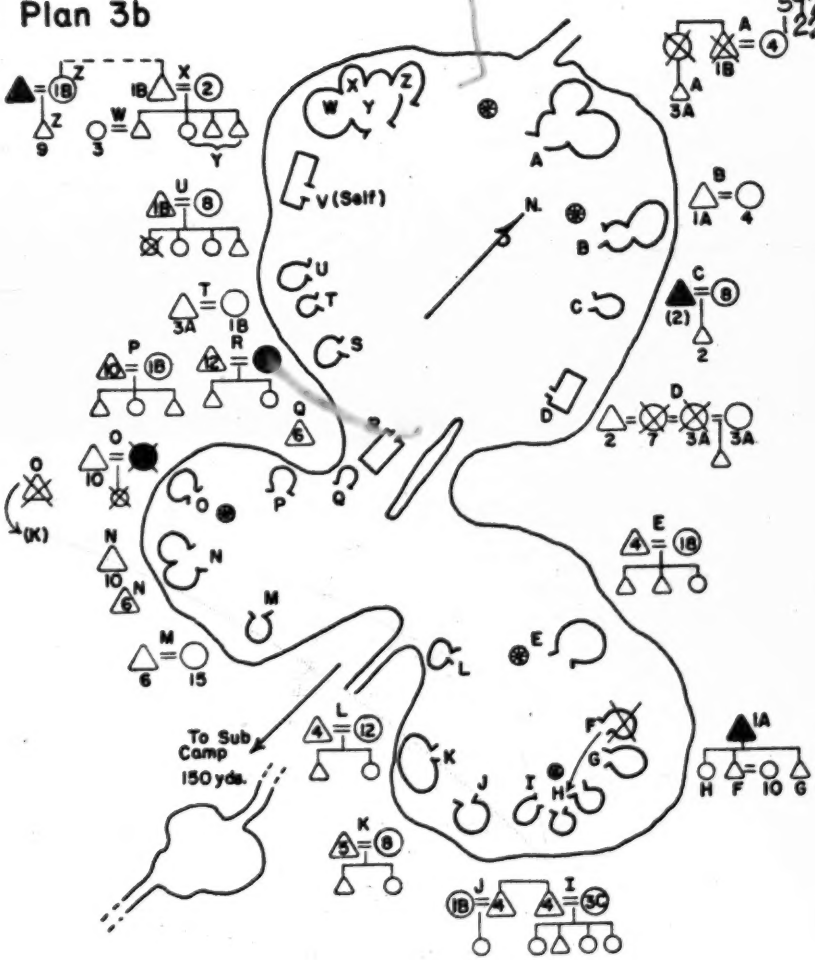
Plan 3b



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3c

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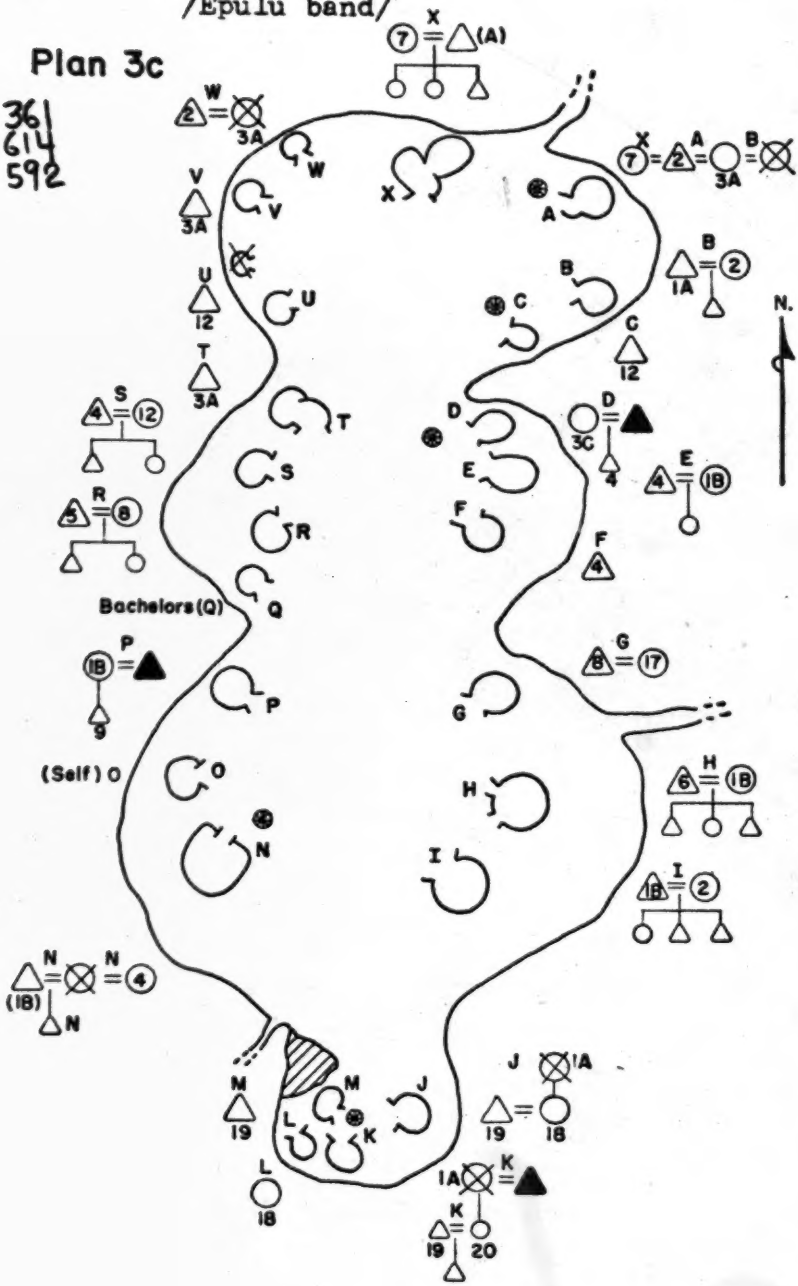

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

[P. 343]

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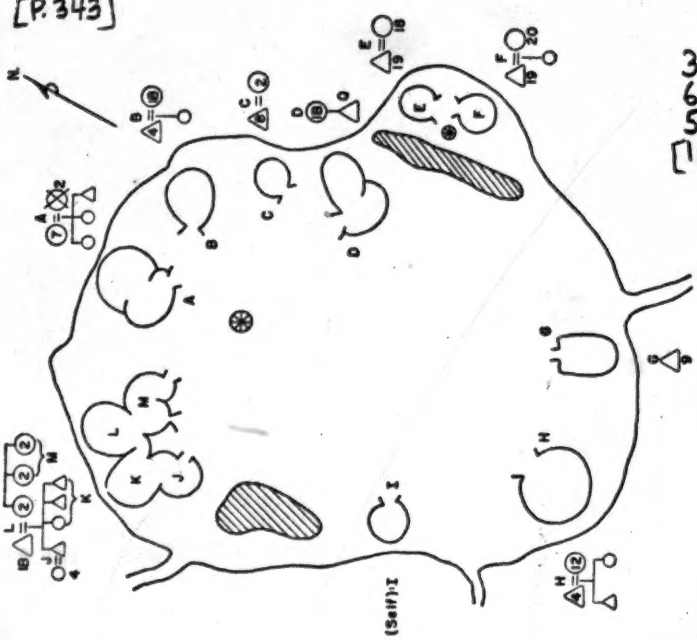
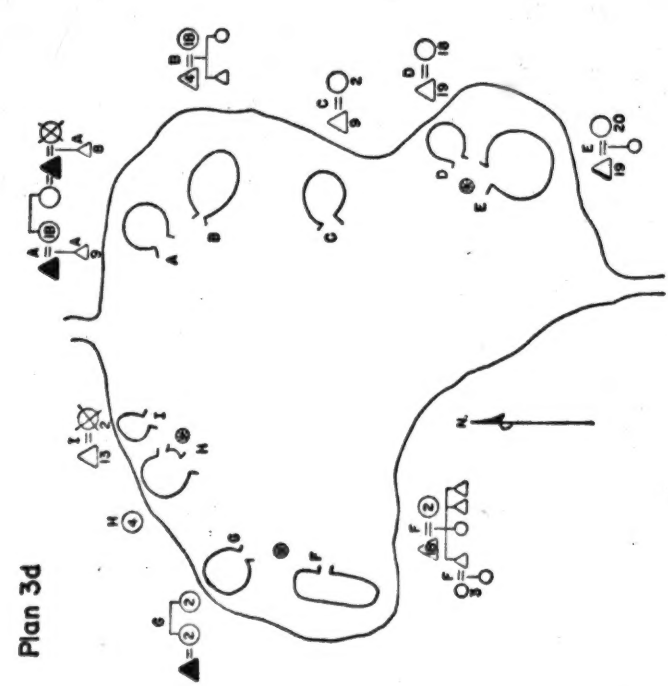


Plan 3e



Plan 3d

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

WAYWARD SERVANTS
/Epulu band/

Plan 3f

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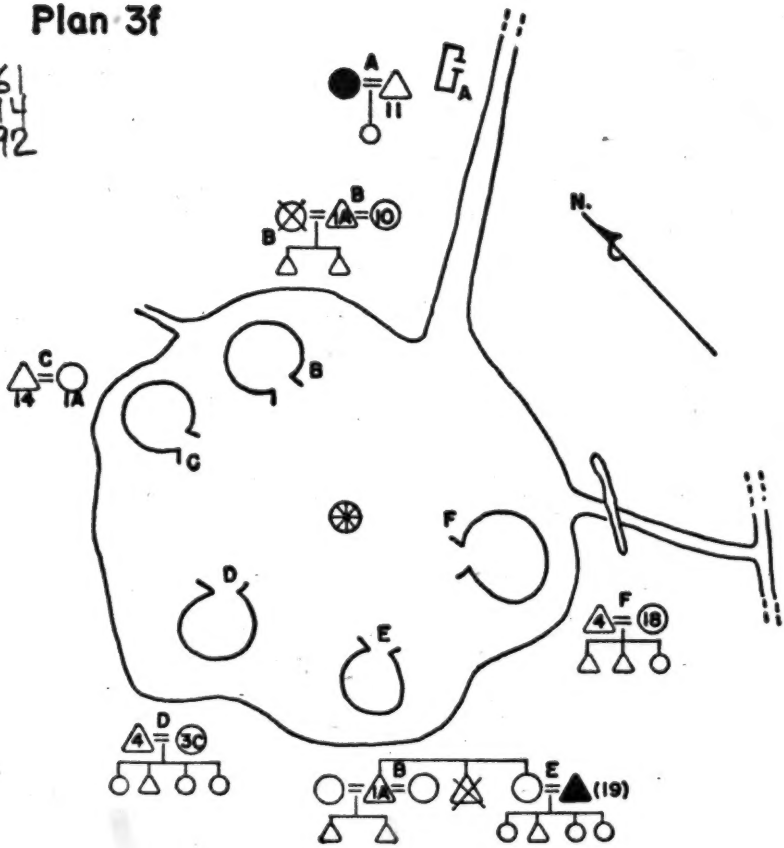

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

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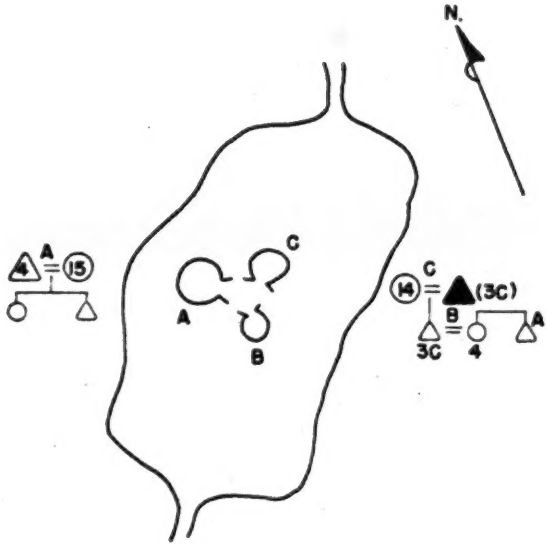
Plan 3g



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.346]

Plan 4a

G'BAO	1
RANGANA	2
MAU (a)	5
MAU (b)	6
GBÉ	4
"LESÉ"	7
GBOSU	8
HAGBÉ	9
BUGBU	10
GANI	11

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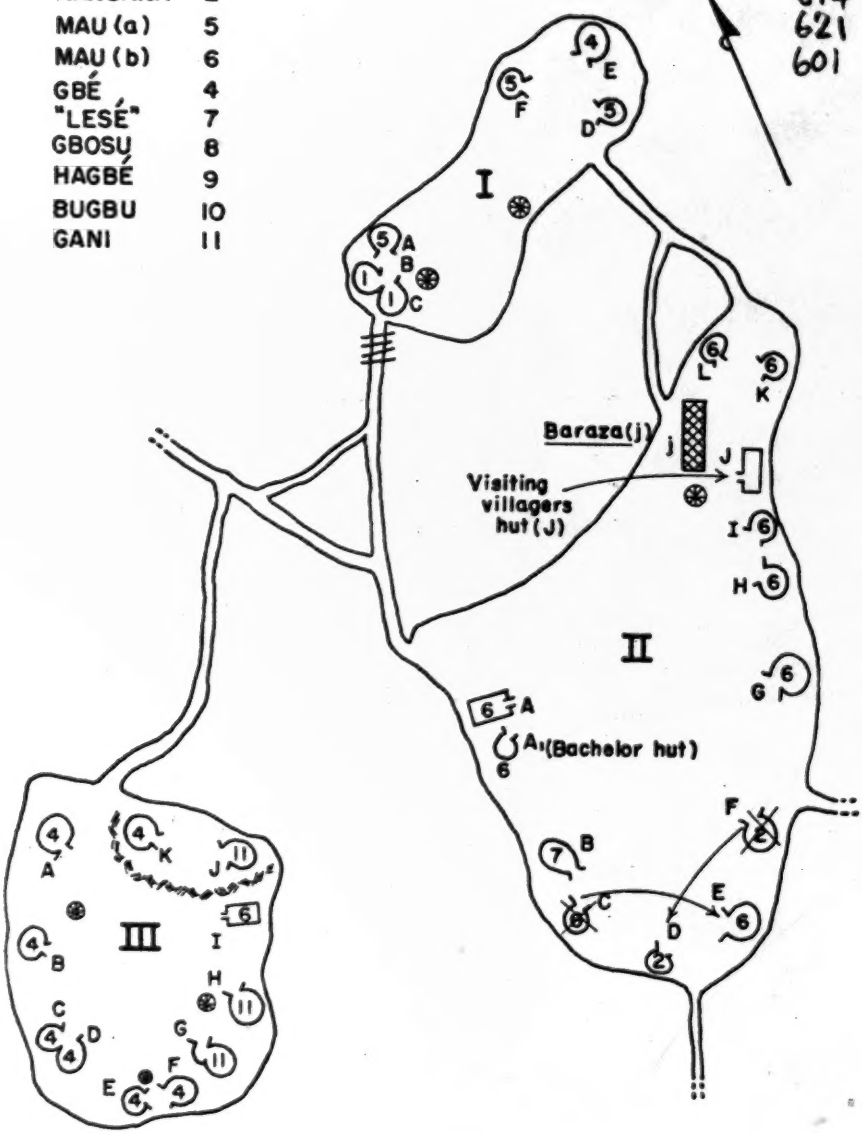

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[R 347]

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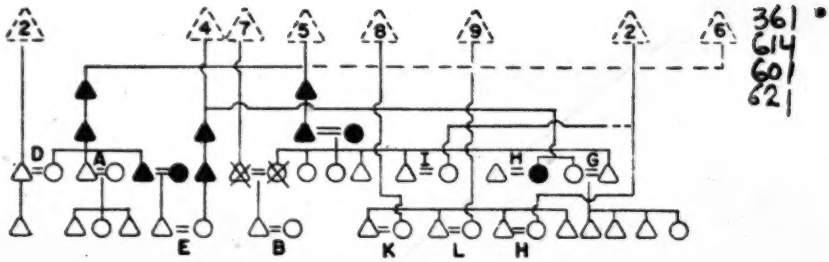

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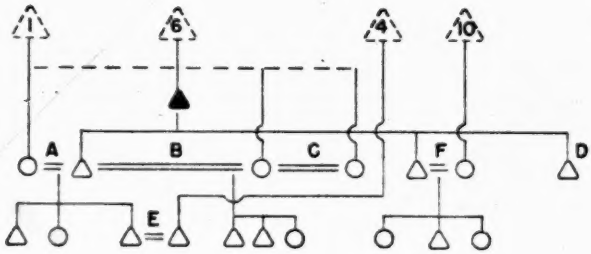

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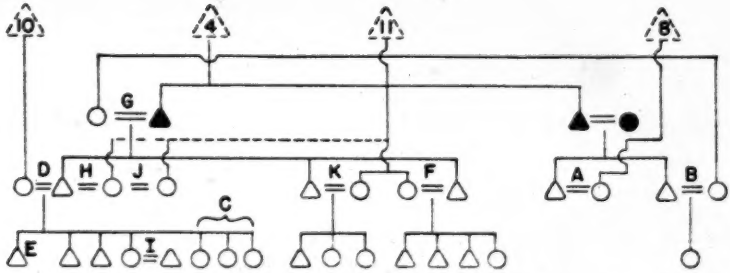

PLAN 4a–m *Hunting camps of net-hunters and archers other than at Epulu, showing composition.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.348]

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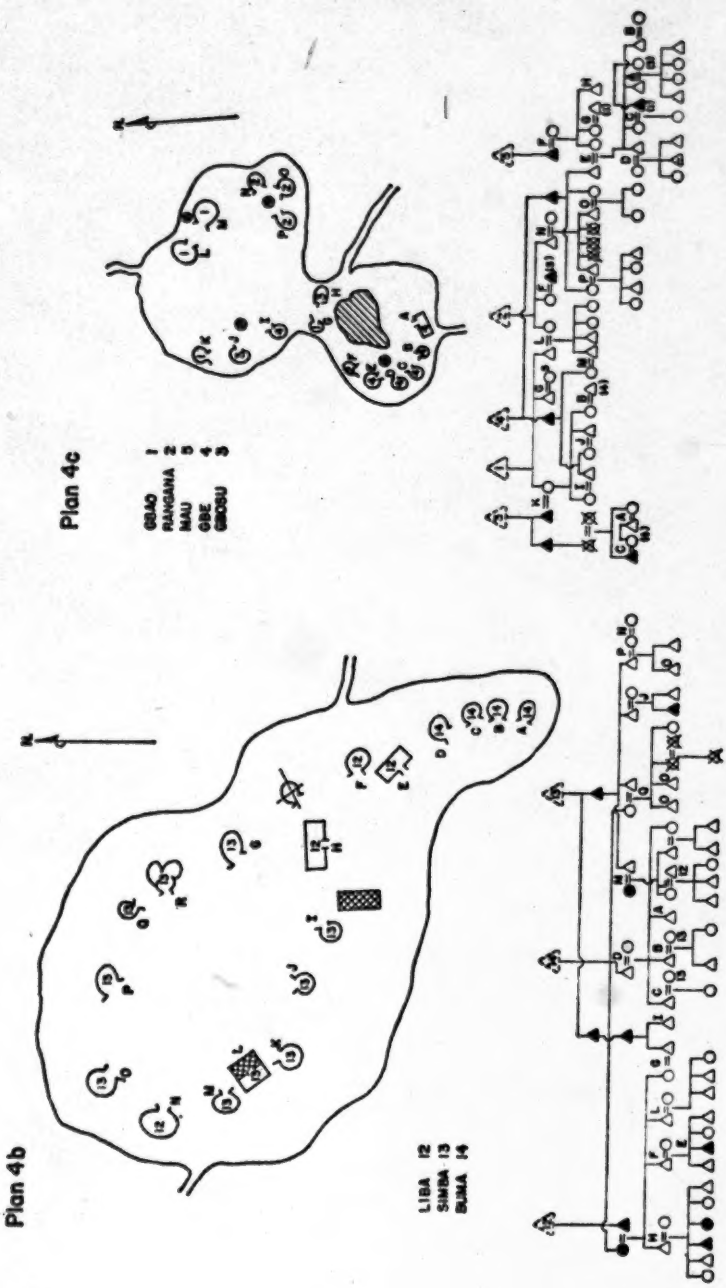
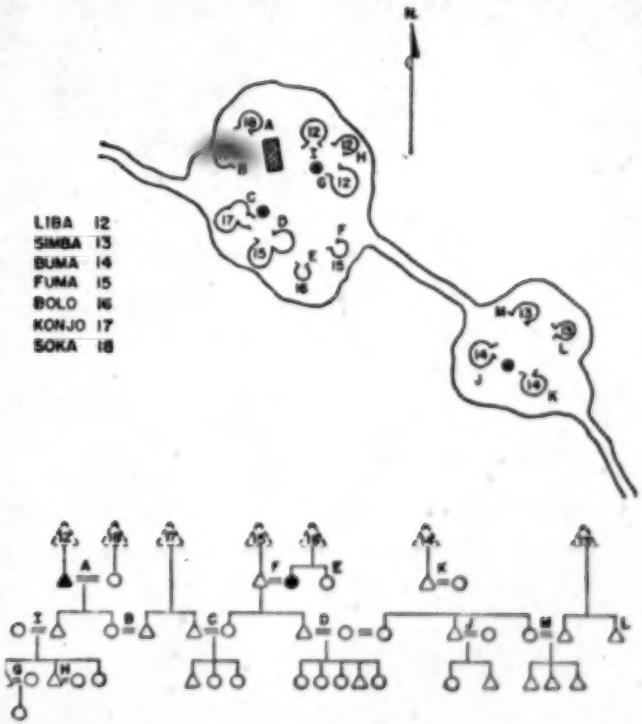
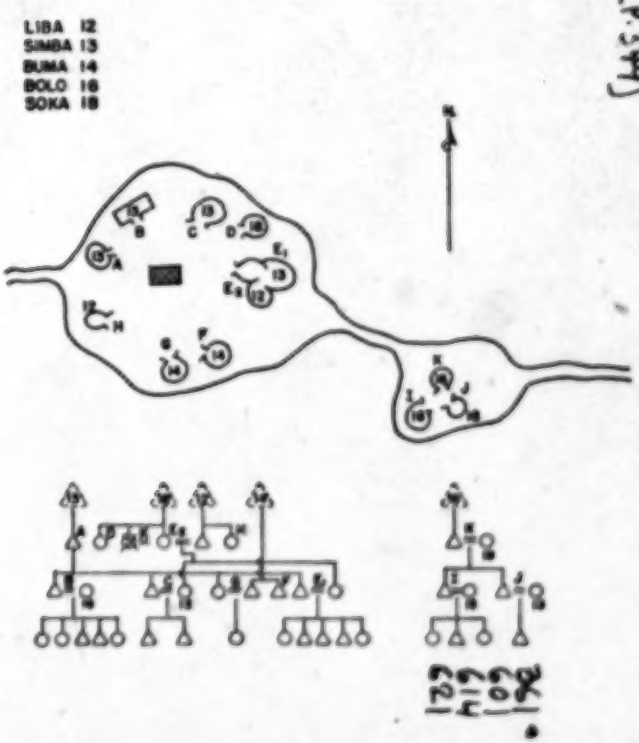


[P.349]

Plan 4d



Plan 4e



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4f

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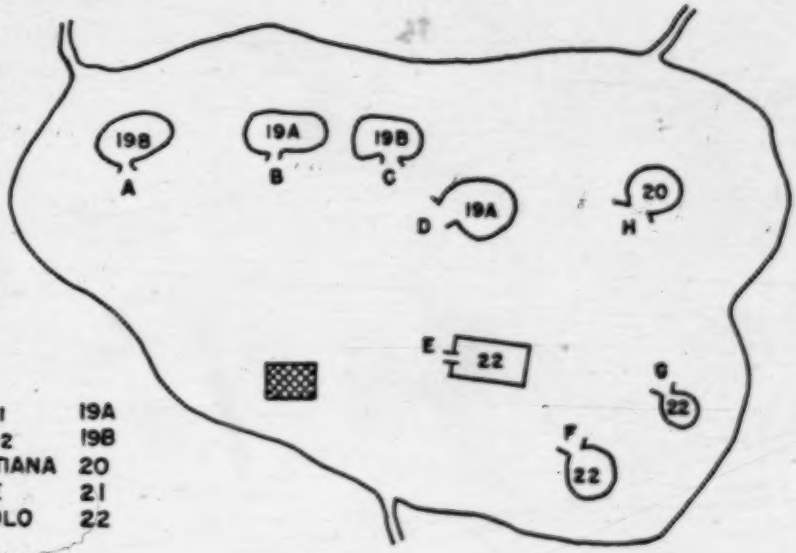
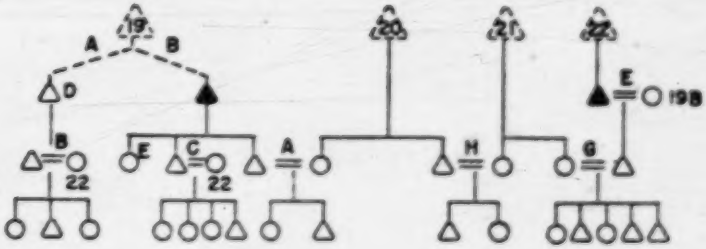


KIMA1	19A
KIMA2	19B
PIPUTIANA	20
DOLÉ	21
TOBOLO	22



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4g

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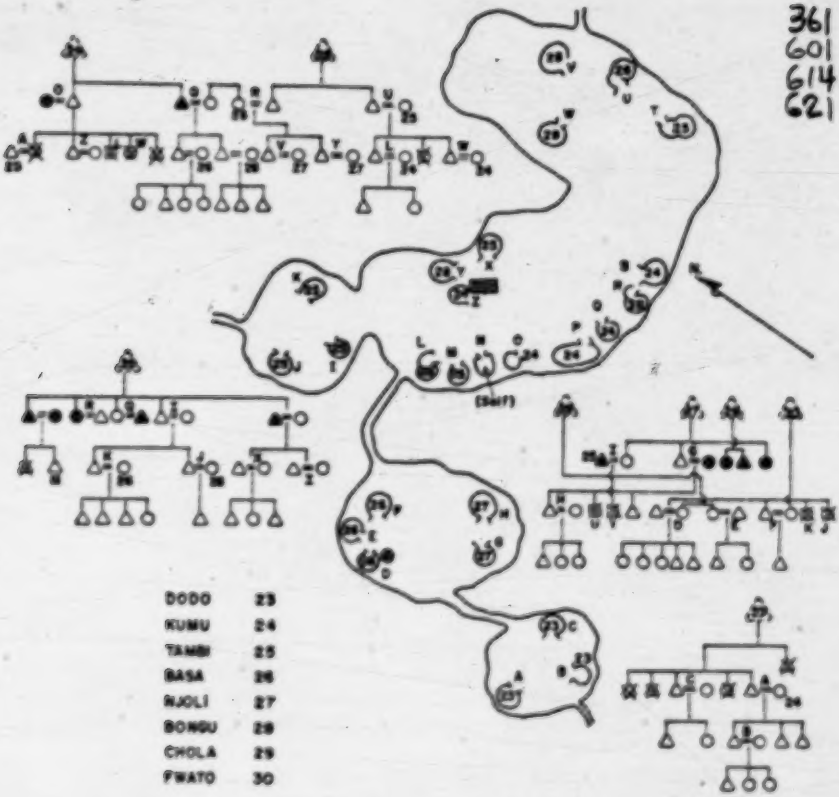

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 RO4 Pygmies RO4
Mbuti

[P.352]

361
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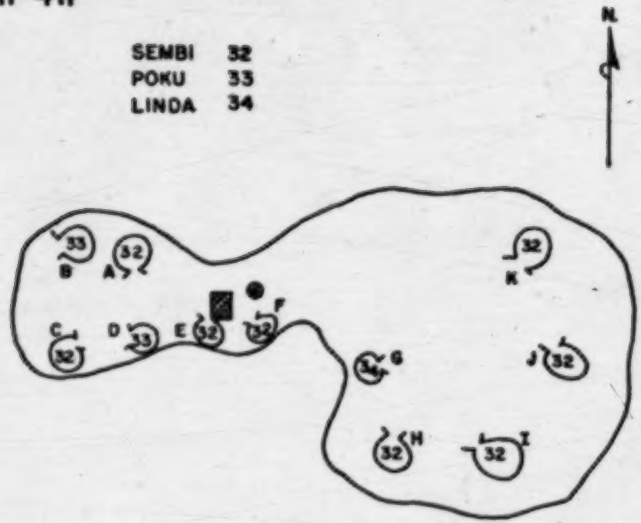
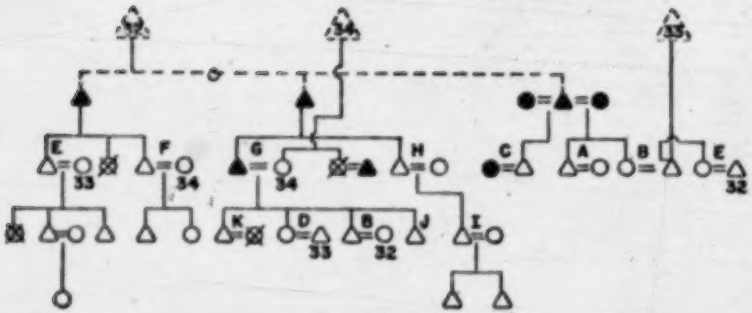
Plan 4h

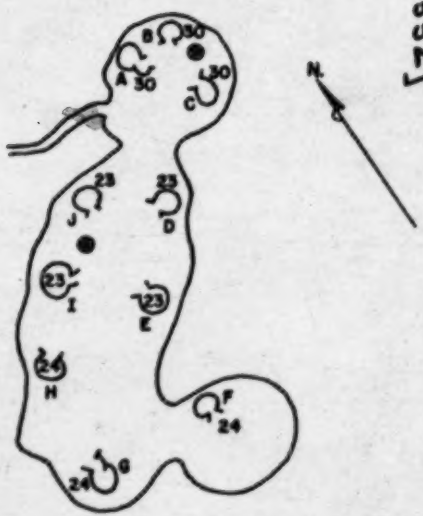
SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34

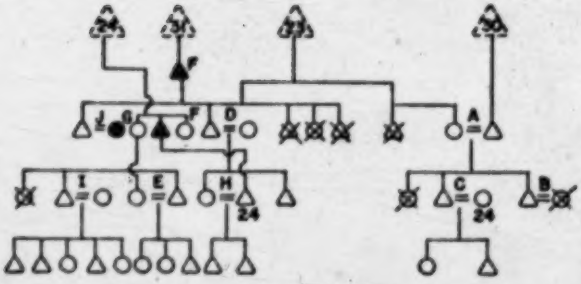




Plan 4i

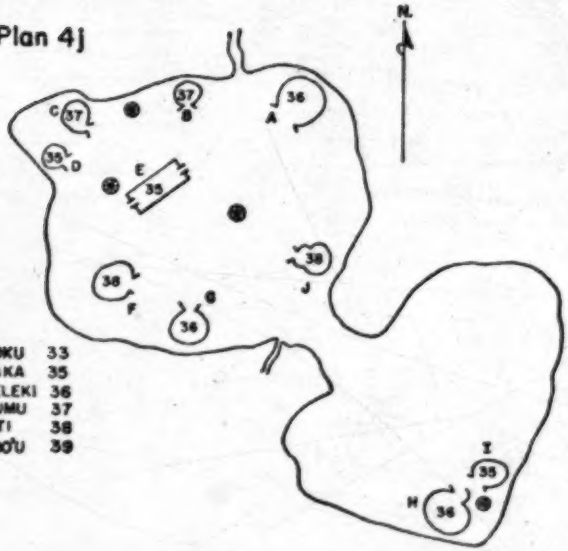
DODO 23
KUMU 24
FWATO 30
DENA 31



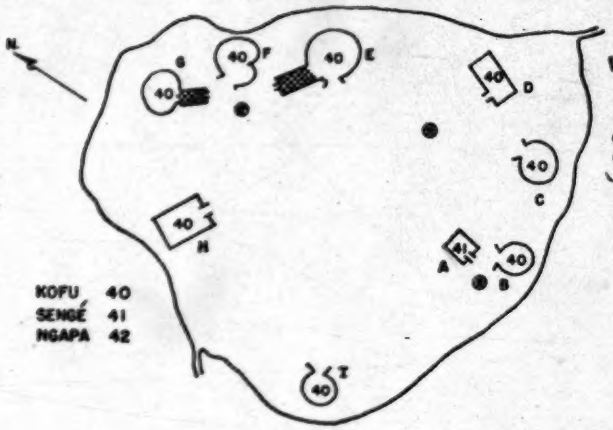


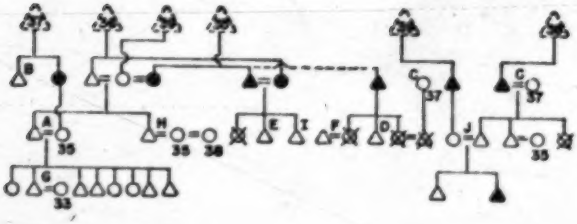
[P 353]

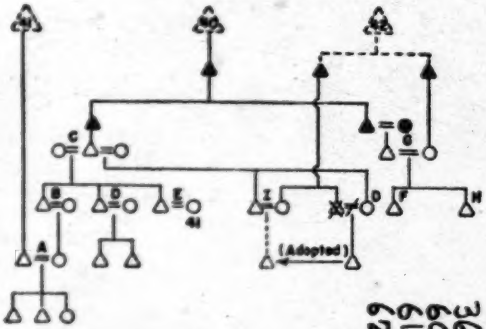
Plan 4j



Plan 4k







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[P. 354]

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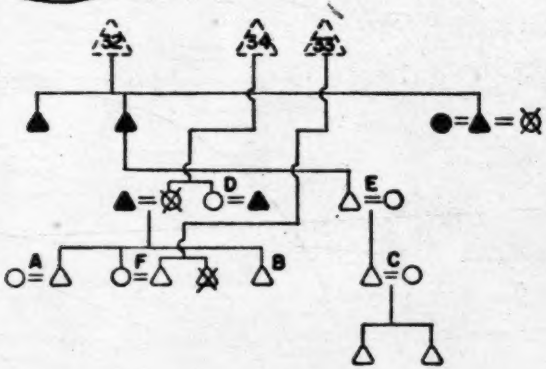
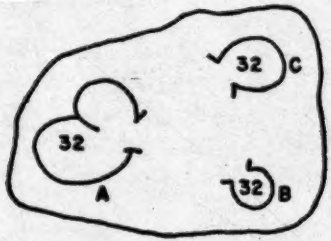
Plan 4L

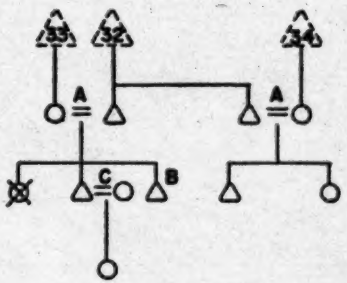


SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34

Plan 4m



SEMBI 32



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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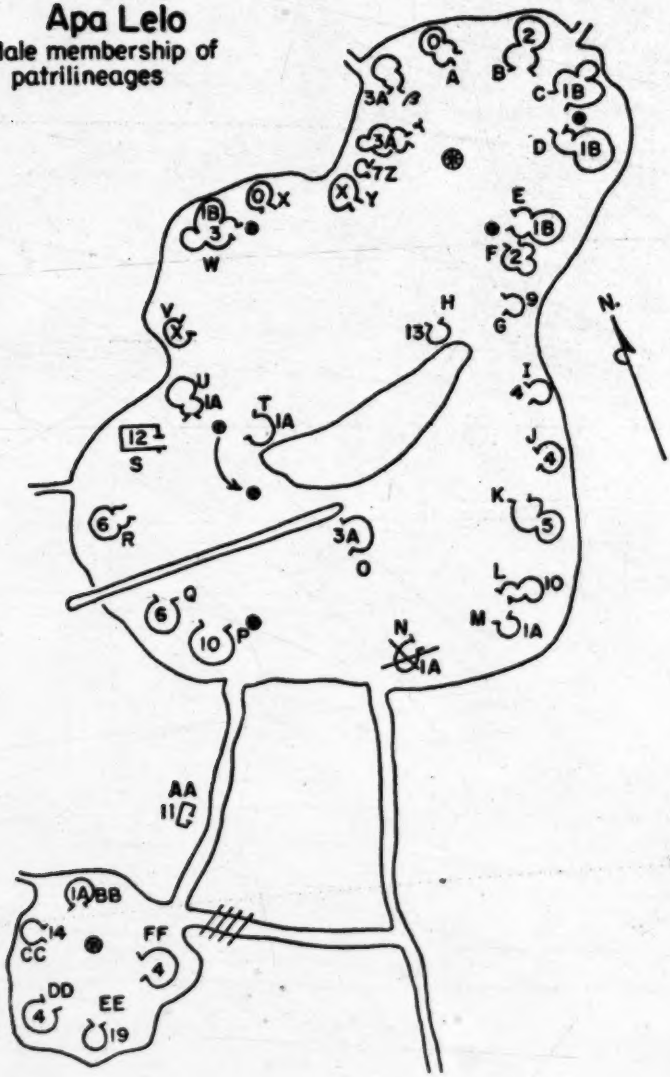
Plan 5
Apa Lelo
Male membership of patrilineages



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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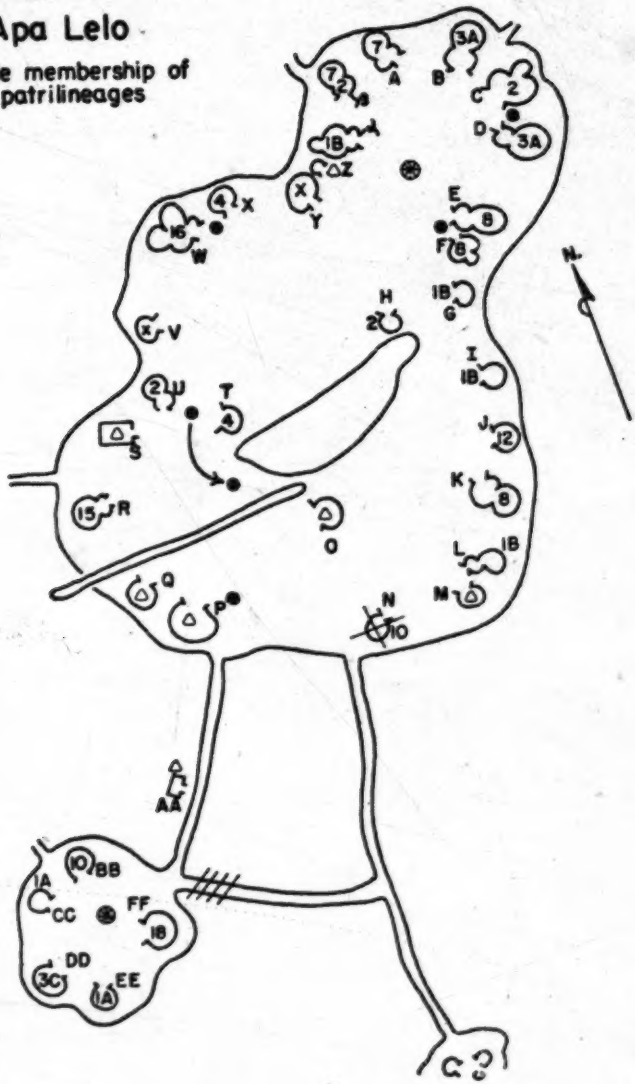
Plan 6
Apa Lelo

Female membership of patrilineages



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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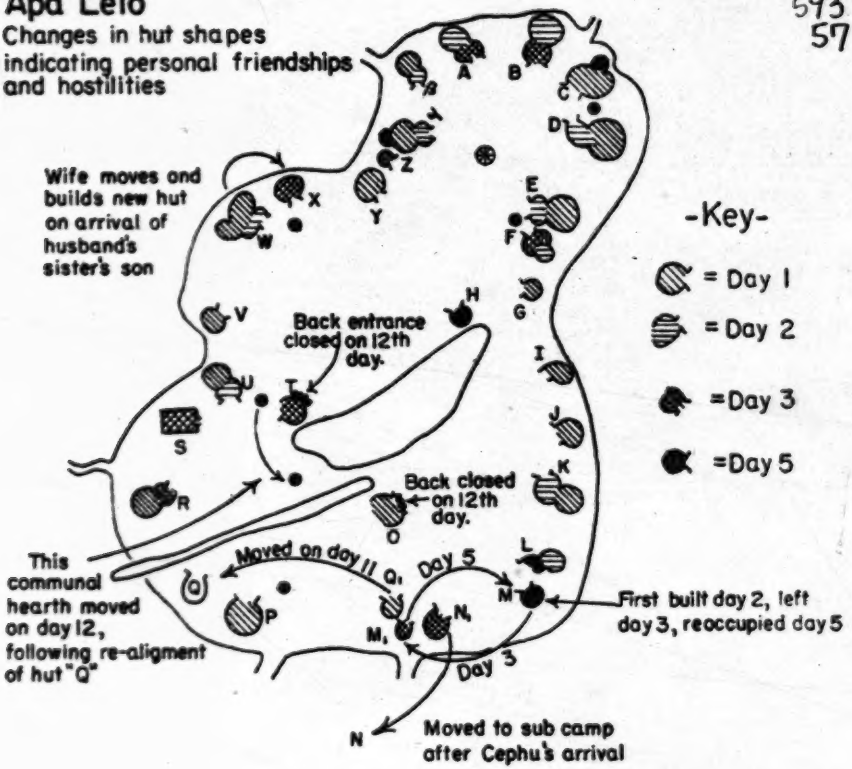
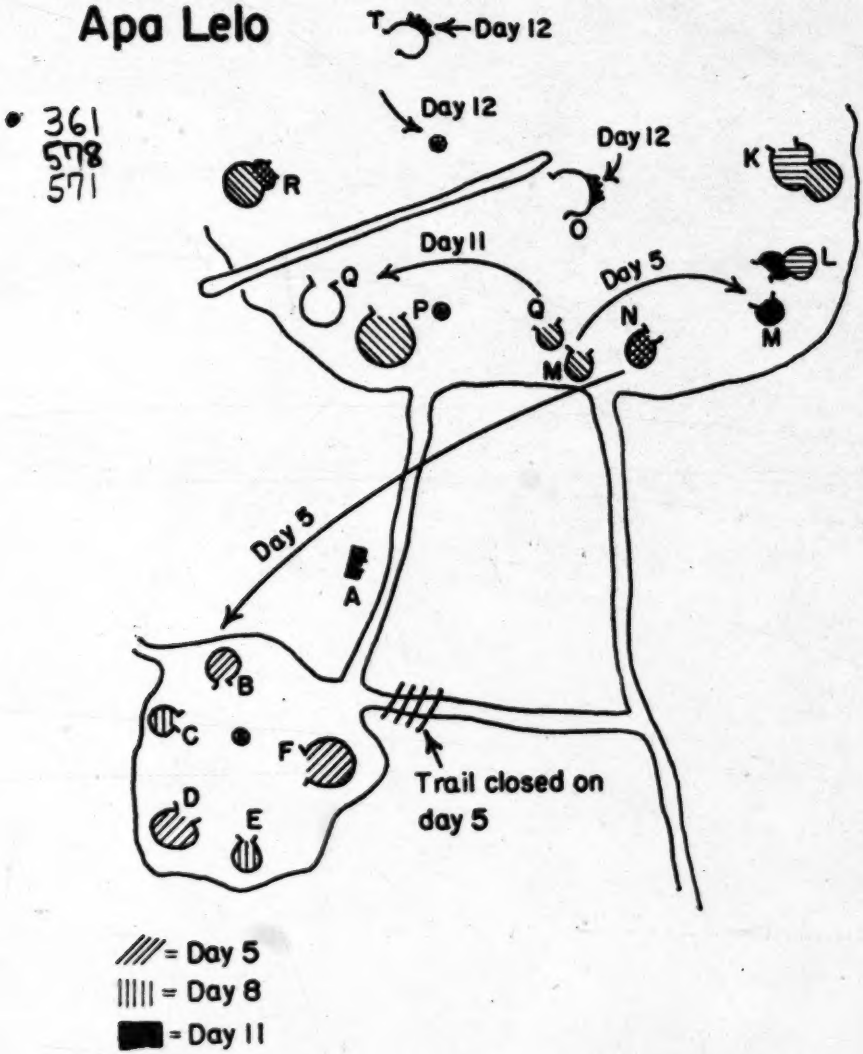
Plan 7
Apa Lelo

Changes in hut shapes indicating personal friendships and hostilities



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 8
Apa Lelo



Apa *Lelo: changes at southern end of camp due to Cephu's arrival.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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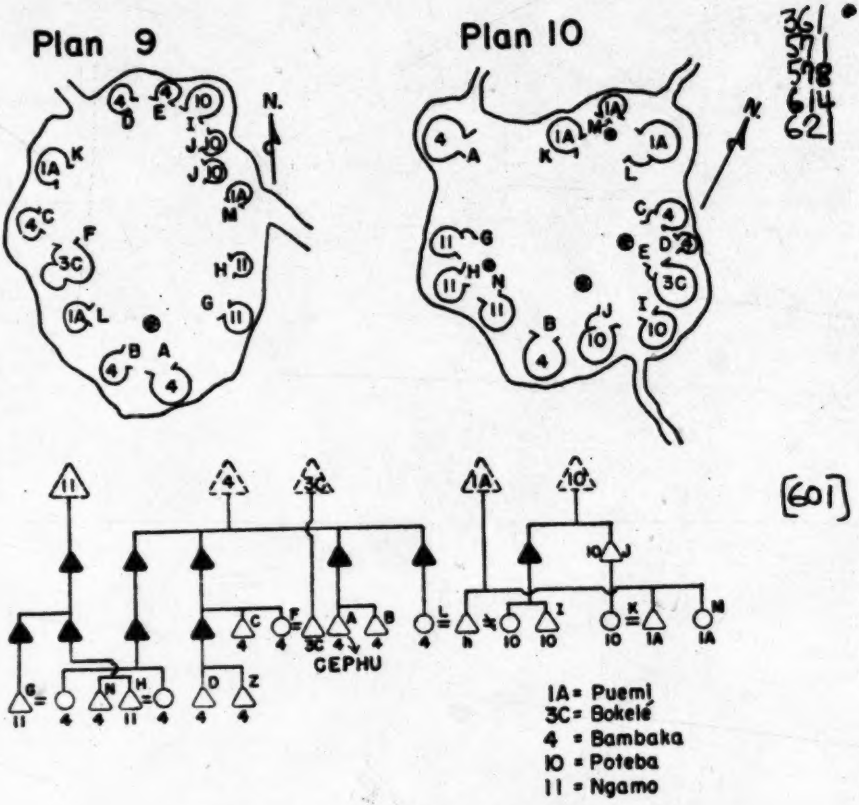

[601]

Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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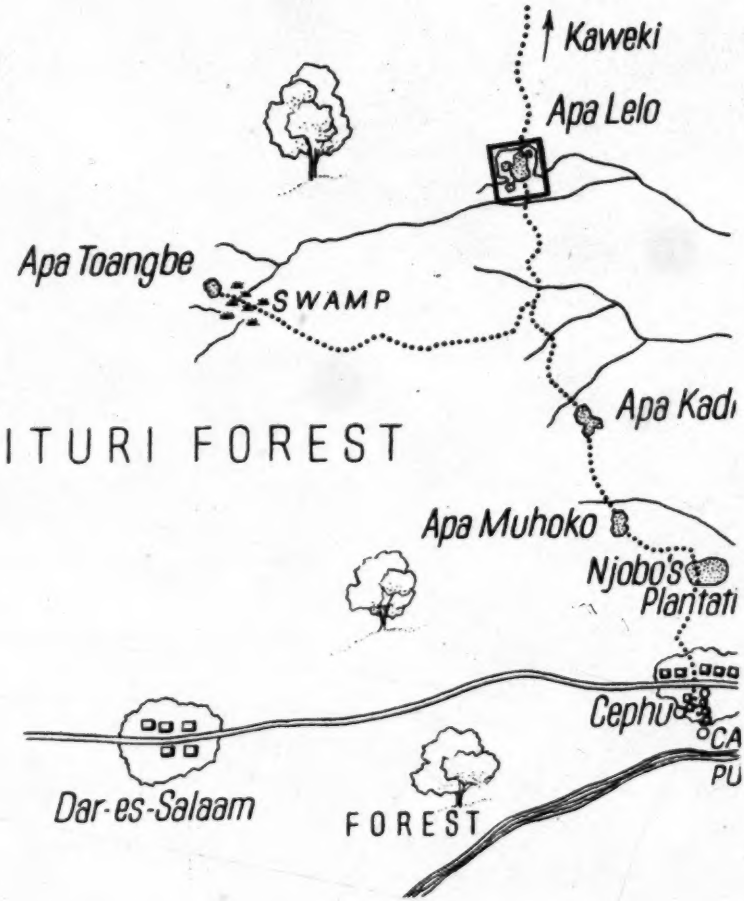
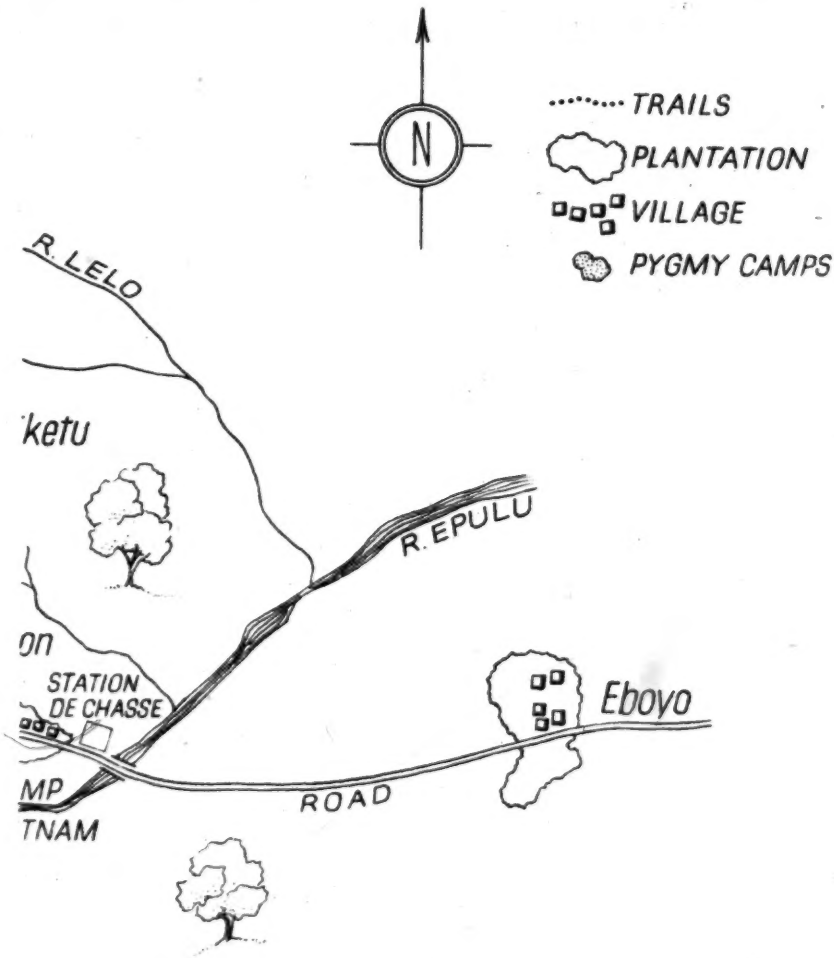


MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



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Area of Map 3

[P. 10-E]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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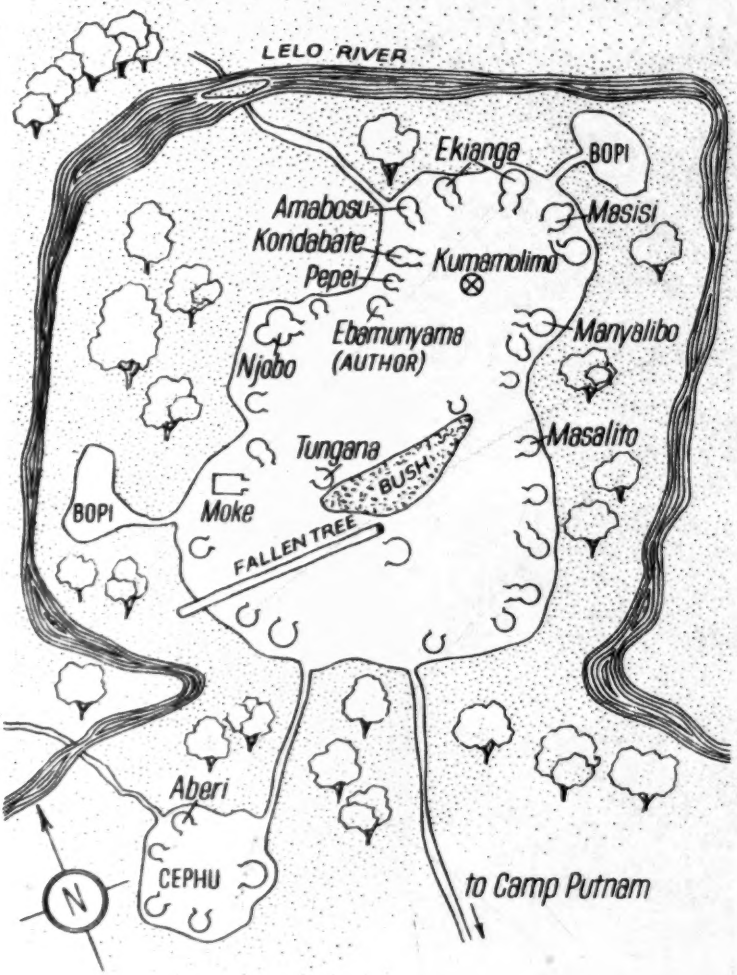

MAP 3: Apa Lelo
[P. 10-F]

115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 177 so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313 new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123] house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splintered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412] and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down. They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313 down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245 Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was struggling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342 characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361] manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other. The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete. Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekianga's was dif- 342 ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184 across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, 372 484
keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by 484
recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now 133
and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main [515]
stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into [821]
the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally 361
arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. 484
It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most 361
114

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 361 114 beautiful parts of the whole forest for me. This is partly because of what happened there, but also because it is one of the places where the forest is at its gentlest and kindest. Even when we left, after a month of heavy rains had turned the campsite into a morass of mud, it was still beautiful, and much as the Pygmies hate a muddy camp they were reluctant to leave. Now, however, all was still green and fresh.

137 132 Elsewhere the forest can be severe, particularly in the mountainous regions; and in many places it is overwhelming in its immensity. The leafy roof where the trees join together can be so far above that you feel as small and insignificant as the other animals roaming the ground below, depending on the forest for life. And at times it can be so powerful that it is frightening. When it whips itself into a fury, conjuring up rain and thunder and lightning, it turns small streams into raging torrents and sends heavy branches or even whole trees crashing down, some of them with trunks as thick as houses, destroying the living trees that stand in their way.

361 137 But even in a storm Apa Lelo was gentle and kind and protective. Here, somehow, one felt superior to the other animals of the forest. At the far end of the camp, just beyond the hillock where Kenge had said our house was to be built, a path led off to the left through a glade where the smell of leaf mold was rich and cool and moist. [136] Termites built their nests there, elfin huts of clay with funny mushroom-shaped roofs; small animals scampered about below and birds fluttered lazily overhead. The world at Apa Lelo was full of delicate colors and shades and whispering sounds, and up in the highest branches orchids shyly hid their delicate heads among the moss.

133 [361] This glade was almost an island, as the Lelo swept around it, all but encircling the camp. The Lelo, the river the Pygmies loved above all others, widened out at the end of its curve into a broad shallow stream, a hundred feet or so across, clear and rippling. When the water was low a bank of shingle rose in the center. In the middle

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way
across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen
tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top
of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only
paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride.
He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food
and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-
clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they
turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Many-
alibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting
as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down
their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their
houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets
down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with
bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been
examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night
before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest
behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[546] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
825 had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond. 361 342 412 [123]

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds. 342 314 48 114 123 [321] [487]

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground 314 114 123 [412]

and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had arrived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

[284] Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

• 361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that *Avobanei, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately* away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

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stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- 842

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852 dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts.
876 Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate
[842] decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known,
156 and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed
832 her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black
302 juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cica-
304 trized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked
[361] just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

765 During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the
[283] entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a
[262] noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut
765 the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket
372 was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

765 I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this
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A Pygmy camp. This one is Cephu's.

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512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
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224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
527 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
594 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

177 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
[151] Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

• 361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village. 361

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake. 857 152 883 177 152

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am *going to steal* all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine 883 177 521 273 [836]

P 177 to verify just how much meat there was, accusing them of having eaten it all themselves. But the Pygmies paid no attention. Some made for their own village and dumped their belongings there. I wandered on with the others who went straight to their patrons to whom they presented the meat they had brought with them. Before long they were sitting down in whatever shade they could find, fanning themselves to keep the flies and mosquitoes away, eating heartily from enamel dishes, drinking dirty village water from enamel mugs.

P 177 361 C 361 After spending some time, rather like the Pygmies, greeting the various villagers, I returned to the Pygmy village and sat in the shade of my veranda looking down the dismal, double row of tumbledown huts. About half a mile away, in the background, the forest raised its tall dark face against the edge of the plantations, dwarfing the leafy plantain trees that were only three times as tall as men, making them look like blades of grass. Ineffectual blades of grass that had, with the help of village-man, usurped the place of the great primeval forest, but which in a year or two would be choked to a final death as the forest claimed its own. Clouds of dust arose as a small, disconsolate group of children played football with a ball presented to them by some fond villager. The dust got into my nostrils and made me feel suddenly bad-tempered. Kenge, who was trying to cook me a meal, cursed the children and told them to go and play somewhere else. But they had no bopi—no cool, clean streams, no vine swings. So they went off to chase the dogs, goats and chickens of the nearest Negro household.

At the far end of the little village stood Ekianga's house, the only one that was not falling to pieces. It straddled the width of the village, bridging the space between the two not very straight rows of smaller huts. The elima girls made a couple of sorties from the single P [881] door, dashing around to the back of the house where they could not be seen. Otherwise all was quiet.

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000 Chasse as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. 361 And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and 241 scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to 512 dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down [313] more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

361 In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several vil- 177 lages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first 621 came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was [illegible] was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

THE WORLD BEYOND

Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clearings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers? 648 199 361

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans had disappeared into mouths.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill outside the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 648 199 361 147 164

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Mbuti

648 361 170 147 164 181 177 36 182 impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

[829]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

15

The Dream World

OUR RETURN TO EPULU found most of the Pygmies, except for 361
Cephu and his group, down in the village. Hunting had been excep- [439]
tionally good and over the past weeks they had dried a quantity of
meat which they were now busy trading for village produce. Their
[illegible] camp [illegible] 'ambuambu, who [illegible] my house
there was still standing. They all seemed to have agreed that they [342]
did not want any more mud houses, and they had made a temporary
camp just inside the forest. It was not far from one of the plantations,
and close to a stream of crystal water.

Kenge had a hero's welcome; even the villagers came to visit the

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 camp to hear his stories. But none of his stories fascinated the Pyg-
361 mies as much as those of the model Pygmy villages we had passed
179 on our way home. He was made to repeat these accounts over and over again, giving every detail. While the younger men and women laughed until they could laugh no more at Kenge's description of the distribution of beans for planting, and how most of them ended up in the cooking pot, the older people were less amused. "But are they actually living in those villages?" they asked. And when Kenge answered that some of them were, the next question was "What if there is no game nearby?" Kenge could only tell them what the administrator had said: "You are welcome to hunt so long as you continue to look after the plantations." Everyone knew that to be impossible. Hunting is a full-time occupation, and it could lead a group away for months on end. It called for the co-operation of men, women and children. Who was to stay to look after the fields?

Other questions brought equally unsatisfactory answers, even so far as the younger people were concerned. There were no trees in the "model" villages—every last one had been cut down, exposing the huts to the full heat of the sun. The Pygmies were to be supplied with free seeds to plant, but they would be expected to produce a definite yield, and they knew that villagers who failed to come up to the mark were fined, and if they were unable to pay their fines they
[512] went to jail. Every village had been placed near a supply of fresh water, tested by the administrator himself (by looking at it—he was horrified when I drank some). But the Pygmies knew that however clean it might be to start with, it would soon be polluted; and in any case there was no guarantee that it would continue throughout the year.

361 Far from being "liberated" from the villagers, the Pygmies felt
829 that in these model plantations they would be in greater danger than
179 ever. In the forest they knew that they were safe, because the forest was theirs, but once out in the open they were subject to all the evil

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

me and finally brought us down to a swampy region, dark and dank. 114
A stream flowed through the middle, fed by innumerable tiny rivulets from the hills all around. We picked our way across, balancing on fallen tree trunks and jumping from log to log. As we began to climb a steep hill on the far side I heard the telltale sound of bark cloth being pounded into shape, the cheerful shouting of women as they called to each other while they finished the building of their huts, and an occasional outburst of song, sung for no other reason than that this was the honey season, the season to be happy, the season to rejoice. Kenge gave a loud whoop of pleasure and darted [152] among the trees like a young antelope, leaping and bounding out of sight. When I reached the clearing he was already sitting down, his face buried in a sticky mongongo leaf dripping with rich brown honey. He looked up and laughed.

The camp was called Apa Toungbe, the *toungbe* being a special 361 kind of honey tree. It was built halfway up a fairly high hill, on a [192] patch of ground that was not quite level. Masisi's house was at the highest point of the tiny clearing, with Asofalinda to one side and Maipe's mother to the other. Masamba had built a house that virtually joined onto that of Masisi. Mine was halfway up the slope on the other side, facing across to Maipe. It was all ready when we arrived, the only one completely finished. Masisi proudly led me to it and inspected it with me. He had built the bed himself, carefully [352] refraining from turning the ends of the branches up sharply as Pygmies seem to think should be done, so that the bed becomes the shape of a hammock without any of its back-saving resilience.

It was not thirty feet from one side of the camp to the other, and 000 the forest closed in a protective wall all around us. Kenge and I set off to see what the surrounding country was like, and soon we were far beyond the sounds of any voices other than our own. Everywhere we went we saw mushrooms and nuts and berries, and we collected

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

[312]

Negro-Pygmy Relations

433
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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

608
571
177

This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P 323-A]

4: Putnam E-6 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

177 Before the Belgians stopped inter-
439 village and intertribal warfare, the
648 most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract: the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside
439 the territory of his Negro hosts. In-
• 361 dividuals and small family groups may
621 go outside to visit relatives in other
648 bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 When the pygmy camp is close to
574 the Negro village, some of the pygmies

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[296] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[297] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home
[535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[P. 335-B]

361 621 widows; there are no ritual structures. There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts 361 621 572 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is dictated more than anything else by the friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 361 Once they are in this camp they will stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do [805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 574 **Intercamp visits.**—For various reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring [583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

[P 336-A]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkuza* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets. 512 22 [286] [267] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water. 364 514 [184] 515 [481] [825]

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 237 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

• 372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of fire itself is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light. [373] [416] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 [114] As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped

[P.169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1961, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *bogbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magbu*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

535 and old, men and women, is the dance, which is accompanied by music and song." Most of the instruments Schebesta (1941, 244–253) describes serve to accompany dance. He makes three classifications: sportive, mimetic, and erotic dances. The former are not mere exuberant acrobatics, but follow certain choreographic rules; he does not give the rules. The usual form of dance is circular, he says: an outer circle composed of women and an inner circle of men, with the drummer in the center. If there are only a few dancers, the men may dance solos, leaping one by one in toward the drummer, then back to their places in the still-moving circle.

• [372] Schebesta also mentions the existence of fire dances, one of which he witnessed on the occasion of a birth in the camp.

535 831 Erotic dances generally involve two lines of dancers, one line male, one female. Each woman comes out of the line in turn and makes an

[P. 188-B]

[ARCHERS]

776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
761 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P 189-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *tord* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
821 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
534 blowing of the *seghe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *seghe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
782 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
224 the apparently ancient *beghe* beat hunt, as is
372 mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

1: Turnbull E-4.3 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses.

776 [821] [561]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.)

776 772 761 [82] [772] [341]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

• 392 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [393] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *karuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *ekata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [258] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a [463] Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *karuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P 210-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [184]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, 535 [831] [372] [84]

[P. 212-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-A]

535 the dance through fire, is reserved for special re-
[372] ligious occasions among the net hunters. Secular
[84] dancing takes place at any time of the day, any day, but nearly always there is dancing in the evening, and, when the moon gives enough light, the dance may continue through most of the night. Except for the religious dances, men, women, and children take part in the dancing together.

533 Song is even more important to the net hunters. There is not much information in the Putnam material, except that different types of song exist for men and for women and for different occasions, but from my own observations among this group there are, as with dance, clearly two major divisions. One is between secular and sacred, and the other is between songs proper to men and songs proper to women. Certain songs are sung only by members of the men's religious association, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*), and those proper to members of the women's association, the *elima* (Schebesta: *elimo*). Then there are songs for hunting and songs for gathering. Each of these

[NET HUNTERS]

two manifestations of the same spiritual being 761
and that both this being and the *molimo* are in 776
some way connected with death. The former
causes death (whether in some or all cases is not
known), but the latter seems to be different in
that it appears only the day following death
and can restore normality to the community in
crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis.
The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo*
"animal" in times of crisis and brings it physi- [782]
cally into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's
notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings
of food, which is consumed by members of the
molimo, and by dance and song.

No information is given as to any belief in 761
the origin of death, or of any human failings 784
that might cause it other than violation of the
molimo by a woman or of the *elima* by a man.
Infringement of rules of exogamy and other
taboos may or may not cause death; individual
opinion among the net hunters varies consider-
ably on such matters.

According to local informants, the only vil- 776
lagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, 171
Ndaka, and Bali.

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but 821
not necessarily of death. When lightning comes
at night, campfires may be covered so that the [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *ezumbo* or *ezumbo for lozumbo*.

[P 238-0]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-A]

821 flames will not be seen, then the lightning will
• 872 pass. Mrs. Putnam reports that on one occasion a particularly large and bright fire was built during the night because, according to the Mbuti, a Lese woman who had died recently was "tapping in the trees." Fire is reported to be extinguished in one of the *molimo* dances, among the net hunters as well as among the archers.

Totem and Taboo

614 Putnam distinguishes four kinds of taboo for
825 the net hunters. The first is related to what he calls the clan totem.[1] Each clan, he says, has its own private totemic animal. This is believed to be not the clan ancestor but, rather, connected with that ancestor in mythology, as having rescued him from danger or helped him in some enterprise. Putnam mentions seven species of antelope and 12 species of monkey that appear as totemic animals among the Mbuti bands in his area. Other animals, not important as food to the Pygmy, are also totemic animals but, according to Putnam, less frequently. Slow game and vegetables, that is, food collected by women, are never used as totems.

[NET HUNTERS]

789 224 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *seple* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Seple* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *awjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 *Seple* are not to be confused with *madl* (Fig. 534 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the 222 honey season.

Rain magic involves the covering of the 789 campfires with leaves but evidently without 821 much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as • 372 putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P 240-3]

[NET HUNTERS]

CP. 240-C

leaves to cover fires is an effective way of keeping them burning during a rainstorm, is not always accompanied by the production of smoke (thought by some to be an offering), and is never described as being accompanied by any invocation. As far as the descriptions and my own observations go, it could be a simple precautionary measure taken to preserve the all-valuable fire. 789 82 372.

Mrs. Putnam was told that barkcloth should not be beaten if it is going to rain, but this may also be for purely practical technological reasons. She once saw an old Pygmy blow a *segbe* pipe a number of times, looking at the sky, in an avowed attempt to avert the rain. When it rained the old man simply shrugged his shoulders and took shelter. 789 82 [287]

On another occasion, when it threatened to rain and spoil the dance one evening, the young men and boys all seized leaves and ran down to the stream and back, beating the leaves on the ground. They evidently did not wait to see if this magic would work, and all retired to their huts.

PLATE 33 $\frac{2}{A}$

AN MBUTI GATHERER WITH HER TYPICAL BASKET AND TUMP LINE,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

462 Women and girls do nearly all the gathering, though a man may pick any mushrooms or
482 fruits he happens across on the trail. Women are also responsible for the maintenance of
222 fire. Not knowing how to make fire, women always carry a smoldering ember, as does this
372 woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves.

1, /Plate 33 appears on page 299--Analyst/
A

[P. 298]

Turnbull E-4. 6 (1961-1969) 1965 FOM Pygmies FOM
Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1946 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Ituri

[p.299]

/Plate 33/
/Caption appears on p. 298/

2: Turnbull E-6 (1961-1964) 1961 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.* By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how necessary is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

* Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the molimo, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are never used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

B: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 824
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

P 224 rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped
• 392 twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply
789 burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

P 224 There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the
392 more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider
789 *anjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire
* 177 circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

P 224 One clear example of village influence is that in any village context
* 177 the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt.
834 These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating
P [941] woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

P However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of ac-
778 tual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and
* 177 this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the
C belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a
778 position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *nghenghe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *ofuwa* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in holes in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *nundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1960) 1961 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the molimo fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madi** (*ele: ngbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

* The *madi* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *ndusu* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and emphatically as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

B: Turnbull B-5 (1951-1960) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *bonja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amaboro, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amaboro, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipe-stem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
824 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *anghe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'nghe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this.

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened.

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season.

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 761
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

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291
415
516
372

29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 276-E]

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31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
462
[222]

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

• 372 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
372 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372 •
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177]* concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

593 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just
578 given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this
593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonethe-
578 less concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu
622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real
[685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance.
[252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be-
[372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and
[372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old
[198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like
[186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

fear, but a recognition of the completeness of a loss that could never 763
be made good. There was a finality and terrible emptiness in old Balekimito's death which could not be answered, for which there was no explanation, not even through sorcery or witchcraft. For the moment it seemed that the Pygmies, faced with the death of an old and well-loved and respected person such as this old lady, had nothing to cling to, and I was genuinely afraid that some of them would come to harm. Young and old alike crowded around the house, trying to force their way to Balekimito's deathbed. They were even fighting to get in, and once inside they fought to get out. At one point several children came flying out in a frenzy and threw themselves onto the ground, beating it with their arms and legs, kicking and biting at anyone who tried to comfort them. Inside, the commotion was even [762]
worse—Asofalinda, looking almost as old as her dead mother, had put a noose around her neck and seemed to be trying to strangle herself, full of remorse at having let her mother die. It took three men to take the noose from her neck, and when they finally tore it from her she ran outside and collapsed on the ground, sobbing her heart out.

Even Moke quietly forced his way into the death room and stayed there for a few minutes, saying nothing, making no sound, while tears rolled down his wrinkled face. Then he went out again and helped Asofalinda into the shade. Only Tungana and his wife, Bonyo, remained where they were, outside their hut a few yards away. They were too old for the exertion, and they just sat and cried to themselves, unashamed.

I went to my half-finished veranda to get out of the sun and found Kenge and a number of youths sitting around a fire. No [372] •
matter how hot it is, there always has to be a fire. After a while the 763
rest of the men joined us and sat silently, as though waiting. Then 761
Moke came into the middle of the veranda and started talking, very softly and quietly, so that it was difficult to hear him at all. The

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko,* a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

222 [482] Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles and hitched them[1] to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 484 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we came up behind the women who had started early. They had also [222] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the [482] small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been [136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 484 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

[1] [i.e., bundles of mushrooms, - Analyst]

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most

and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married. If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 533 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 533 513 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to [372] [373] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 533 578 688 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who

224 476 286 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [482] [251] [372] The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

224 777

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
• 372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory. There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the
[182] hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

1 [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, looking in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from another fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground.

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She P 123 177 439 obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came P 123 177 over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father C 832 [576] was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 [513] [372] That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

C 648 123

765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Kondabate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end. They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night. It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

this direction and that; even her fingers each seemed to have a dance 765
of its own. But her head was still, and her eyes were fixed on those 562
of Kondabate. 535

At this point Kondabate handed the banja to another of the 765
women standing nearby and led the young girls right into the center 562
of the men's group, dancing in a close circle around the molimo fire. 535
As they moved around, the men stood up and made room for them, 533
and now the singing came almost entirely from the women. The men just stood and stamped and clapped and growled a bass accompaniment. The girls danced more and more wildly, but their heads and eyes were always turned toward the molimo fire, no matter how violent the body movement. After nearly half an hour the old woman, still crouching, ran into the center after the girls, and turning to face them from the far side of the fire she drove them slowly backward, back until they were lost among the others at the edge of the group. The singing was quieter, and in a few minutes it faded away altogether. Not a word was spoken.

After a short rest the singing started again, and this time there was no mistaking it—the women were leading. Manyalibo's wife picked up the banja and beat them, sharply and decisively, and the girls began the song. The men followed in obedient chorus. Once again, as the song grew faster, the old woman began to twitch until her whole body was alive with movement. Then she sprang up and came into the center of the kumamolimo alone. For an instant she stood there, and her head moved sharply from side to side. It was like the movement of a bird, keeping a wary eye open for possible foes. As she began to dance she seemed to sink slowly into the ground, her knees folding up like a concertina, her body bending at the waist; but always her head stuck out in front, jerking from side to side, eyes staring and expressionless.

She circled the fire three times, looking out and upward into the [372] •
night, but unseeing; then as if satisfied that she was alone and un-

765 observed she flung her head and her whole body around and faced
562 the fire directly. She was about seven or eight feet away from it. She
535 advanced slowly and cautiously, two steps forward, one step back,
533 her attention riveted on the flames. The singing was louder and faster,
372 but she refused to be hurried. At her own pace she approached closer and closer until it seemed impossible that she could stand the heat. She hesitated at the brink of the fire, her frail body gleaming with sweat, her face glowing and trembling. She made as if she was going to pounce on the fire, but whirled around at the last moment and danced quickly back to where the women were singing, watching her, eagerly and anxiously. She sat down on her haunches and accepted a steaming bowl of liko.

The singing did not stop this time but went on quietly at a slower tempo. The men made no attempt to move back closer to the fire. After about ten minutes the old lady, apparently refreshed and as full of vigor as ever, danced back into the men's circle, with Kondabate at her side. Their movements were perfectly co-ordinated, even to the twitching of their heads; as they sank down close to the
765 ground they might have been one person. But as they neared the
562 fire, again having circled it several times, the old woman sprang to
535 her feet and ran swiftly around to the far side and crouched there,
372 staring at Kondabate through the flames. They started circling once more, each keeping her eyes on the other, moving from side to side so that they were always opposite each other. But now they were closer to the fire than they had ever been and on their hands and knees they passed through the hot ashes, as though trying to reach each other through the flames.

Finally Kondabate retreated and squatted down at the edge of the circle, her body twitching just as the old woman's had done, her eyes staring and empty as she gazed at the molimo fire. The men heaped more wood on the flames, which were beginning to die down.
[533] Now they were singing as loudly as the women, stamping on the

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames.

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and

765 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making
562 any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned"
562 the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the
773 women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to
[462] play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had
• 372 asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy
182 it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again,
533 and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264 439
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 177
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and children retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 533 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza,* [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing. They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped. They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.
765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.
[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village. 765 534

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god. 765 761 765 372 778

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 765 594 177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE VILLAGE

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unsmiling triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown. 881 832 574

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted. [152]

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry. [411]

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere. 881 832 372 574

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372]
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534]
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their ap- 621
pearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

415 177 439 Also obtained from the Negroes are the cooking pots that all pygmy women own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

• 372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 462 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman [824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 462 476 This technique is not easy; it is much easier if two women work together, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[A 327-A]

165 After this come the various diseases
164 which kill the pygmies. Pneumonia and dysentery are the greatest killers; infection is rare. Far less important
136 than disease even is the action of hostile
165 animals—elephants, buffalo, or leopards. Once in a while an old leopard, too old to catch antelope, will dare run the risk of sneaking into a pygmy camp at night. The pygmy houses have no doors, and the leopard may slink into a house and grab a pygmy. At the noise so created, other pygmies will wake up and attack the leopard with spears or firebrands. Sometimes the leopard wins completely and carries off his victim's body, to munch at leisure. Sometimes he drops the mangled corpse, and at other times the pygmy may survive. I have seen one pygmy woman who had most of her face bitten away by a leopard and who
165 still lived. The pygmy resistance to
164 wound infections is incredibly great, although they will die like flies from pneumonia.

165 Another occasional cause of death is
372 burning. Pygmies are unusually restless during the sleeping hours of the night, and individuals get up frequently to relieve themselves. After doing so the pygmy seldom goes back to bed immediately. He usually sits in front of his hut for a while, in front of the fire.
[276] Here he will often light up his pipe and take a deep puff of tobacco, apparently to get the maximum effect of the nico-

[P.341-A]

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire. Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.

[P.341-B]

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 237 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of fire itself is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light. [373] [416] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 [114] As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped

[P. 169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [373] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [252] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam [463] is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. Afte: we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
578
688

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 [342] [415] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.168-B]
301 are also used for adornment. Both men and women may wear combs in their hair. Sometimes the Mbuti make such combs themselves, more often they are borrowed or stolen from the villagers (Fig. 15a).

Body Decoration

304 Body mutilation is practiced occasionally in
177 imitation of the villagers. Schebesta mentions
302 as a peculiar "Bambuti" custom the plucking of eyelashes, also the shaving of the head for esthetic effect. Men may tattoo their foreheads;
304 women, their faces, stomachs, and backs. Teeth may be chipped, and sometimes women pierce their nasal septa, lips, and earlobes. Cicatriza-
302 tion is very rare. All Mbuti, says Schebesta, like to paint the body for esthetic effect as opposed to the magical significance of facial painting.
[386] White, red, and black are the colors used, the dyes being obtained from clay and certain

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (F.fe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

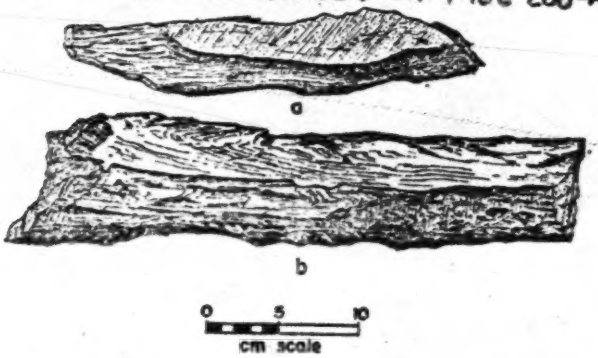
1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

or by being heated and smoked over a fire. The resultant barkcloth may be worn in its natural color, dyed red or blue, or be painted with simple designs (Figs. 25–27), The dyeing and painting are done by women, using a special mud for an over-all blue dye, the juice of a citrous fruit for blue line designs, and *nkula* (elsewhere *ngula*) bark, scraped with another piece of bark (Fig. 24), with water added while scraping, for

287 386 531

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 200-A]



[412]

FIG. 24. Block and scraper of wood, *nkula* (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri; used with water for the extraction of the red dye most commonly employed in the decoration of barkcloth.

[P.197- D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtaposition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

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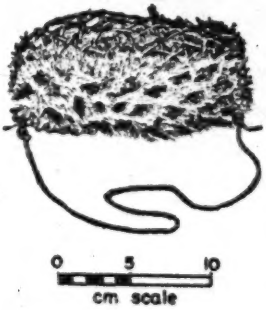

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] [84] 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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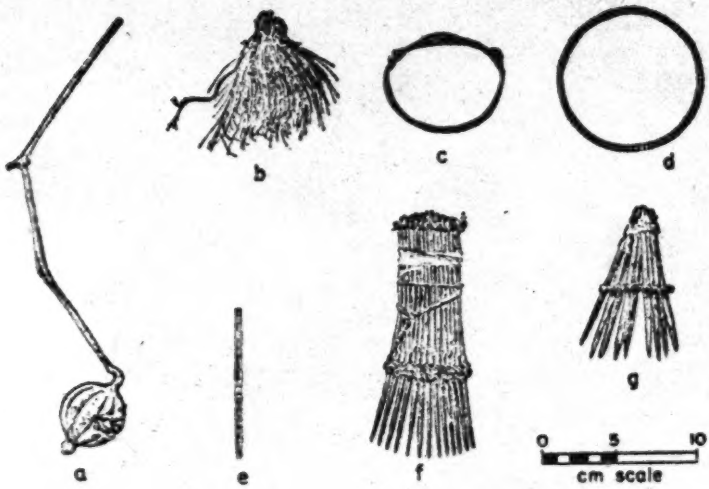

FIG. 30. Personal adornment. a. *Kangay* (gardenia) seed, used by women for extraction of a black dye for painting the body, also for painting designs on barkcloth; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Hair decoration, *mongele* antelope hair; net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. c–d. Bracelets; Bira villagers, Central Ituri. e. Nose and/or lip plug, *bobu;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. f. Comb, *kisanoa;* Bira villagers, Central Ituri. g. Comb, *kisanoa;* net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. As everywhere among the Mbuti, metal objects are of villager origin. Many of the wooden objects of personal adornment are made in imitation of villager artifacts (compare f and g).

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[177]

[P. 200-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 177

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 412 237 177 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass, and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

287 462 b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

531 386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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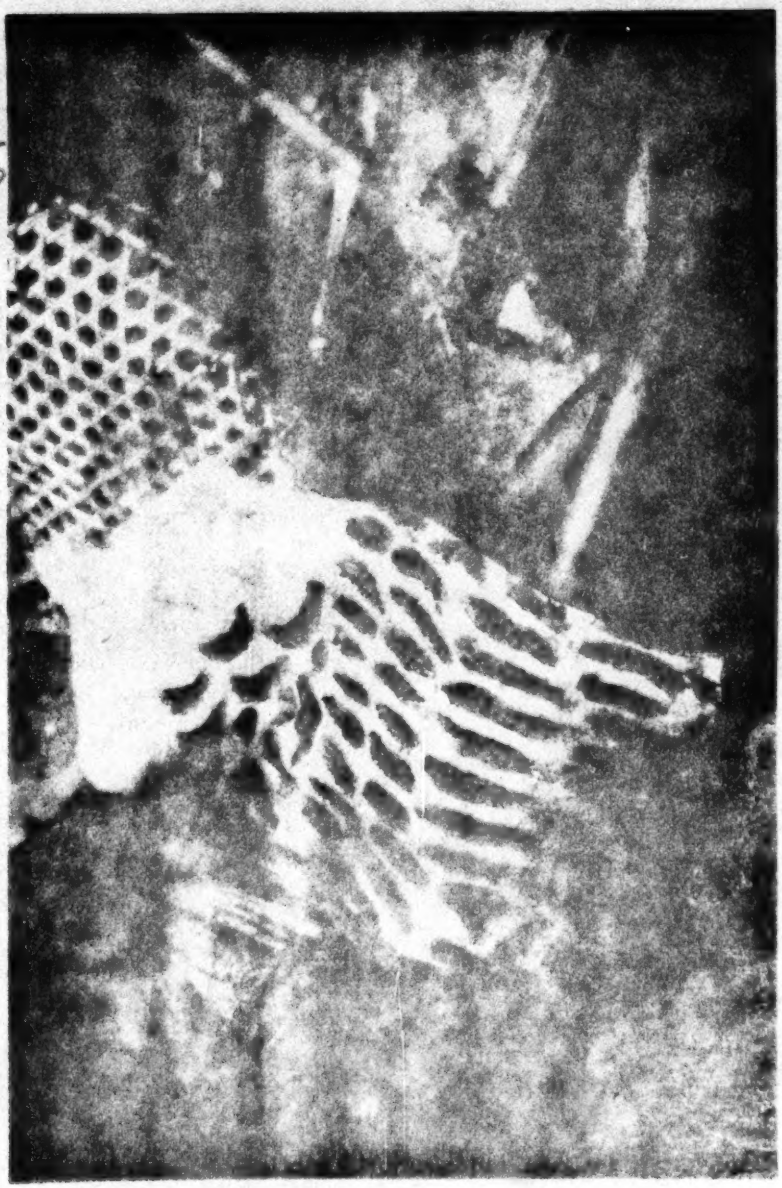

/Plate 32-B/

/Caption appears on p. 296/

[P. 297-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-J]

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[177]

12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

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[302]
[386]

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*177

13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Makubasi. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her *kpara*'s sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away [237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted [412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either [386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of 287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in 462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the [516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which 386 •
may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. 287
If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made 462
from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby 283
a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend 294
hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and sim- [511]
plicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it 286
has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or [462]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

Mate-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not used in his [189] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell ~~from~~ reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by [252] Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [262] states that he has never known these Pygmies to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 41 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [291] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to [184] cover the back, but he does not specify to which Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

[P.165-B]

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 237 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

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411 [114] As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped

[P. 169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

[ARCHERS]

with metal points. Schebesta believes that a 411 •
number of different poisons are used, apart from
the poison described in detail by Parke (1891).
The poisoned arrows are used against tree- [224]
dwelling animals, particularly monkeys, and
hardly ever against antelopes or larger game.
Schebesta contradicts, in the light of his own [114]
experience, Stanley's (1890) assertion that
Mbuti hunt buffalo and elephant with poisoned
arrows.

Mbuti use of antidotes is not known to 278
Schebesta (1941, 65).

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting 224

Schebesta (1941, 86 ff.) describes the various hunting techniques used throughout the Ituri. The Efe among whom he did his most detailed work are primarily archers. They do not know the net hunt and seldom practice the communal beat (Efe: *begbe*). Schebesta (1941, 86) ranks the ambush as most important. This method of hunting is used by the older men no longer able to track game successfully. They lie in wait and imitate the call of the game, attracting it until it is within range of their iron-tipped arrows.

The daily hunt, however, is the track hunt

[P. 169-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 171-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
[ARCHERS] Mbuti

[P.170]

411
284
184

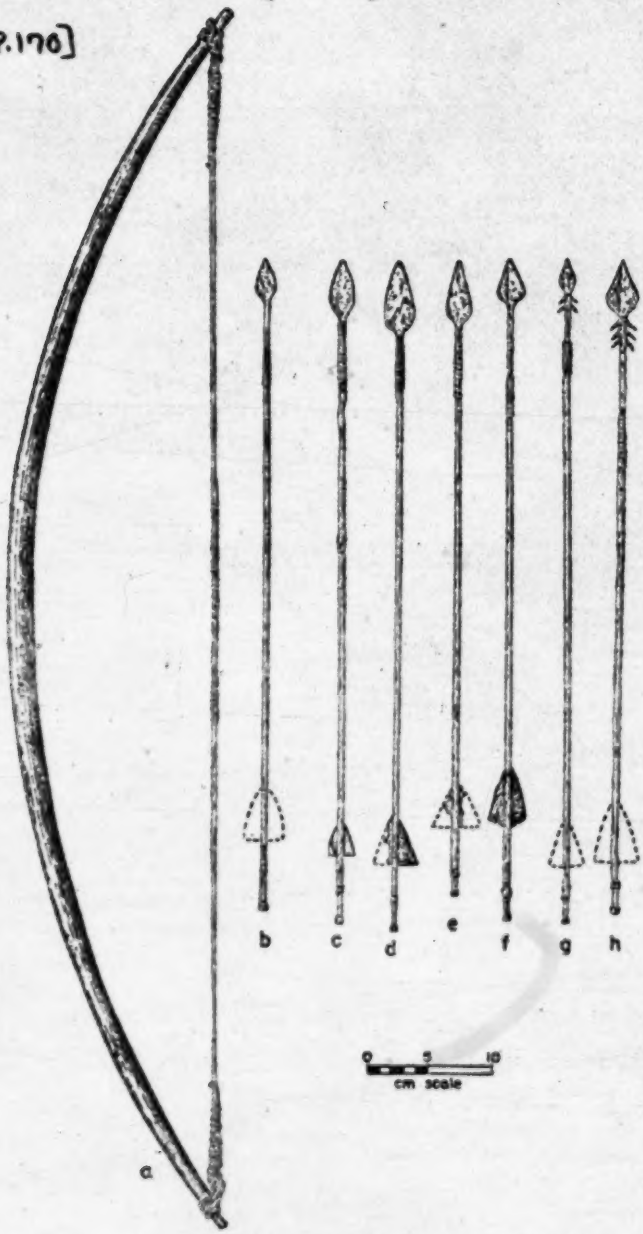

FIG. 6. Hunting equipment, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. These are typical of the eastern archers and similar to the bows and arrows of the neighboring Nyari villagers.

1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

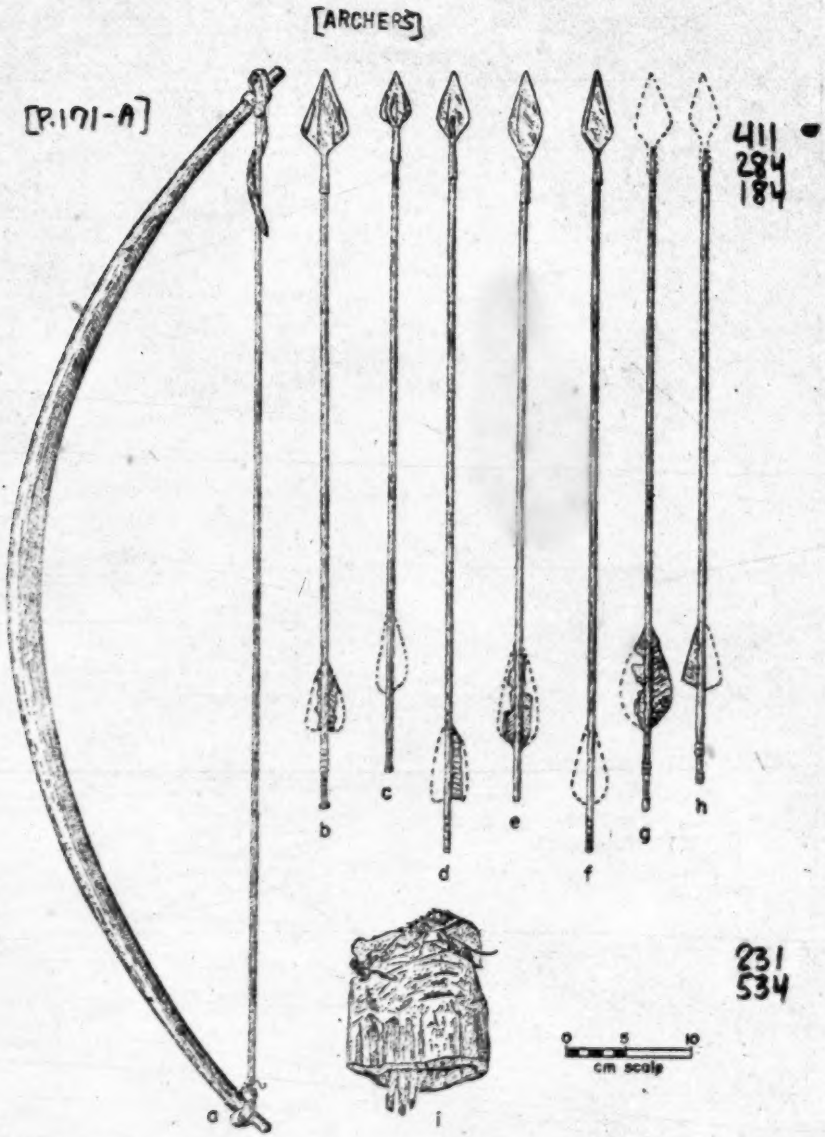

FIG. 7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Nduye District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–h. Arrows. i. Dog bell.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.172-A]

• 411

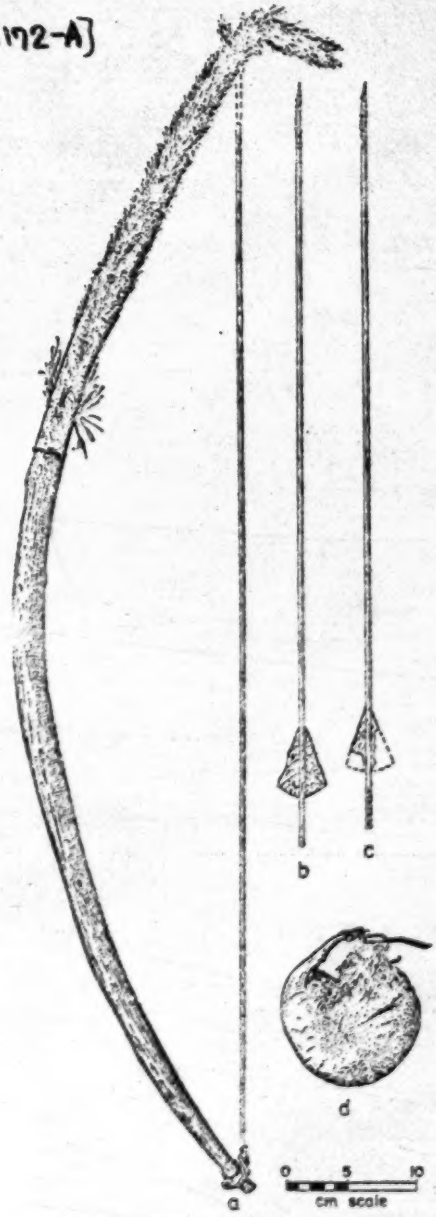

FIG. 8. Hunting equipment, archers, Oysha District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–c. Arrows. d. Wrist protector. Bows and arrows and wrist protectors of the archers seem, on the average, to be approximately 3 to 4 inches longer than those of the net hunters.

[184]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p. 173-A]

411
[237]

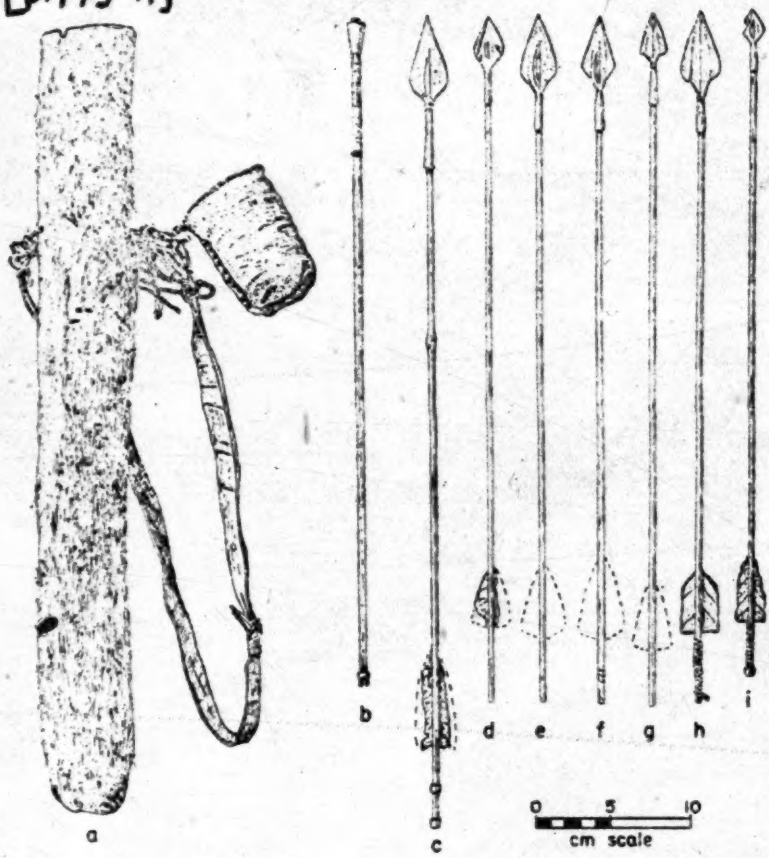

FIG. 9. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver. b–i. Arrows. Quivers are not generally carried by either archers or net hunters; by both groups the arrows are usually held in the left hand, together with the bow.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]
[P.174-A]

B
P
411
284

FIG. 10. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a–b. Spear, of village origin and villager hafted; probably Bira. c. Spear, hafted by Mbuti. All blades for spears come from the villagers, though Mbuti frequently rehaft spear, ax, and adze blades, to suit their needs.

B
B
[197]
[139]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

392 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [393] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [252] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam [463] is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

411

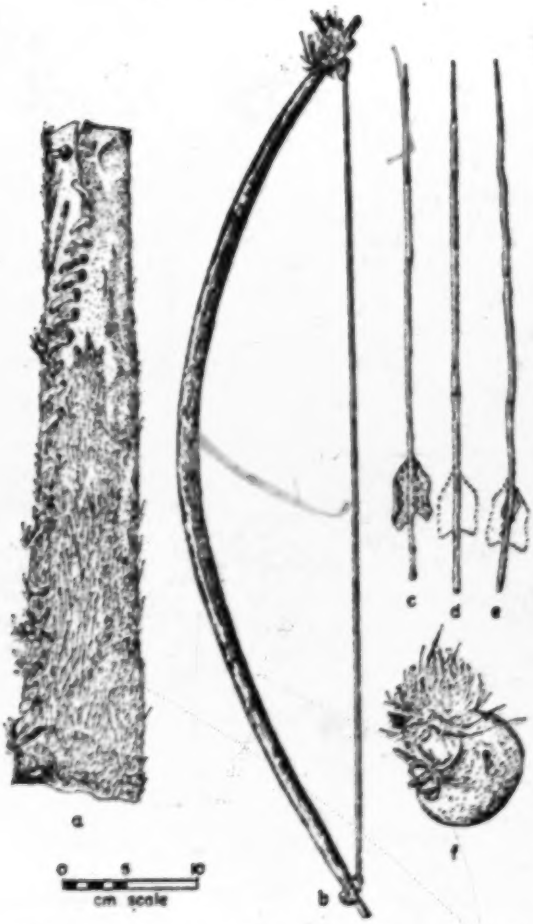

FIG. 37. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Skin quiver, *baba*. b. Bow, *mangé*. c–e. Arrows, *api*. f. Wrist protector, *asuba*. The bows, arrows, and wrist protectors of the net hunters are notably shorter than those of the archers but are only of secondary importance in the food quest. The net hunters prefer poisoned arrows to those with metal tips (see Figs. 38–39). [192] [184]

[P 204-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.205-A]

224 hit the target. At tracking, however, the Mbuti
• 411 are excellent, being able to move swiftly and silently through the forest. They can, in Putnam's estimation, catch game with their hands, and often do so, as successfully as by using their bows and arrows. Iron-tipped arrows are used on larger game, and untipped, poisoned arrows
[278] are used mainly for monkeys and birds. The poison is prepared individually, strophanthus being the vital plant acting as a heart stimulant.
224 Hunting dogs are used both during the net hunt and by individual owners for hunting wild boar.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

• 41

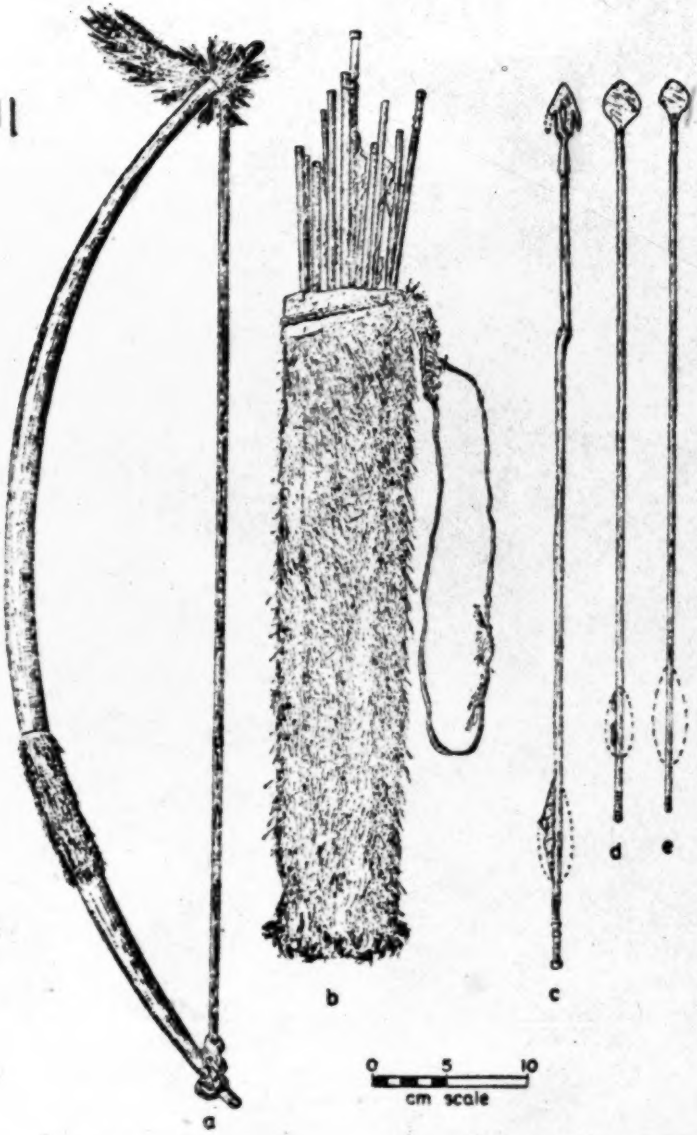

FIG. 38. Hunting equipment, net hunters. a. Bow, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Quiver, Central Ituri. c–e. Arrows, Central Ituri.

[P. 205 – C]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 206-A]

411

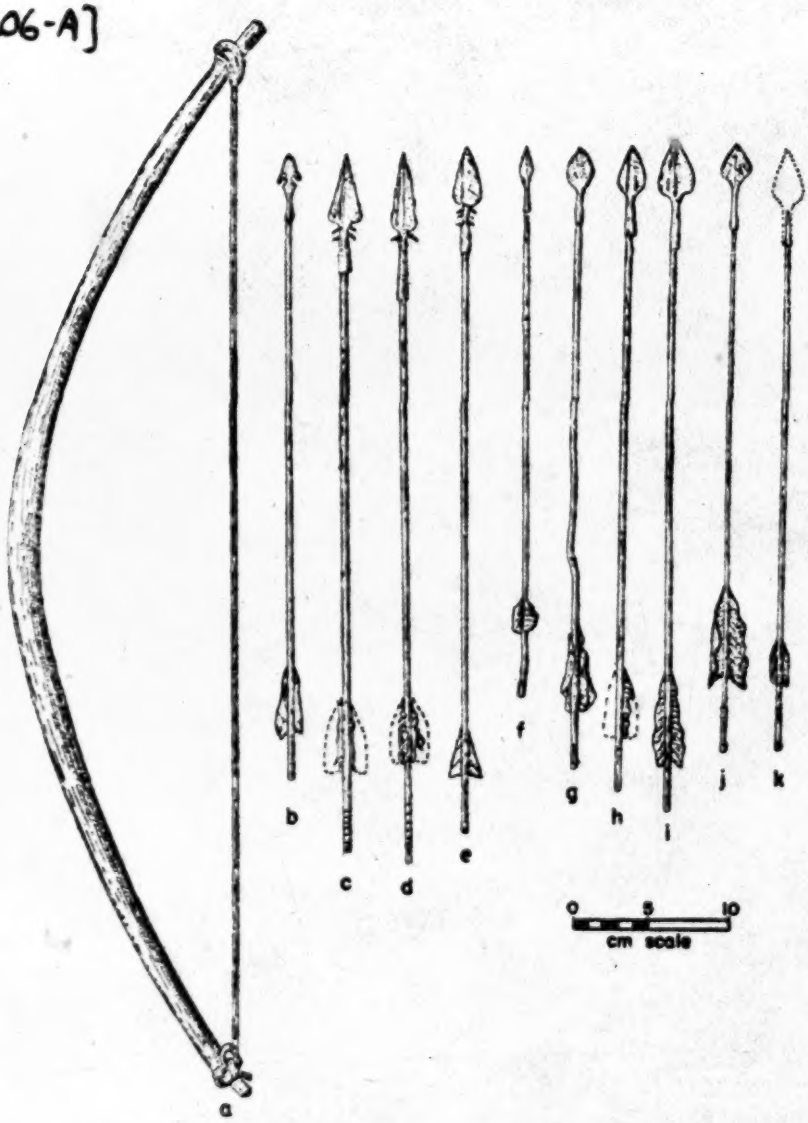

FIG. 39. Hunting equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Bow. b–k. Arrows.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.207-C]

411
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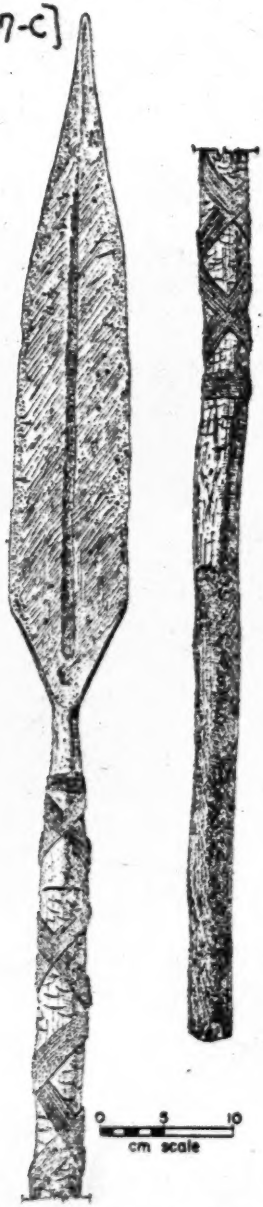


FIG. 40. Spear, *ekonga*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Used throughout the Ituri, except possibly in parts of the north, primarily as a weapon of defense and secondarily for the hunting of large game, including elephant. Mbuti hafting. [184]

[NET HUNTERS]

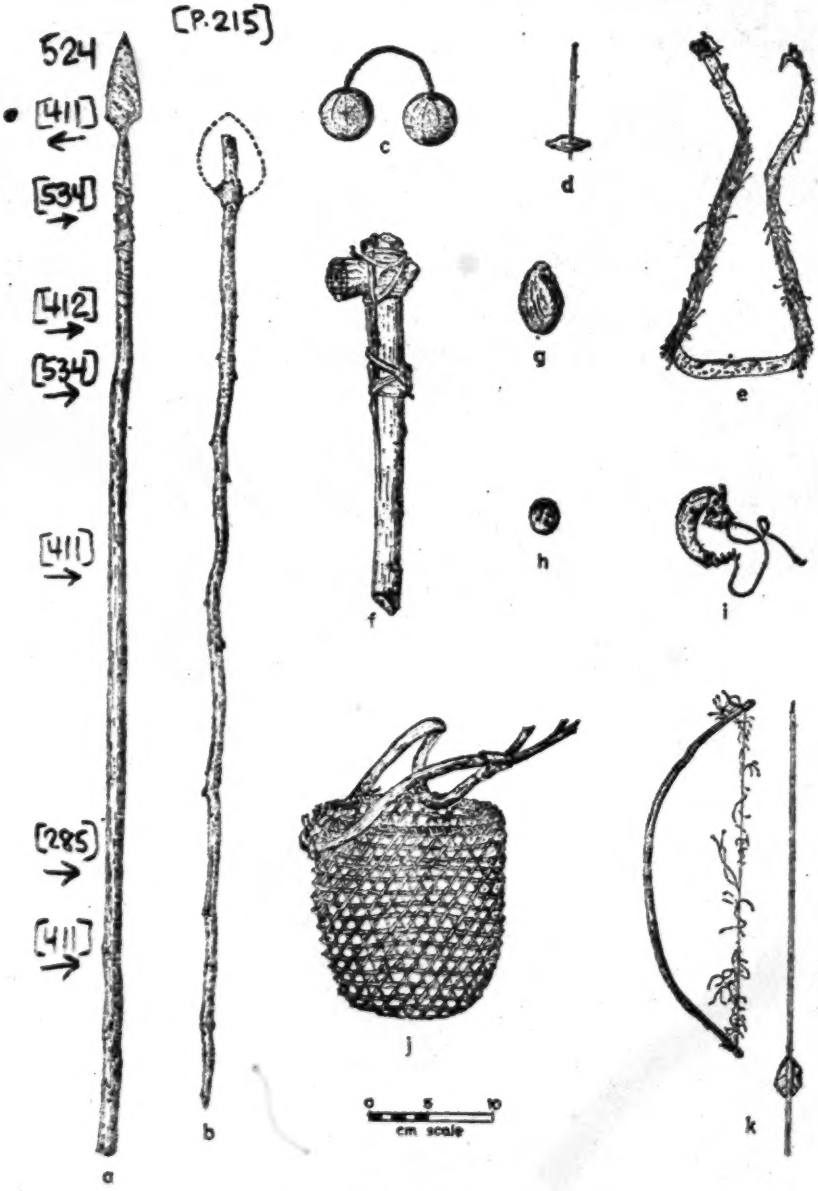


FIG. 45. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ekonga*. b. Fire spear, *irwakamaboki*. c. Castanets, *kolokbenje*. d. Top, *tokiya*. e. Baby sling, *koko*. f. Bark beater, *kolea*. g–h. Seed whistles, *pho'u*. i. Wrist protector, *asuba*. j. Basket, *so*. k. Bow, *mangu*, and arrow, *api*.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] • [751]

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 881 177 P Z [535]

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411 •

[P. 231-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 232-A]

278 411 their arrows but seldom achieved the same effect. The ingredients were known to him, and he concluded some special skill was used in the actual preparation. There is no mention of antidotes to these poisons.

278 Putnam knew of the existence of effective medicine among the net hunters, but no details survive in the notes. Anne Putnam's notes, however, mention a number of cases in which she observed the use of indigenous medicines and treatment.

752 757 During a fight a boy was knocked unconscious by a blow from a piece of wood. He was immediately propped up; the main concern seemed to be to prevent him from lying flat on the ground. Even when semiconscious, the boy was not allowed to lie down. This possibility seemed to frighten the Pygmies more than anything else, and for a while no other treatment was given. Then some incisions were made on his chest, and a leaf was applied.

757 Against toothache a certain leaf (not identified) is chopped fine and mixed with water. This mixture is poured from a leaf cup down each nostril.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[R 244-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 35 1/A

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

224 a. The kill. When an animal falls into the nets, nearby men and youths run to catch it before it tears itself loose or damages the net. As the men disentangle the trapped animal, a youth stands by with a spear ready to make the kill. Even the smallest antelope, when trapped, can be dangerous. Although the hunt is vital to the food economy of the Mbuti, they take no pleasure in the kill. It is considered a crime to hunt or kill more game than is essential for sustenance.

• 411 b. The main weapon of the archers, the bow and arrow, is for the net hunters only an incidental means of obtaining food. The net hunters prefer their own poisoned arrows with [177] a fire-hardened tip (as used here) rather than the unpoisoned metal tips supplied and used by the villagers.

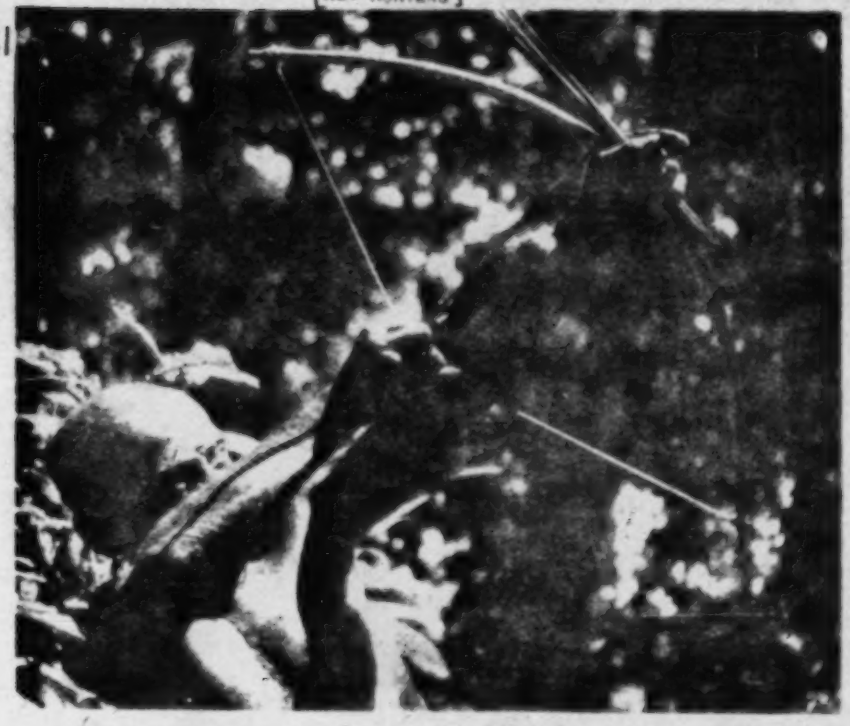
1/A. /Plate 35 appears on page 303--Analyst/

[P. 302]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 411

[NET HUNTERS]



/Plate 35-B/

/Caption appears on p.302/

[P. 303-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 37 1/A

MUSICAL BOW, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

534 533 41 [516] Mbuti music is almost entirely vocal, the voice being accompanied by wooden clappers. The musical bow is used sometimes to accompany the telling of legends or simply for personal amusement. As here, it is most often simply the hunting bow, tapped with an arrow, the mouth acting as a resonator.

1/A, /Plate 37 appears on page 307--Analyst/

[P. 306]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 37/

[illegible] /Caption appears on p. 306/

out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

become spirits, but there is no evidence of the old or crippled actually being treated with anything but a care and respect that, judging from appearances, derives more from affection and a sense of responsibility (not unmixed with a certain amount of rare forethought) rather than from fear. 732 734

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The iron tools available to the Mbuti since the inception of their relationship with the village tribes have not, apparently, tempted them to develop their hunting technology. They do not dig pits or make traps, nor do they erect spear-falls, techniques employed by the villagers. To make their traditional technology more efficient, however, the Mbuti do use iron blades for their spears, axes, knives and arrow blades. The spear blade makes the hunting of elephants much easier, though old Mbuti assert that they used to kill elephants with fire-hardened wooden spears. The knives and machetes undoubtedly make the cutting of leaves, saplings and vines much quicker and easier, and the honey ax affords simple access to beehives deep within hollow branches or tree trunks. The arrow tip is used more by the archers than by the net-hunters, it seems, but both groups rely primarily on poisoned arrows. The bows of neither group are large or efficient, accuracy is made doubly difficult by the limited vision of the forest environment, and hunters often aim at a sound or a movement of leaves rather than by sight of the actual quarry. With the poisoned arrow even a light graze will bring down the quarry, whereas with the metal-tipped arrow direct impact on a vital spot is essential. Even so, so chancy is Mbuti archery that throughout the forest the practice is to hold a handful of arrows in the hand that holds the bow; this enables them to be drawn and fired with remarkable rapidity. Naturally many are lost, but the loss of a poisoned arrow is of far less economic significance than the loss of a metal tip. 224 411

Traditional hunting techniques include archery, net-hunting and spear hunting, and occasional snaring (usually by youths, sometimes by old men). Nets vary in length from one to three hundred feet, and are about four feet in height. Seven small nets, together with beaters, might form a circle of over one hundred yards in diameter. Any area smaller than this would be impractical, as the game would be scared away before the nets could be set up and the beaters get in place. Even seven nets of average length would only form a circle barely two hun- 224

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-F]

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[184]

32. Masisi stops on his way to the hunt to try for a monkey in the treetops. For net-hunters the bow and arrow is only an incidental means of food-getting. As seen here, poisoned arrows are preferred to those with metal tips provided by the villagers.

224
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[882]

33. Two youths, armed with spears, carry their fathers' hunting nets. They will not have nets of their own until they are married but may, on occasion, take the place of their fathers on the hunt.

hunting but also working on plantations, cutting wood and drawing 114
water. None of this was true of the Pygmies that I knew. But I did 177
agree with Schebesta about the *molimo* (a religious festival). Although he had not seen it himself, from what he heard about it and about similar practices among other groups of Pygmies, he felt sure that it was essentially different from the practices of neighboring Negroes, however similar they might appear to be on the surface. This certainly tallied with my own experience.

The general picture that emerged from his studies was that there 114
were, living in the Ituri Forest, some 35,000 BaMbuti Pygmies, 101 177
divided into three linguistic groups, speaking dialects of three major [161]
Negro languages. The Pygmies seemed to have lost their own lan- [174]
guage, due to the process of acculturation though traces remained, [177]
especially in tonal pattern. Only in the easternmost group did Sche- [184]
besta feel that the language had survived to any recognizable extent.
These were the Efe Pygmies who lived among the BaLese, an eastern Sudanic tribe with a not very savory reputation for cannibalism, witchcraft and sorcery.

But in spite of this linguistic difference, and the fact that the Efe 114
also differed in that they did not hunt with nets but with bow and 105
arrow and spear, Schebesta believed that all the BaMbuti were a [184] [411]
single cultural unit. They tended to live in small groups of from three families upward, moving around the forest from camp to camp, though always attached to some Negro village with which they traded meat for plantation products. There was no form of chieftainship, and no mechanism for maintaining law and order, and it was difficult—from Schebesta's account—to see what prevented these isolated groups from falling into complete chaos. The most powerful 114
unifying factor, it appeared, was the domination of the Pygmies by 105
the Negroes. Schebesta cited the *nkumbi* initiation as an example of 177
the way Negroes forced the BaMbuti to accept their authority and that of their tribal lore. Remembering what I had seen, living in an

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Masisi hunts birds and monkeys. The wooden point of his arrow is tipped with poison.

224
411

[R 72-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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411
115

Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.
[P.72-E]

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 534 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534
for old men to talk about these things. 123 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322]
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411]
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157]
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

607
593 the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself
595 and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time,
853 and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening
578 [252] meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu
595 continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange
• 411 eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end,
578 Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He
607 looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives
595 were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's
578 wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her
607 brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

outside their hut to sing, they were carefully guarded by their 881
mothers and older sisters. But the girls and their attendants cast sly glances at the young men who always drew close to watch and listen. They whispered and laughed among themselves, and when they 881
stood up to dance they often made it very clear by their gestures 832
which boy had taken their fancy. Sometimes they chose at random simply to annoy a special lover, and boys often stalked away in a huff. That was a mistake.

At any time of the day the girls were likely to emerge from the [411]
elima house armed with long fito whips. If you were close enough you could hear them plotting their strategy behind the door, but there was no escape once they burst out into the open. Any males, young or old, and particularly those who had shown annoyance at being teased, were liable to be chased and whipped by the eager young furies.

I myself was chased once, for a good half-mile down a forest trail, [123]
running as fast as I could. It was considered cowardly to run, but I ran with good reason, for to be whipped establishes an obligation to visit your assailant in the elima house. Once inside there is no need to do anything further, but you are subject to considerable attention if you refuse. And to get into the house, in the first place, requires no small amount of courage and strength. So I ran. Most other bachelors had less reason and no desire to escape, so they contented themselves with giving as good as they got, throwing sticks and stones at the girls, running around the village, dodging behind houses and through fields of sugar cane. The battles never lasted long, but sometimes they came to an abrupt end.

The girls often whipped old men or young boys, and in either case it was generally considered a compliment and did not carry the same obligations that it would have done had they been eligible bachelors. But sometimes they hit too hard, and the old men resented this and shouted, while the boys simply screamed their heads off.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown. 881 832 574

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted. [152]

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry. [411]

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere. 881 832 372 574

224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 411 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries two kinds of arrows, the first with iron tips, which he generally uses on the larger, antelope-size, animals, and wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned, and which he uses for monkeys. He rarely shoots a monkey with an iron-tipped arrow, through fear of losing it. Each man makes his own poison as well as his own darts. The plants from which the poison is made [824] are well known, and there is neither ritual nor mystery attached to the proc- [137] ess. The vital plant is a strophanthus; they will mix other plants with it, but they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart stimulant. Its action is not immediate. The monkey runs along a bit, grows weaker, and urinates. The pygmies watch for this, for the moment of 224 urinating is the fatal one. If the monkey is out on a limb where there are no other branches, he will fall off; if he is within reach of a lateral branch or one rising upward, he will clutch it, and the hunter will be obliged to climb the tree if he wants the monkey. To do this he uses the technique described under pygmy locomotion. Since the monkeys are usually high in the trees and the pygmies are such poor marksmen, they undoubtedly miss more of them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant hunting involves a technique that is wholly different from either of the above two. The pygmy elephant hunter is a specialist; not every pygmy has the courage to face an elephant and kill it, and not every man has the skill. Wheth- [177] er or not pygmies ever killed elephants in the early days, the present form of

[P. 330-A]

Z 237 439 435 177 [567]

ing a double profit. Slavery, therefore, was a by-product of these raids, and not the primary objective, which was to obtain ivory. When the white men came in, they said to the Negroes, "Why deal with these Arab slavers? Sell your ivory to us, and we will leave you alone." Thus, ivory became an important item to the Negroes, and the more they could get of it the better.

P 224 177 439 Z 439 563

The pygmy could never, by himself, kill enough elephants to stop them from trampling his host's gardens. He could, however, kill enough to swell his host's supply of ivory and increase his host's capital. So a pygmy who was an elephant hunter became a special favorite of his Negro host and would get special gifts and favors in return for the ivory.

P • 411 Z [325]

The pygmy elephant hunter uses a special spear. Its handle is three to four feet long; its blade is leaf-shaped, of thin iron, about eight inches long and four wide. It is Negro-forged, of soft iron; the pygmy hunter sharpens it on a stone, until it is razor sharp.

P 224

His technique of hunting is daring and simple, and takes as much skill as that of a Spanish matador. He tracks the elephant, which is not difficult, until he knows from the spoor that he is close to it. When he hears the elephant's bowels rumble, he goes along even more quietly, until he sees the elephant through the underbrush. He then approaches the elephant silently, up wind; he jabs his spear as far as he can into the elephant, gashing the belly just behind the ribs; then he pulls it right out again. The elephant at this point usually turns, and the pygmies say that if you as much as wink at this moment you are a dead pygmy.

The man stands stock still, so the elephant can't see him. Then he goes through a sequence of stab and jump and stand still, as many times as he can. Every time the elephant looks

[P. 331-A]

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter. 352 417 25

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers. 415 412 177 [439] 412 177 [439]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412 •
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.175-A]

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FIG. 13. Adze, Bira villagers, rehafted by Mbuti archers, Central Ituri. A villager utensil, useful but not indispensable to the Mbuti, for the extraction of honey from hives in tree boles.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.175-D]

B
412.

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

B
[149]
[571]
[431]

[ARCHERS]

[P.178-A]

000 would hasten the hour of birth. Pregnancy is
843 recognized by the cessation of the menses and the discoloration of the breasts. During pregnancy a woman is subject to various alimentary taboos, but otherwise lives her full, ordinary life, including the carrying of heavy loads of wood, carrying all household goods when moving camp, going in search of food, and other specific activities of women.

844 Customs attending childbirth vary from region to region, but Schebesta concludes that, although archers have no effective method of dealing with complications, the women normally give birth easily and without any particu-
[184] lar preparation. Although this account does not specifically relate to the Efe archers, Schebesta (1948, 402) writes that, from his observations throughout the forest, certain generalizations
844 are possible. Women alone are admitted to
412 assist in the childbirth. The father cuts the umbilical cord with an arrowpoint, or, among some bands, with a sharp piece of bamboo. Before metal blades were available, Schebesta (1948, 404) says that there is evidence that bamboo knives or sharp leaves were used.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies
Mbuti
Bira FO11

188 (A)

• 412
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FIG. 15. Miscellaneous items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Comb. b–c. Notched flutes. These luxuries are not an essential part of hunting life but seem to be gradually becoming more common.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner. [512] [356]

[P. 194-D]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412 439

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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[199]
[439]

FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

[P.196-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are
285 Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are
439 made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

291 Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to
[789] that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne
287 Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and
286 repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
287 only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
• 412 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those
of the archers; the beating ends may have one
of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[462] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity
[476] calling for cooperation between men and women.
[P.197-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-C]

287
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[284]

FIG. 23. Types of grooving found on ivory bark-beater heads, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

mond grooving being the commonest. There are only about two bark beaters to a camp.

There are two main ways of preparing the cloth. Strips of the bark of *Ficus* are peeled off the trunk between two horizontal and one vertical slit. Before the beating, the outer bark is scraped off, then the inner bark is softened either by being soaked in water from half an hour to 12 hours, according to the type of bark, or by being heated and smoked over a fire.

287
[824]

[NET HUNTERS]

or by being heated and smoked over a fire. The resultant barkcloth may be worn in its natural color, dyed red or blue, or be painted with simple designs (Figs. 25–27), The dyeing and painting are done by women, using a special mud for an over-all blue dye, the juice of a citrous fruit for blue line designs, and *nkula* (elsewhere *ngula*) bark, scraped with another piece of bark (Fig. 24), with water added while scraping, for 287 386 531

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 200-A]

[412]

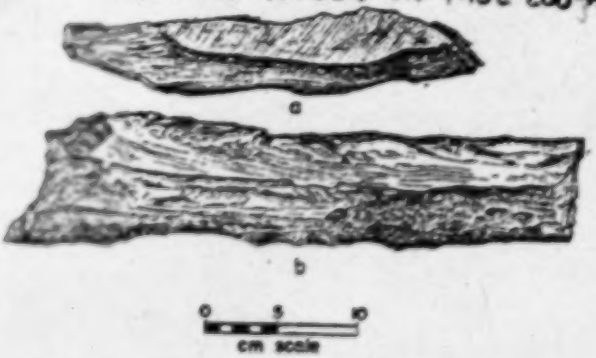

FIG. 24. Block and scraper of wood, *nkula* (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri; used with water for the extraction of the red dye most commonly employed in the decoration of barkcloth.

[P.197-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

FIG. 45. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ebenge*. b. Fire spear, *irmahemabobi*. c. Castanets, *bolokbenje*. d. Top, *tabipa*. e. Baby sling, *koko*. f. Bark beater, *kolea*. g–h. Seed whistles, *pio'a*. i. Wrist protector, *ensele*. j. Basket, *ea*. k. Bow, *mangu*, and arrow, *epi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 31 1/1

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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883
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Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1/1 /Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
287
412
883
516
177

/Plate 31/

[P 296] /Caption appears on p. 294/

PLATE 32 3/A

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
• 412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

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386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 32-A/

/Caption appears on p.296/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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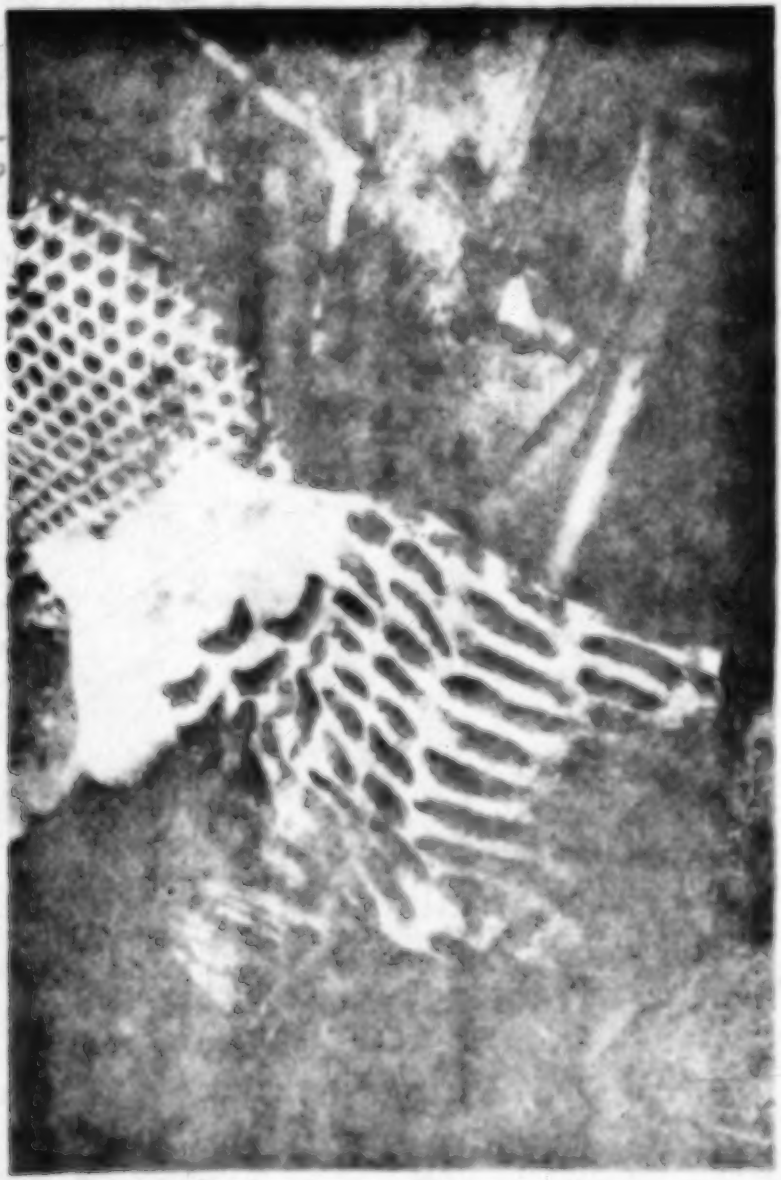

/Plate 32-B/

/Caption appears on p. 296/

[P.297-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 36 1/A

Collecting Honey, Efulu District, Central Ituri

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

222 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
[251] drunk.

1/A, /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 36-A/

/Caption appears on p. 304/

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
322 vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
324 *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the huts and the shafts for spears; the ax is used for enlarging the 412 •
boles in which bees make their hives, so that the honey can be extracted more easily. Younger Mbuti do not know what they would do without the machete for cutting saplings. Both they and the older men realize that the ax is not absolutely essential, and I have seen ax-shaped clubs used for breaking away the wood from around a hive, where the wood is rotten, as it frequently is. The older men say that [324]
if they did not have machetes for cutting saplings they would use stone tools, but they have no knowledge at all of how to make such tools, and are probably prompted to make this remark by the presence in the forest of early stone axheads.

Accepting, for the moment, that the Mbuti in their forest world are 121
not in any position of necessary dependence upon the villagers for food 177*
or material, or technological skill, and admitting that in the village context they are dependent, the question arises as to why they choose to place themselves in that position of dependence. It is certainly not out of economic necessity. The truth of the matter is simply that the village offers, for a brief while, an agreeable change of pace, an opportunity for a relaxation that is not always possible in the forest, and, one might say, better hunting, on occasion. An Mbuti band or an Mbuti family or an Mbuti individual may descend upon a village either because of sheer whim, or because of laziness if the forest hunting gets too strenuous, or because of dissension, or indeed for almost any reason except necessity. Whatever the reason, and most commonly it at least involves an expressed desire for relaxation and freedom from care, the reason is on the side of the Mbuti, the choice is theirs, and the dependence that follows is as voluntary as it is temporary.

ECONOMIC RECIPROCITY

We then have to ask what the Mbuti offer in return for the food and metal products that they receive, and to determine at least the economic structure of the relationship. In so doing we are inevitably led to consider the domestic, political and religious aspects and their interrelationship with the economic system, and it is in these interrelationships that inconsistency and conflict emerge.

Even in terms of sheer economic reciprocity the relationship is in- 121
herently unstable. Continuing to grant, for the moment, the fact that 177*
no economic necessity is involved on the part of the Mbuti, and that 439
their dependence is voluntary and temporary, the forest world remain-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

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4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

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9. The Mbuti village bazza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 621 847

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. 594 561 533 664

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. 843

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

[p. 228-A]

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• [512 539] 11. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 228-C]

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23. A youth, Kenge, strips a piece of bark before it is soaked, prior to hammering it into cloth.

24. Strips of bark, softened by water or smoke, are hammered into cloth up to eighteen inches wide. There are many individual preferences for different types of bark.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teku* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this.

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened.

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season.

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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37. Honey-gathering usually involves climbing to great heights, but honey is occasionally found near ground level. Only if found in fallen tree trunks can the honey be collected by women.

38. Honey is highly prized, but is nonetheless shared among all. Here Kelemokel's uncle, Mazalito, shares with his favorite nephew.

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circumstances he could not have foreseen or he would not have been 122
so cheerful.

For the first few days I went out with Kenge and others to the 313
new "Pygmy plantation," to collect the poles and saplings for my [123]
house. The plantation was a chaotic tangle of fallen, broken, splin-
tered wood. The Pygmies, armed only with their small honey axes, [412]
and a few bigger blades borrowed or stolen from the Negroes, had
chopped the smaller trees down at about shoulder height, or rather
less. The bigger trees they had attacked higher up, working from
a flimsy frame from which they gnawed with their tiny hatchets like
rats until a hundred and fifty feet of timber came crashing down.
They had evidently caught on to the idea that if they attacked the
big trees first, those, as they fell, would bring down a number of
smaller ones, saving that much work. The result was that even they
found it difficult to pick their way among the debris, and they had
no means of clearing it. None the less, they had hopefully thrown 313
down banana stems here and there, hoping for them to take root. 245
Njobo proudly showed me one he had "planted," which was strug-
gling manfully to raise its withered leaves above the debris into the
sunshine. The only clearing had been done by Negroes, like myself
in search of building materials. Evidently the Pygmies' enthusiasm
for their plantation had not carried them very far.

The building of my house followed much the same pattern that 342
characterizes every Pygmy endeavor outside the forest world. It began
with a lot of noise and big ideas. Their own camp was built in the [361]
manner of a Negro village, mud huts in two lines facing each other.
The huts were only about seven feet long and five feet deep, some
without roofs, some without walls, none of them really complete.
Larger families joined two houses together. Only Ekiangs's was dif- 342
ferent, as might be expected. His house stood at the far end and ran 184
across between the two lines, facing down the middle. It was about
twenty feet long and had a fine wooden door that opened and

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[346] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
[425] had seen a *sonda*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
261 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
392 stride into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
261 Mazamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
392 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
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for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond. 361 342 412 • [123]

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds. 342 314 48 114 123 [321] [487]

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground 314 114 123 [412]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P.72-K]

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight. 627 281 [685]

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention. 684 235

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned [42] • [152]

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

28 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away
[23] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted
[412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either
[386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of
28 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in
462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the
516 material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red *nkula*, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

Pygmy Technology

417 197 439 **Basic tools.**—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
[284] all. He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles are added. The women use these for
[462] many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.
412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.
[p. 326-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173), who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 [342] [45] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter. 352 417 251

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers. 415 412 177 [439] 412 177 [439]

[ARCHERS]

782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as "*Mugu! daó a iye!*" ("*Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in- [224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to [769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the 782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *sulia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

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FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

[P.196-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.210-A]

• 415
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[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *ekimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayakiri*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *nglengle*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[824]
[222]
[533]

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngèngè* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P 210-C]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 299] /Plate 33/

/Caption appears on p. 298/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
272 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
• 415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
• 177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
• 177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
• 177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[324] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-D]

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

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9. The Mbuti village bazaa was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

142
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29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[229]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P
C
137
252
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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

[P. 72-K]

St Turnbull E-6 (1901-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 533 were women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires.
881 885 533 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [691] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 885 157 Akidiminha was very different from her usual boisterous self. She was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 533 415 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya.
881 152 302 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing

415 Also obtained from the Negroes are
177 the cooking pots that all pygmy wom-
439 en own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have
462 chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman
[824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 This technique is not easy; it is
462 much easier if two women work to-
476 gether, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[A327-A]

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

824 237 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of fire itself is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light. [373] [416] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 [114] As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped

[P.169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for fighting off invading ants. Another form of light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

[416] [373] [314] [252]

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

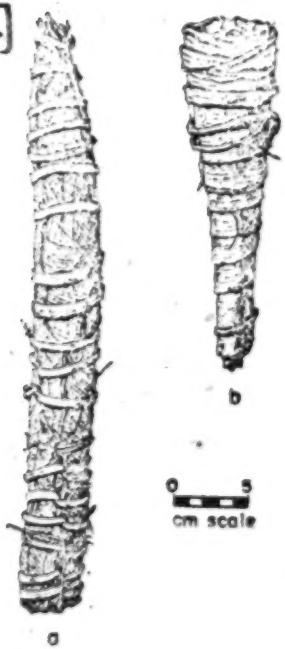
[463]

[P 201-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-C]



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→

FIG. 31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, made of *kasuku* resin and wrapped in leaves; used when necessary to move from the hut at night. b. Bark pipe, *mbende*, used when village pipestems and bowls are not available.

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More 352
often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on
the ground to make a bed. There may also be a
wooden stool, given by or stolen from the vil-
lagers, or a rough chair made from stout sap-
lings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying 417
racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires 251
to preserve meat for barter.

UTENSILS

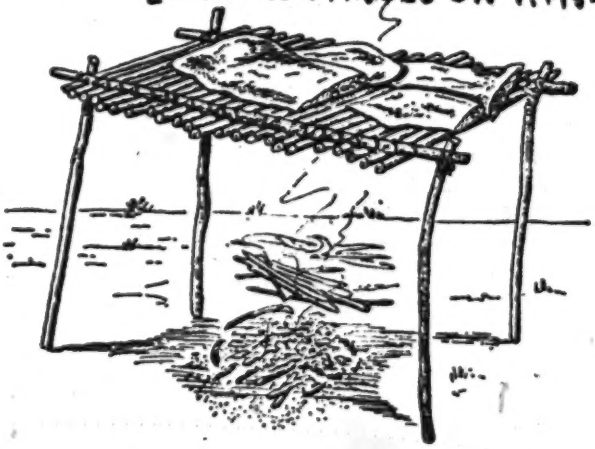
Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy 415
wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers 412
(Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by 177
the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many [439]
archers now make mortars for themselves.
There may also be wooden plates of village
origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays.
All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also 412
come from the villagers, and, like the cooking 177
utensils, these foreign importations are said to [439]
have become indispensable to the archers.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Honey Gathering

Honey gathering is of particular importance 222 [221]
and is seasonal. The equipment consists of fire,
[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 175-B]



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417.

Fig. 12. Meat-drying rack, archers, Central and East Ituri. Meat drying takes place only when the Mbuti intend to trade with villagers and is by no means a part of every hunting camp. [439]

[P. 174-C]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-B]

142
302
291
251
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417

22. A young hunter prepares meat on a smoking rack for bringing to the village.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]
000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

Legal System

671 There is virtually no evidence from which
.421 any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 The district hunted by the band, together
621 with all the vegetable and animal food con-
628 tained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is
[224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 627 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 177 571 574 Z 563 571

Legal System

There are no data available on property law, and there is no clear distinction between collective and private property, as far as can be learned from the material that is available. Most items of personal possession, except used barkcloth, change hands at some time or another, temporarily or permanently, with or without any immediate exchange. There is certainly no scale of values by which any item of property may be assessed in relation to another. The question of whether personal goods, such as cooking utensils for the women or weapons and hunting nets for the men, are P 421 • P 422

[P 229-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-A]

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the
428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

421 It seems, first, that the forest and both its
[186] animal and vegetable produce are considered by the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien
[621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

[NET HUNTERS] A

421 224 lazy hunter and his family go without meat; an idle woman goes without vegetables and has no roof to her hut. The division of game obtained during a net hunt is the only division that includes everyone in the band, whether or not they attended the hunt. Even then we do not know whether those who did not attend had any arrangement with any of the actual hunters. Nets are frequently lent, as are spears. It may well be that absentee members of the hunt participate by proxy and in this way entitle themselves to a share. The division itself, as is mentioned above, is said to be subject to complicated rules.

594 222 421 Apart from the net hunt, which is essentially collective and cooperative and concerns the band, other forms of food quest are familial. A woman is entitled to what she finds, for herself and her family. Similarly a man, hunting 594 224 42 individually with bow and arrow, may claim as his own anything that he may bring in, though in such a case there is some doubt. Using bow and arrow he would be likely to bring in only small game, and rarely, these Mbuti being very poor shots. If however, he killed or found large game, such as an okapi, on his own, it would be

[P. 230-B]

: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of division would not apply. It seems therefore to be a question of surplus. Every family is entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty 186 francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

[ARCHERS]

422 Certain objects that by their nature are col-
222 lective property, however, are considered to be-
long to the finder. This applies mainly to vegetable products, a honey tree, a termite nest, or a nest of grubs or caterpillars. All who help in the gathering are due their share of these products, but the major part goes to the finder.

422 All personal objects made or acquired by an
[423] Mbuti are private property. Thus not only the utensils, but the homestead itself, is the property of the wife, who may, if she wishes, pull the hut down as a gesture of defiance. Weapons belong to men; clothes, to each individual. These objects can be disposed of in any way, at
[685] will. Petty pilfering is considered as theft, and theft is both forbidden and punished; but Schebesta does not describe any system of punishment.

428 With regard to succession, generally the brothers or the sons, says Schebesta, inherit from a father; sisters and daughters, from a mother.

000 Schebesta (1948, 533) argues that, as the
[P. 186-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 202-C]

The net-hunting technique is similar to that of the *begbe* described by Schebesta (1952, 133 ff.) but with the notable absence of the leadership of an "elder." The decision as to when and where to hunt is made during the evening preceding the hunt, in conversation among all the hunters around the campfire. Whereas rain puts an end to both net hunting and tracking, lack of rain (causing dry leaves to crackle underfoot) is disadvantageous only to trackers. Like the beat hunt, net hunting relies on the ***amount*** of noise that can be made. 224 184

The net hunt calls for a minimum of seven nets, each married man owning a net. Unmarried men may also own nets if they have proved their prowess as hunters. It is usual in a normal camp of about 17 huts for the majority of men, women, and children to join the hunt. If the camp is large, some members stay behind and perform their various subsidiary chores such as the repair of nets, the manufacture of bark-cloth and twine, gathering, and so forth. The women joining the hunt carry their babies on their backs; boys and young men are armed with bows and arrows or spears; and the heads of families carry their nets and spears. Various 224 [422] [512] [854]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 177 571 574 Z 563 571

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[P 229-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-A]

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512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

857 them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a
868 supervisory capacity.
[883]

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and
883 will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up
561 into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then
868 teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these
882 swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

882 As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense
[832] of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although
[836] they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor
[584] by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

224 After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his
884 mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will
885 add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting
561 prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with
[422] additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared be-
[581] tween the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern
88 the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to
561 say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [554] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[3]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[3] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

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Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epulu	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Biasiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

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Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

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Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

224 It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in
561 common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women
[562] are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

224 The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law,"
602 which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

224 The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on
621 the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring co-
626 operation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of inter-
594 nal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

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mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time 222
throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti [252]
to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of [224]
the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark [482]
tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There [602]
is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much [422]
more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but 222
insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are fre- 533
quently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the 789
elima songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity, [778] [776]

When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

765 534 322 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [487] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick [824] [784] bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tearlessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

[P.160-C]

among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps.

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided.

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

[ARCHERS]

422 Certain objects that by their nature are col-
222 lective property, however, are considered to be-
long to the finder. This applies mainly to vegetable products, a honey tree, a termite nest, or a nest of grubs or caterpillars. All who help in the gathering are due their share of these products, but the major part goes to the finder.

422 All personal objects made or acquired by an
[423] Mbuti are private property. Thus not only the utensils, but the homestead itself, is the property of the wife, who may, if she wishes, pull the hut down as a gesture of defiance. Weapons belong to men; clothes, to each individual. These objects can be disposed of in any way, at
[685] will. Petty pilfering is considered as theft, and theft is both forbidden and punished; but Schebesta does not describe any system of punishment.

428 With regard to succession, generally the brothers or the sons, says Schebesta, inherit from a father; sisters and daughters, from a mother.

000 Schebesta (1948, 533) argues that, as the
[P. 186-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tree and the Mbuti alleges that the villager stole the stem by trickery, leaving him only the leaves, so that the villager was able to replant the trees and grow more, but when the Mbuti planted the leaves they just withered and died.[3] It is seldom that the Mbuti deny possession of the stolen goods; what they deny is the act of stealing. But whatever the fact, and however judgment is given, the essential point is that there is no mechanism for enforcing that judgment. Judgment being given by a villager is in my experience without exception against the Mbuti, and orders restitution of the property, or service in lieu. If the Mbuti complies, however, it is merely because in his own estimation it is expedient to do so. If he feels that he has exhausted the goodwill of the injured villager he will simply leave, and thenceforth deal with another villager. If any attempt is made to inflict physical punishment on an Mbuti, or to imprison him, then the whole band will initiate reprisal raids on the plantations of the individual who brought the complaint. This seldom happens, because villagers seek other means for achieving some measure of control over the Mbuti, and it is with those that we shall now concern ourselves.

[3] See Appendix I: "The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
621 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

A [see page 321 -- Analyst]

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.168-A]
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B
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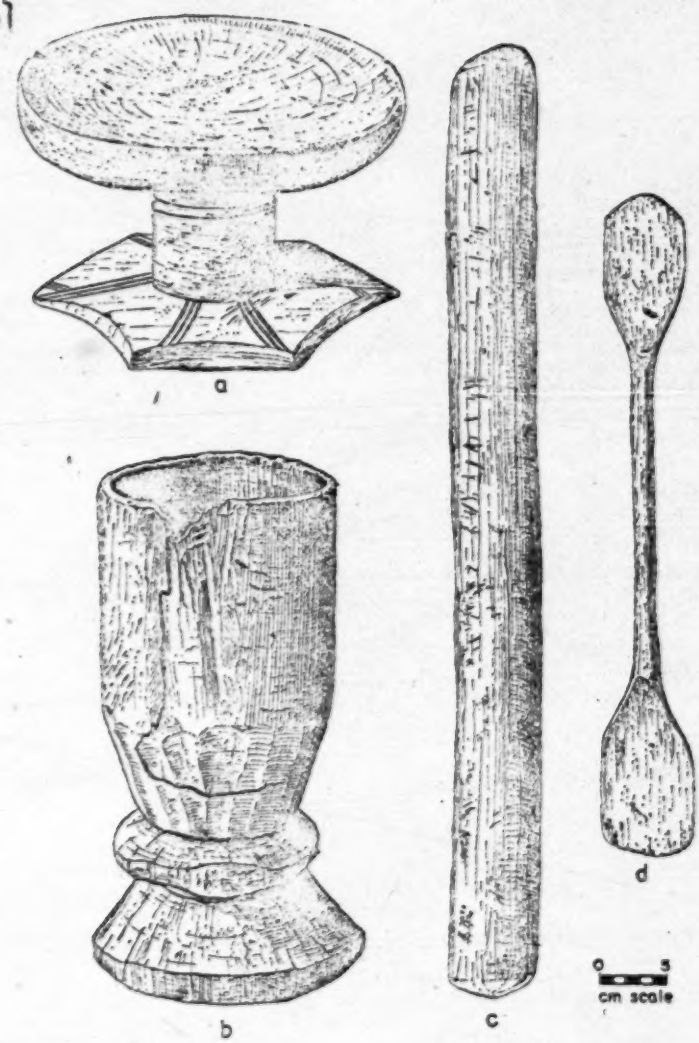

P
[426]
[685]

FIG. 4. Household utensils carved from wood, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Stool. b. Mortar. c. Pestle. d. Stirrer. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti frequently borrow or steal wooden utensils from the villagers. These may be found in hunting camps close to villages.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 621 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

P 177 439 571 [426]

wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

Z 186 **Negro attitude toward their pygmies.**—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581

The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy woman it is a great rise in the scale of living to marry a Negro as his second or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

Z [595] [522]

[P.324-B]

[ARCHERS]

422 Certain objects that by their nature are col-
222 lective property, however, are considered to be-
long to the finder. This applies mainly to vegetable products, a honey tree, a termite nest, or a nest of grubs or caterpillars. All who help in the gathering are due their share of these products, but the major part goes to the finder.

422 All personal objects made or acquired by an
[423] Mbuti are private property. Thus not only the utensils, but the homestead itself, is the property of the wife, who may, if she wishes, pull the hut down as a gesture of defiance. Weapons belong to men; clothes, to each individual. These objects can be disposed of in any way, at
[685] will. Petty pilfering is considered as theft, and theft is both forbidden and punished; but Schebesta does not describe any system of punishment.

• 428 With regard to succession, generally the brothers or the sons, says Schebesta, inherit from a father; sisters and daughters, from a mother.

000 Schebesta (1948, 533) argues that, as the
[P. 186-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 476 36 578 621 [P·229-A]

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

P Z [428]

Z [628]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-A]

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the
• 428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

421 It seems, first, that the forest and both its animal and vegetable produce are considered by
[186] the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien
[621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[428] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.175-D]

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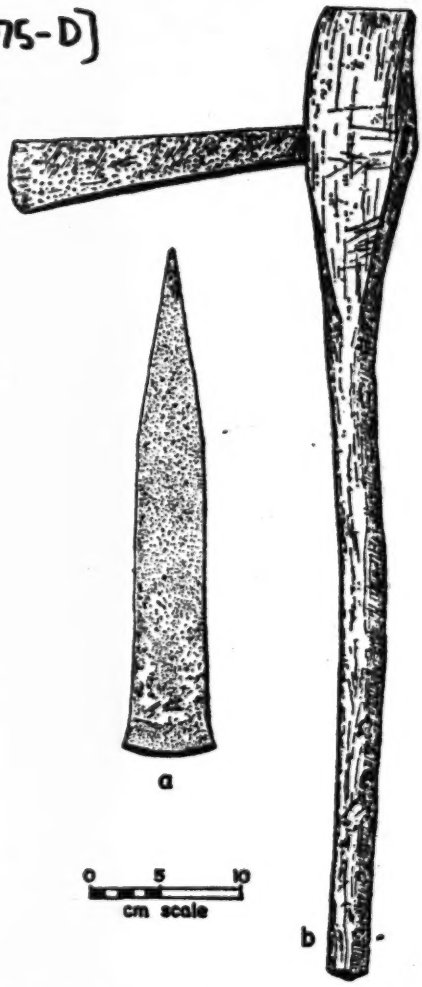

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

B
[40]
[571]
[431]

[ARCHERS]

[P.180-C]

Marriage, however, is not necessarily preceded by a period of courtship. Schebesta (1952, 233) attests to the betrothal of infants by their parents but does not know how frequently these betrothals result in marriage. The ultimate essential is agreement between individuals and their respective lineages. The qualities in a man appreciated by a girl are courage, decision, prowess in the hunt, and ability in the dance. Her hunting band also appreciates these qualities and receives favorably any suitor who brings presents of game that he has killed, but it is said to be more interested in the suitor's band. There is no formal adult betrothal; the boy visits the girl's camp and spends some days there, giving her small presents. Her acceptance of the presents and reciprocation of his attentions constitute betrothal; it remains only to secure the agreement of the two bands and to overcome the obstacle of exchange price. If a youth fears that his prowess as a hunter or dancer is not sufficiently impressive to prove his manliness, he will resort to various love philters. Philters are also used by Mbuti girls.

584 [581] [431] [832]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152
[533] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[534] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.
[431]

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
536 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
[261] One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
[789] tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [965] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 157 [624] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe 685
named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given 157
a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it 685
had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of 157
the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, 578
a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, [251]
and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated [627]
as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly [554]
respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, [627]
Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, 685
brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, 627
saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if 578
he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and [152]
saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was 627
brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most fre- 431
quently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nip- 685
pold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African 157
pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. 421
It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only [114]
obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group as a whole.

Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting. The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p.176-A]

262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433 439 177 22 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a division of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic entity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very productive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[P. 201-D]

439 114 [81] torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that 439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support • 433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away [482] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The [462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time [222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil- [184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages. 439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a

[P. 245-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Trade

The bare facts only are known. The Mbuti supply the villagers with meat and with certain forest products, such as roofing leaves or lianas, in return for plantation products. The villager invariably tries to enforce some service as well, with varying degrees of success. Either extreme can be found: cases in which the relationship is formal and binding in fact as well as theory, and those in which the theory is held only by the villagers and does not correspond to the fact, i.e., the Pygmy maintains his side of the trade relationship only so long as it suits him. In my experience the latter is the situation far more often than otherwise.

Then again we must emphasize that trade is not necessary on either side. The villagers could perfectly well hunt if they had to, and the Pygmies could equally well gather all their vegetable needs from the forest. Further, contrary to Schebesta's (1952, 112) assertion, the Mbuti are perfectly capable of cultivating, given a

Z 439 433 177 P 439 433 177 P [241]
[P 249-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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[D. 250-A]

clear space. Some of the net hunters in the Epulu area have tried, and with success, but quickly lose interest and revert to their old nomadic ways.

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The fact that there is no attempt to equate the supply of meat and the supply of plantains is also significant. Either side gives what it feels like giving, except that the Mbuti believe themselves free to take what they want if it is not given. There is also the Bira custom mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) of giving the first fruits to the Pygmies. The Mbuti seem to have control of this situation. The villagers have no means of preventing the Mbuti from returning to the depths of the forest whenever they wish. When the Pygmy hunting camp is some distance from the village, the villagers may send in to ask for meat, or the chief may even come himself.

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Sometimes the villagers try to gain control of the situation by supplying nets and claiming the appropriate share of a net owner. The Mbuti accept the nets, but see to it that only such game falls into them as they think fit. They eventually contest the ownership of the net, claiming to have added to it themselves and thrown away the damaged, village portion.

At most, it seems possible to regard the trade relationship only as one of mutual convenience. By itself, it is far too unformalized and unstable to provide the basis for the remarkably close relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the *molimo*, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are *never* used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
* 177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
* 177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
* 177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[824] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 439 C 439 608 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *karé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P 439 *177 This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *karé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

P 439 621 571 C [439] Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[2]

P 439 • 433 184 224 In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

C [648] [2] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti; the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561
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561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 732 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

TABLE 3a

FOREST/VILLAGE EXCHANGE

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To illustrate the major areas in which an exchange of goods or services does or could take place.

The Village

	Forest Produce	*Village Produce*
SHELTER:	Phrynium leaves, small saplings, firewood.	House poles; large saplings; leaves; mud for walls; wood for doors, furniture, etc.; clothing.
FOOD:	Meat, rarely nuts and honey.	Bananas, manioc, peanuts, rice, corn, beans, palm oil, dried fish (trade).
LABOR:	Partial hut-building, guarding plantations, carrying goods to market, drawing water, entertainment.	All major building, furniture-making, marketing, plantation work, clearing, canoe-building, fishing, road work.
SKILLS:	Effective medicines.	Pottery, metalwork, toolmaking, divination, ritual specialization (circumcision).

The Forest

SHELTER:	Phrynium leaves, saplings, firewood, clothing, furniture.	Nil
FOOD:	Meat, mushrooms, fruits, nuts, berries, roots, honey.	Bananas, manioc, corn, beans, palm oil, rice (with relevant utensils).
LABOR:	Hut-building, bark-cloth-making, hunting, gathering.	Nil
SKILLS:	Effective medicine, manufacture of hunting equipment, dance and song.	Metalwork (metal tips for arrows and spears, blades for knives and axes).

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles
[312] apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P 323-A]

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

Pygmy Economic Activities

224 433 Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

[P. 327-B]

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Although between themselves the pygmies have little division of labor, in another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

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This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy spends all of his time hunting, the Negro only a portion of his. The pygmy depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

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Throughout the pygmy country, the pygmies can be classified either as net hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

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Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

[P. 328-A]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara,* or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

578 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
*177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
186 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
436 the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission.
[621] Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[201] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the encroaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the encroaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seeking a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge occur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-operation as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571 121
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 621
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 554
others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438] •
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

[ARCHERS]

[P.167-C]

ground on four short forked branches. More often the sticks, or simply leaves, are laid on the ground to make a bed. There may also be a wooden stool, given by or stolen from the villagers, or a rough chair made from stout saplings lashed together with vine. Meat-drying racks (Fig. 12) are built over smouldering fires to preserve meat for barter. 352 417 25

UTENSILS

Cooking utensils, clay pots, and heavy wooden mortars are obtained from the villagers (Fig. 4). The first-mentioned are never made by the Mbuti, but Schebesta says that many archers now make mortars for themselves. There may also be wooden plates of village origin, baskets, and basketry winnowing trays. All metal knife and ax blades (Figs. 13–14) also come from the villagers, and, like the cooking utensils, these foreign importations are said to have become indispensable to the archers. 415 412 177 [439] 412 177 [439]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (Efe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

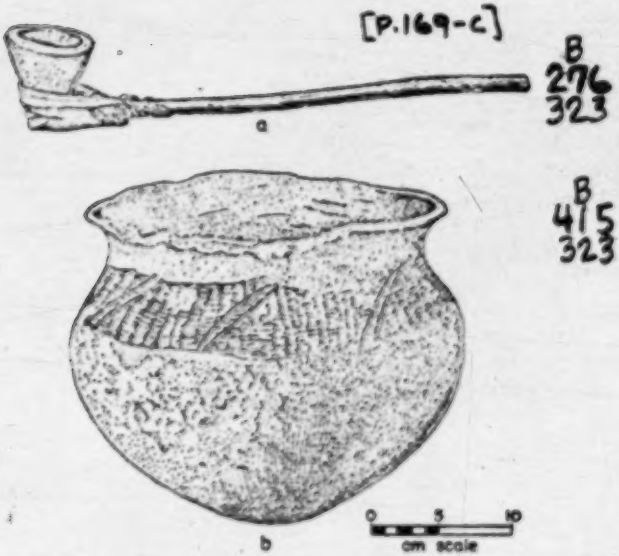

FIG. 5. Household utensils made from clay, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Pipestem and clay bowl. b. Cooking vessel. The Mbuti obtain their major pottery artifacts, as luxuries, from their villager neighbors.

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[439]
323

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-A]

B
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411
284

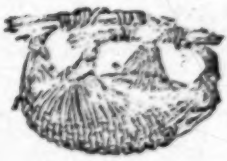
FIG. 10. Hunting equipment, archers, Central Ituri. a–b. Spear, of village origin and villager hafted; probably Bira. c. Spear, hafted by Mbuti. All blades for spears come from the villagers, though Mbuti frequently rehaft spear, ax, and adze blades, to suit their needs.

P
B
[177]
[439]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-B]



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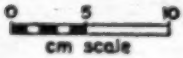

FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is provided almost exclusively by women. First place goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and peanuts acquired from the villagers in return for meat or service. But the forest itself provides an abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses. Schebesta gives no details as to the exact proportions of these various foodstuffs consumed, so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics of this group. He also mentions the place of snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk catch crabs and small fish in the shallow streams, using their hands or small nets.

262
[462]
[439]
[226]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Honey Gathering

Honey gathering is of particular importance 222 [221] and is seasonal. The equipment consists of fire,
[TEXT CONTINUES ON P. 175-B]

251
417

Fig. 12. Meat-drying rack, archers, Central and East Ituri. Meat drying takes place only when the [439] Mbuti intend to trade with villagers and is by no means a part of every hunting camp.
[P. 174-C]

[ARCHERS]

[p.176-A]
262 boos, mostly acquired during initiation, not connected with the clan totem. These two classes of taboos are responsible for what food restrictions there are.

Trade

433 The food quest is, in Schebesta's words, the
.439 alpha and omega of Mbuti economy. It is a
177 day-to-day economy. The supposed uncertainty
22 of adequate supply is given as the reason for the alleged dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers. At times the Mbuti have no food; at others, they have an excess. But living in a symbiotic relationship with the villagers, the Pygmies are able to maintain a steady diet, relying on the villagers in times of shortage and in times of plenty supplying them with forest produce. According to Schebesta, their relationship is based on this exchange. The Pygmy not only has come to rely on village plantations to supplement his own inadequate diet, but he has come to rely on villager-manufactured tools and utensils. Jadin (1936) says that the Pygmies know no resources other than those available through hunting and gathering, despite villager domination.

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the trading is carried out. He says that there is,
[613] however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band. 000 582 621

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of 583 [191] [439]

[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage. [613]

[P. 180-D]

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] P M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 .439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors. P 2 439 • 177 571 [114] P 2 [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

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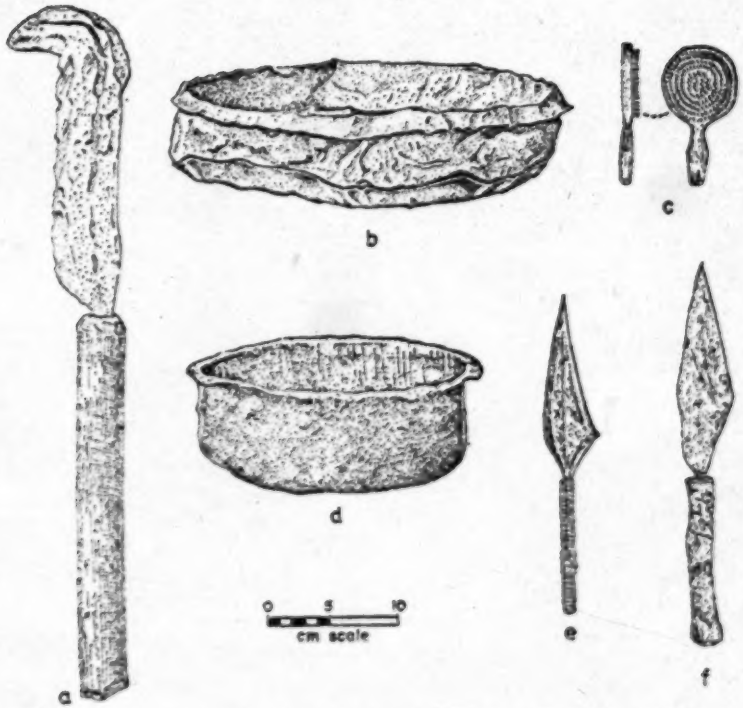

FIG. 21. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Machete, used for cutting large saplings such as those required for village houses. b. Cooking vessel (trade), needed for the cooking of village foods, such as rice, requiring boiling. c. Comb. Another villager use of metal that finds favor among the Mbuti. d. Cooking vessel. e. Knife. f. Knife, used mainly, and widely, by Mbuti women for food preparation and for the preparation of roofing leaves. These are the common household utensils of metal that might be found in any net-hunting camp.

P
[179]
[439]

[P.196-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

412 truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax
• 439 blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are
285 Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are
439 made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

291 Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to
[789] that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne
287 Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and
286 repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[p. 201-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.202-A]

281

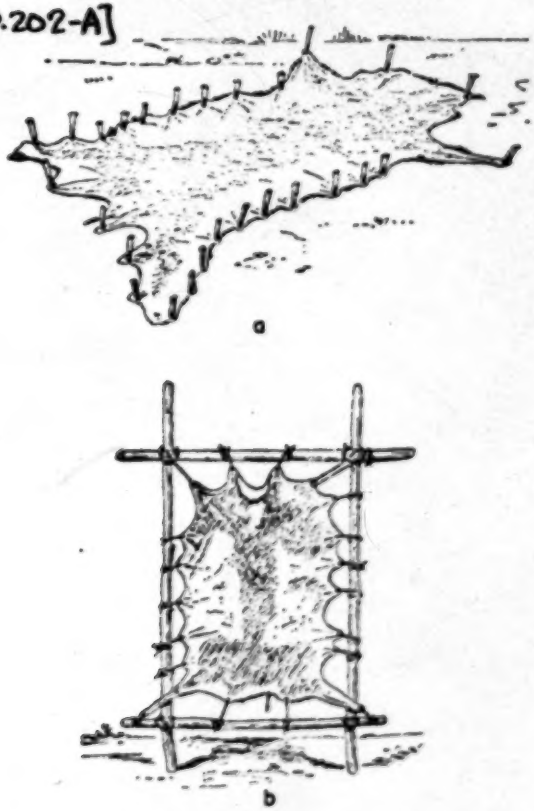

FIG. 32. Methods of stretching hides to dry, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Hides, little used by the net hunters except as baby slings and, more rarely, as quivers, are good trade items that are needed by villagers, among other things, for drumheads.

[237]
[439]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 205-B]

Elephant hunting is important in the Epulu District. Certain bands of Pygmies are specialists. Among the local net-hunting band from which the most detailed information is available, however, four out of 12 or 15 hunters are elephant hunters. Putnam says that the present form of elephant hunting is a recent development in answer to the needs of the villagers whose plantations were continually being ravaged by elephants and who encouraged the Pygmies to kill them off. In the early days the villagers had little use for the tusks, other than as barkcloth beaters, but with the advent of 224 [178] [237] [439]

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 206-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 Arab traders ivory became a most precious
[237] commodity, and the Pygmies were doubly in-
[439] couraged to kill elephants. For the Pygmies themselves, a slain elephant was a source of great satisfaction, providing them with meat ample enough to obviate the necessity of hunting for several days.

[157] The killing of the animal was, and still is, a matter that inspired the normally audacious Mbuti with some caution. Putnam says that elephant hunting is a specialist occupation: not every Pygmy is brave enough, and the tech-
[171] nique itself takes great skill. The villagers use spear-falls and elephant pits (dug so as to trap

[P. 206-B]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P209-A]

222
285

FIG. 42. Gathering equipment, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a–b. Baskets, c. Close-mesh baskets are obtained from neighboring villages and may be offered by villagers in exchange for forest produce.

[49]

[NET HUNTERS]

222 Putnam says that, for most of the year, gather-
221 ing can be said only to supplement vegetable
• 439 food obtained from the villager plantations, al-
though during the "dry season" (January–February) certain seeds and fruits ripen, and forest foods become so plentiful that the Pygmy can live entirely by gathering.

222 Particularly important among the fruits is
[137] the *ibambi*, a large fruit somewhat resembling an outsized pineapple. When ripe it can be heard falling to the ground, at which there is a

[P 209-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal [825] of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

Trade

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by 177 Putnam on the present dependency of the net [184] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent val- [571] ues other than mutual satisfaction. But the villager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.

[P. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]

alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of intervillage warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] 648 184 177 571

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[P. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, in some form, is not lacking among the villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumòi* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P 229-B]

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
4[illegible] as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[R 244-B]

[P. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
221 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

•439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[482] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P 245-B]

[p 245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

554 The fact that men go through the not inconsid-
881 erable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

555 Male status depends primarily on skill in the
224 hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by individual exploits such as elephant hunting. Among certain bands elephant hunting is a
[439] specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do so. This compulsion may have arisen in part by
[825] virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

224 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the
825 ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954,
[p. 247-B]

Little can be said of inter-band relationships as there are so few data. Neither type of band has any need to cooperate with neighboring bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occasions when there is a particular profusion of game. Among the archers joint hunting would be necessary in order to make use of the *beghe* beating technique. Among net hunters two or more bands might combine either when the individual bands fall below economic level or when a particular profusion of game requires more nets than are possessed by the single band. With the net hunters such association could become permanent, whereas with the archers it would never be necessary as the band is of such small optimum size. 628 476 224 184

The difference between the archers and the net hunters in their relationship with the villager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Putnam, is one of both degree and kind. We have seen that with their less efficient hunting technique the archers must rely more on vegetable products, and how, with the women's sphere limited to gathering, the women have more time and opportunity for gathering from the villager plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy 184 182 224 439 •

[P 247-D]

1: Turnbul E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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184 nature of the hunt also makes possible a more
182 permanent settlement near the village. The
224 trade relationship among the archers, then, as-
.439 sumes greater importance and is more formalized. Schebesta further understands it as being an inter-lineage relationship. Putnam, while acknowledging its importance also for the net hunters, says that it is interfamilial and can be broken by either side. The net-hunting technique makes more game available for trade, so there is less demand by villagers upon the net hunters than by the Lese of the archers. The necessity of a more strictly nomadic life also militates against permanent and continuous attachment between the net-hunting Mbuti and any one villager "master."

128 Of the legal system no more can be added to the section dealing with authority and leadership. There are simply not enough data even for comparison of the concepts of property and ownership between the two groups.

THE MBUTI-VILLAGER RELATIONSHIP

121 177 .439 [128] In the preceding sections we dealt with the survey briefly, mainly in order to test the validity of our classification of the Mbuti into net hunters and archers. We deliberately avoided, as far as possible, reference to the Mbuti-villager relationship, although in the final section on religious life it became particularly obvious that this relationship could not be ignored. In Mbuti society a number of institutions in one way or another are associated with or appear to be identical with villager institutions, and we must understand this connection. The only alternative is to assume that the relationship between the two peoples is one of straightforward symbiosis based on an exchange of meat for plantation products and that, in the course of this symbiosis, certain customs have been adopted and are practiced either separately or jointly. This often-drawn picture represents only the outward appearance of the facts. When one tries to understand it as part of a coherent system, however, it can be done only by creating a hypothetical Mbuti social system that is in fact a hodgepodge culled from all over the Ituri area, from which any offending portions are plucked with the excuse that they are of villager origin.

121 177 We must determine, then, the underlying facts, as opposed to the mere outward appearance: the extent to which various institutions have been adopted by the Mbuti; how far their underlying values have also been adopted, or

[A249-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 249-c]

how far only the outward form of the custom has been taken over and the values rejected. The most we can do is to clear the ground for such a study. We do so with reference only to the Epulu net hunters (unless otherwise stated), as our information is fullest here. 121 177

In the first place, what are the major points of contact between these two poeple? They may be listed as follows:

Material culture
Trade
Magical practice
Dance and festivity
Intermarriage
Ceremonial attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death

Material Culture

The adoption by the Mbuti of various villager items of material culture or technological skill has only one significance for us, which is the extent to which it places the Mbuti in a dependent position. This is difficult to estimate. It is difficult to visualize the Mbuti without metal and hard, though quite possible, to visualize them without plantains. But, even among the net hunters, luxuries tend to become necessities, and we must admit of the trend, if not the accomplished fact, toward economic dependency on the villagers. 177 439 [178]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Trade

The bare facts only are known. The Mbuti supply the villagers with meat and with certain forest products, such as roofing leaves or lianas, in return for plantation products. The villager invariably tries to enforce some service as well, with varying degrees of success. Either extreme can be found: cases in which the relationship is formal and binding in fact as well as theory, and those in which the theory is held only by the villagers and does not correspond to the fact, i.e., the Pygmy maintains his side of the trade relationship only so long as it suits him. In my experience the latter is the situation far more often than otherwise.

Then again we must emphasize that trade is not necessary on either side. The villagers could perfectly well hunt if they had to, and the Pygmies could equally well gather all their vegetable needs from the forest. Further, contrary to Schebesta's (1952, 112) assertion, the Mbuti are perfectly capable of cultivating, given a

[P 249-D]

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clear space. Some of the net hunters in the Epulu area have tried, and with success, but quickly lose interest and revert to their old nomadic ways.

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The fact that there is no attempt to equate the supply of meat and the supply of plantains is also significant. Either side gives what it feels like giving, except that the Mbuti believe themselves free to take what they want if it is not given. There is also the Bira custom mentioned by Joset (1947, 13) of giving the first fruits to the Pygmies. The Mbuti seem to have control of this situation. The villagers have no means of preventing the Mbuti from returning to the depths of the forest whenever they wish. When the Pygmy hunting camp is some distance from the village, the villagers may send in to ask for meat, or the chief may even come himself.

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Sometimes the villagers try to gain control of the situation by supplying nets and claiming the appropriate share of a net owner. The Mbuti accept the nets, but see to it that only such game falls into them as they think fit. They eventually contest the ownership of the net, claiming to have added to it themselves and thrown away the damaged, village portion.

At most, it seems possible to regard the trade relationship only as one of mutual convenience. By itself, it is far too unformalized and unstable to provide the basis for the remarkably close relationship that does, in fact, exist between the two groups.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Zaire F01

[P 250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. There is no evidence of such a practice among the net hunters, but they may cal in a villager for the purpose. But here we should consider Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying the villagers with meat for some time, yet has been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as his excuse the fact that the hunting has been poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as one can judge from casual conversation among themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti have little faith in it. Further, they have their own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song *may or may not be* accompanied by a dance re-enacting a successful hunt, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

P 224 177 789 789 533 177 P [439] • P 224 789 533

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

P 582 186

P 583 439 •

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it? P 881

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in P Z 177 181 P Z 17 439

[R 254-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
• 439 in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-
439 hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue further. Also, because of their nomadic exis-
P tence and the loose structure of band composi-
B21] tion, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *ekumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 255-C]

shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well-knit bands, such as may be found among the archers described by Schebesta, may find it possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic relationship with the villagers, but not so an active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind of relationship must be established because of the inevitability of contact. As the smaller, more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies must make the move to fit into the larger, looser group. But there is no question of absorption; the smaller group preserves its identity. The *nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti with an opportunity both for establishing a place in villager society and for asserting their independent set of values by opposition. The antagonism that remains and is even heightened by this opposition is smoothed over to some extent by the secondary mechanism by which the two groups attempt to express their relationship - mutual trade

000 P 621 648 179 [184] Z [563] P Z [439].

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p 258-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must 182
determine both their function and their mean- 53
ing, to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers.

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably 177
the major problem that arises from the survey. 439
We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical 177
grounds for the difference between the relation- 439
ship of the archers to their villager neighbors 184
and that of the more nomadic net hunters to

[P. 273- D]

[P.274-A]

177 theirs. There is also evidence, but in regrettably
• 439 little detail, that certain hunting bands main-
184 tain a client-patron relationship by specializing in elephant hunting, bringing the tusks to the villagers, on whom they rely for all vegetable products and on the edge of whose villages they live in permanent camps.

177 However, no matter how great or little the degree of dependence on the villagers, the Mbuti for whom we have any information all seem to maintain a distinct individuality in opposition to the villagers, despite their apparent adoption of villager institutions and even of [881] villager language. With regard to the adoption of villager customs, the 1954 *nkumói* shows the degree to which this adoption may be a mere superficial conformity and may indeed conceal a formal rejection of villager values. A very careful study should be made of all such institutions held in common, if not practiced jointly.

177 It is indeed at this level that we seem to find
184 some excuse for referring to the Ituri Mbuti as a single people rather than as consisting of a number of widely scattered, semi-independent

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For additional information on Villager/Mbuti relationships in which interpersonal and/or kpara/kare (artificial kin) aspects predominate, see also 608, 571, 578.]

2: Turnbull

PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

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[Author's general discussions of his approach to the problem of Village/Mbuti relationship, in which there is little presentation of specific economic, social or cultural data on the relationship, will be found in category 121.]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

doubt wholly dependent upon the villagers for all metal goods. So also with pottery, there being absolutely no knowledge of pottery manufacture among the Mbuti.

But it is significant that none of the authorities who cite the lack of these foodstuffs and metallurgical and ceramic skills among the Mbuti as an example of their economic dependence also cite the absence, among the Mbuti, of all knowledge of fire-making.[2] By the same reasoning this should make them dependent on the villagers for matches. The point is that mere lack does not constitute a necessary structural dependence, unless the lack is vital. We have to ask ourselves how *necessary* is this apparent economic dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers.

It will be shown in the section on "The Forest World" that there is no question of any absolute dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers for food, in that context, except insofar as luxuries ultimately tend to become necessities. It will be seen that in the forest their technology is sufficient to keep them supplied with all their basic needs. It will also be seen that metal is not a necessary part of their technology, any more than is pottery, or knowledge of fire-making.

In the village world, however, the Mbuti are completely dependent upon the villagers. Hunting and gathering in the neighborhood of any village are likely to be equally poor, and it would be difficult if not impossible for an Mbuti band to keep itself supplied with forest foodstuffs from a village headquarters. It would involve a half day's march, at least, to reach a suitable hunting area, and the physical effort alone would be enough to discourage even the most ardent hunter. But even more important is the fact that by living in the village the Mbuti would be out of touch with the forest, and would have no way of knowing the exact whereabouts of the game at any given time. Living in a hunting camp with the forest all around them, the Mbuti know only what is going on in their immediate vicinity. As the game moves

[2] Some Mbuti have learned to use matches, when available, and a few know of the fire drill from contact with their village neighbors. There is absolutely no indigenous method of making fire, however, and it is a point of no small importance to their social life that each household maintains its own hearth. Embers from this hearth are carried, usually by the woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, during the hunt or while on the trail. At each new camp site, the family hearths are kindled from embers of the old family hearths, preserving a distinct sense of continuity. Whenever a communal hearth is required, as for the molimo, communal participation is accentuated by the compulsory contribution of embers from each family hearth. Whereas matches are rarely used, becoming quickly damp and useless, even if available, they are never used for kindling family or communal hearths, but only for such relatively mundane purposes as lighting a pipe or cigarette.

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal
439 knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
412 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
177 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construction of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[324] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the hots and the shafts for spears; the ax is used for enlarging the 412
holes in which bees make their hives, so that the honey can be extracted more easily. Younger Mbuti do not know what they would do without the machete for cutting saplings. Both they and the older men realize that the ax is not absolutely essential, and I have seen ax-shaped clubs used for breaking away the wood from around a hive, where the wood is rotten, as it frequently is. The older men say that [324]
if they did not have machetes for cutting saplings they would use stone tools, but they have no knowledge at all of how to make such tools, and are probably prompted to make this remark by the presence in the forest of early stone axheads.

Accepting, for the moment, that the Mbuti in their forest world are 121
not in any position of necessary dependence upon the villagers for food 177.
or material, or technological skill, and admitting that in the village context they are dependent, the question arises as to why they choose to place themselves in that position of dependence. It is certainly not out of economic necessity. The truth of the matter is simply that the village offers, for a brief while, an agreeable change of pace, an opportunity for a relaxation that is not always possible in the forest, and, one might say, better hunting, on occasion. An Mbuti band or an Mbuti family or an Mbuti individual may descend upon a village either because of sheer whim, or because of laziness if the forest hunting gets too strenuous, or because of dissension, or indeed for almost any reason except necessity. Whatever the reason, and most commonly it at least involves an expressed desire for relaxation and freedom from care, the reason is on the side of the Mbuti, the choice is theirs, and the dependence that follows is as voluntary as it is temporary.

ECONOMIC RECIPROCITY

We then have to ask what the Mbuti offer in return for the food and metal products that they receive, and to determine at least the economic structure of the relationship. In so doing we are inevitably led to consider the domestic, political and religious aspects and their interrelationship with the economic system, and it is in these interrelationships that inconsistency and conflict emerge.

Even in terms of sheer economic reciprocity the relationship is in- 121
herently unstable. Continuing to grant, for the moment, the fact that 177*
no economic necessity is involved on the part of the Mbuti, and that 439
their dependence is voluntary and temporary, the forest world remain-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
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tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Reya populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tutsi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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rule. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective kpura in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

Tr Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
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which only the villagers need a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti consider the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, and he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government station de chasse.

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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tion de chasse. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbefu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

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to village boys. In some cases the Mbuti's *kpwa* may choose him as *kwé* to his own son, and in other cases he may see some advantage in having his Mbuti form a *kwé* pact with another villager, as this forms an economic and political link, then, between the two villagers. It seems that, generally, *kwé* brotherhood is formed between Mbuti and their *kpwa's* patrikin, however. It is believed that this places the two in an indissoluble politico-economic relationship for the rest of their lives, a relationship of subordination as far as the Mbuti is concerned, and one that will persist into the afterlife of the same individuals.

The villager concepts of afterlife are not clearly defined, but it is accepted without question that individuals continue to exist after death and may, if qualified by initiation and by adherence throughout life to the tribal code of behavior, join the ancestors, who live together much as they did in the present world, and continue to concern themselves with the present world. It is also accepted without question that there must be Mbuti in the afterworld, just as there are in the present. If one asks why must there be Mbuti, the invariable answer is in terms of the economic dependence of the villagers upon the Mbuti in the present world, the assumption being that the same needs will exist in the afterworld. But the economic relationship is the most easily expressed and recognized, however mistakenly, and is not necessarily therefore the most important. The political relationship is also recognized, though not quite so easily expressed because of the greater incompatibility of the systems of the two peoples. But there is also a ritual relationship which is certainly as powerful as the others, if not more so, and it is just as much a part of the *kwé* pact as are the economic and political aspects.

Kwé partners are expected to trade with each other, though not necessarily exclusively. This allows for the formation of *kwé* brotherhood between individuals who are not in a *kpwa*/Mbuti relationship, and is an attempt on the part of the villager to regularize the situation should his Mbuti join a band trading with a neighboring village. To have a *kpwa* in one village and a *kwé* in another, strategically chosen, is considered equally advantageous by Mbuti and villager. As far as the Mbuti is concerned it provides him with two groups of people who feel under some kind of an obligation toward him, and who need him. As far as the *kpwa* is concerned it gives him someone he can effectively claim against should his Mbuti decide to trade in that direction. As far as the villager *kwé* is concerned it is another Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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to his credit, increasing his prestige and also somewhat increasing his trading opportunities. The trade is mainly thought of in terms of meat and labor on the side of the Mbuti, village foods, clothes and tobacco on the side of the villager. A fairly friendly relationship does sometimes develop between two *karé*, who, regardless of the status differentiation, undergo the whole *nkumbi* together, suffering the same ordeals side by side, and are perhaps more united by age than they are separated by the status differentiation.

The political aspects of *karé* brotherhood reinforce the economics, not only serving as a basis for compensation against a migrant Mbuti, but also for extending the *karé* relationship to link the Mbuti's *kpara* with the village boy's father. The relationship is primarily between individuals, but it nonetheless creates felt obligations between the families involved, and one family of villagers may invoke the help of another family in a dispute, through an Mbuti *karé* link. The kinship ramifications of *karé* brotherhood are still far from clear from the village point of view, and it seems that the introduction of the Mbuti to the system may have somewhat disorganized the traditional system. For the Mbuti there is no connection between *karé* and kinship, and effectively there can be none among the villagers. If there were, then the formation of a *karé* tie between *kpara* and their own Mbuti would be incestuous, and the formation of such ties with unrelated families, conceived of as a sibling relationship, would effectively prohibit marriage in that direction and create an impossibly confused dual kinship system. Yet *karé* do refer to each other sometimes as "brother," and take advantage of their thus extended kinship relations.

The religious aspects of *karé* brotherhood are far less easy to define, and far less easy for the investigator to determine because they are seldom, if ever, discussed. I have never heard such a discussion, unless I instigated it, except on the occasion of the death of a villager. On the death of an Mbuti it is generally only the other aspects of the *karé* relationship that are discussed, involving liability for funerary expenses, compensation for outstanding obligations, divination of the cause of death. But when a villager dies the Mbuti *karé* is introduced into the heart of the funerary ritual, having to perform divers functions such as beating the villager's wives, leading an attack upon all close kin of the deceased, conveniently clustered together for the purpose, "to drive away evil," as the villagers explained it among themselves and to me. The Mbuti *karé* is also made responsible for providing certain foods for the deceased and, I believe, certain herbs

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 7

Flux and Instability

Not yet having examined the forest context, we cannot completely dispose of the question of economic dependence or interdependence. At the moment, it appears that the Mbuti do not need the villagers except for luxuries which may in time become necessities, and it equally seems that the villagers do not need the Mbuti except as laborers on the plantations, in particular with the cotton harvest, and this is a very recent need introduced by Belgian administration. The most that one can say about the economic aspect of the relationship is that it appears to be one of mutual convenience. The villagers *could* hunt (and in areas where there are few or no Mbuti, they do) but they prefer not to go into the forest if it can be avoided. The Mbuti *could* live successfully off the forest at their indigenous level of technology, but trade with the villagers makes life that much easier.

If we look carefully at daily life in any village, the economic aspect of the relationship fades even further into the background. Mbuti can occasionally be seen bringing in from the forest meat or other forest products needed by the villagers, such as the *fito* saplings and phrynium leaves for their houses. More often they will be seen helping with odd domestic chores, such as fetching water or firewood, house-building, or guarding plantations. Mbuti women help the village women pound manioc and to thresh and winnow the locally grown dry rice. They also help the village women carry loads of plantains to and from the market.

But mostly, if any Mbuti are to be seen at all, they will be seen lazing on the *baraza* of their *kpara*, being fed and offered ends of cigarettes, or bribed with liquor to put on a dance that all the villagers will come to watch. Such dances are wild and erotic, accompanied by anything from one to three or four drums, never by song.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

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CHAPTER 10

The Economy

THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage
613 context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting
602 entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When
• 439 discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 seq.), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri,
435 except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking
261 Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

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The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *kare* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

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band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *kavé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *kavé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[9]

In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

[9] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti; the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

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no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a *capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age,

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The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of 628
game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey 222
season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a 131
neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As [621]
often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the en- [602]
croaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the en- 621
croaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seek- 628
ing a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, 224
joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge oc- 476
cur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally [439] •
involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means 439
of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-opera- 628
tion as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands 621
is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum 628
economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

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P 621 628 volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

P 439 621 121 This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen C to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic 439 necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in 621 effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial 121 band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of C either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in [611] composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than [597] the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

P 439 621 608 571 The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another P band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in [156] this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

P 439 608 571 The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

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exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *kuré* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[6] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[6] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

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exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

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ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 121
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 621
others will lead immediately to ridicule. 554

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438]
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

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685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[362] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

578 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
*177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
186 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
436 the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fusion.
[621] Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[958] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
514 also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
• 439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

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village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *ssumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *ssumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masini, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masini who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masini ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masini was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masini had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

1. Band/Village: *capita/Chief*
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Kard/Kard*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villagers found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

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throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villagers, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *kare* as they may also do with their *kpare* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *kare* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *kare* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best these mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

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for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *kwé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *kwé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1966 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-A]

21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 rest I put in a place where the tree had two arms [i.e., in a fork]. I
222 sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, but I shall give it all to my
571 *kpara*." I came down.
439

"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" My *kpara* looks at the basket.

"Ah! My master. I came to search for my honey, but there is only a little of it. It is a bad year. It is heavy work. You must go back with my honey; if I get any more I shall come with it."

The *kpara* took my honey with him and returned to the village to say that he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity! [*Ndamdama nda'e!* or *Mbafu yakél!*] When he had gone I quickly climbed up above and I collected all the honey from the place I had put it, and I came down to return to the camp and share it with all my relatives. I walked, I walked, I walked. I arrived at the big river. Darkness began to come. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?" I climbed up a big tree and lay there.

539 Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke up. A little
222 way off I saw two firebrands. "Ah! Who is walking in the middle of
776 the night like that, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit." I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice. "Ah! My child, where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very, very old woman. I was surprised. "Ha! Grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost the trail."

I remained quiet, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree. It was truly an evil spirit, but he had changed into my grandmother. I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"Yes, Grandmother. I am here. I was searching for honey, but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Oh, child, you have done badly, for when you did not return I thought you were dead and I left camp to search for you, and I have found you well. You have done very badly toward me. Give me my honey."

"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, I, myself. We shall return together."

"Nonsense! You are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with my honey. Give it." I was afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit. I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more." I threw down more. "Give me more."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

in the Mbuti/Villager situation. The basis of the proximity and distance elements does not rest on kinship, and the relationship is as much between the two groups as it is between individuals, otherwise the situation conforms to Radcliffe-Brown's model quite clearly—*viz.* (1952, p. 95): "The show of hostility, the perpetual disrespect, is a continual expression of that social disjunction which is an essential part of the whole structural situation, but over which, without destroying or even weakening it, there is provided the social conjunction of friendliness and mutual aid."

In the Mbuti/Villager situation the relationship appears to be symmetrical and permissive, though both sides do occasionally take offense, the village side even sometimes taking counteraction. The ineffectiveness of taking offense or action, however, only serves to heighten the characteristic "social disjunction," and there is no doubt that beneath the display of hostility and disrespect there is cooperation, and even considerable amity. Considering the completely opposed value systems of the two worlds, this is, indeed, the only way in which the two peoples could meet and still retain a separate identity. The reasons for the meeting taking place at all, as we have already seen, are circumstantial—the historical invasion of the forest by the villagers, and their use of the Mbuti as guides; the continued parasitism of the Mbuti upon the villagers long after the original need for cooperation had gone; the contemporary mutual convenience of economic exchange; sheer territorial propinquity. These reasons do not lead automatically or easily to a structured relationship, particularly when the values of the two peoples are so divergent, so while a form of joking relationship helps to stabilize the alliance, maintaining the combination of Radcliffe-Brown's "conjunctive and disjunctive components," it is not by itself enough.

We have seen the methods by which the villagers have sought to further stabilize the situation, through a formal economic-exchange system, a fictive parallel-kinship system, and through introduction to village supernatural sanctions by establishment of magico-religious bonds through *karé* blood brotherhood and *nkumbi* initiation. Any one of these, had it worked, would have reduced the Mbuti to subordination, yet this plainly has not been done. The defense of the Mbuti has lain in their own indigenous forest system, which works not only to maintain internal cohesion but also to maintain the utmost possible structural distance from the village world while allowing a minimal amount of "mutually convenient" economic exchange.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.303]

THE LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

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me ke nandura ka ba boki.
I went to the forest to collect honey.

me ke a'i, me ke a'i, me ke a'i.
I went, I went, I went.

me ke akurahwa, ku pia libo mangbo.
I went very far, beyond the big river.

moki li suanjoki. me oni neko kuma boki.
I heard the sound of bees. I saw up high the place of honey.

me lufudo, "toka bo nangoli; nde mendamo; nde boki ndamo."
I said, "Nobody has enclosed the tree with vine, it is mine; it is my honey."

me poki loka phelea, phelea bekbekbe'i.
I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed.

me teningoli. ke kongi isa, me pisi isa subaso.
I cut a vine. I fanned my fire, and put the fire in my basket.

me pedi oda phangoli; me daphi, me daphi.
I began to climb; I climbed, I climbed.

boki neko kurahwa. nde boki, boki sandenengo, kanga piso.
The honey was very far. It was honey, real honey, not *apuma.*

me kidi. me boingoli, me liki. me pisi isa suba eboso.
I reached it. I fastened the vine, I sat. I put fire into the hole.

me lophi. me ki abi bekbekbe'i, me che'i banzoki.
I blew. I got much smoke, I drove out many bees.

me ko iti, me ko iti, me ko iti.
I chopped, I chopped, I chopped.

me ko iti, me mua kito, a mua pika na dodo.
While I was chopping I heard someone walking below.

"nu andea a mua pika pecha me?" nde mukpara ndamo.
"Who is walking below me?" It is my master.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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"a oki kueta mboki ndamo, a me beli." me wanzi nimbo.
"He heard me cutting my honey, he followed me." I began to sing.

me nimbi bekbekbei, akini melufu. kanga me oki.
I sang loudly, but he called me. I did not hear.

me nimbi, akini me kweti.
I sang, but I chopped.

me nimbi, "Ha! me kweti boki. me ko oka kapa'i akpara mamo."
I sang, "Ha! I am chopping honey to give to my *kpara*."

me kweti bisa, me kweti boka. boki a bi lenga'i.
I chopped slowly, I chopped honey. There was much honey.

akini me pisa depha subaso.
But I only put part of it in my basket.

me pisi ndetina a su soro kokomea.
The rest I put where the tree had two arms.

me nimbi, "Ah! boki a bi depha, me ka bokbu akpara mamo." me ki a dodo.
I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! mambuti mamo, me siye ema?" mubira a si pi so.
"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" The MuBira looks at the basket.

"Ah! akpara mamo, me piki ka ba boki ndamo, akini me pati na che.
"Ah! My Master, I came to search for my honey, but I got only a little.

"me mua ka pa'i bokbu. me sia bo'u."
"I am going to give it all. I will stay empty."

"ue nde mambuti manza. me ka pa eboko mboye siki nanji."
"You are a good Mbuti. I shall give you bananas when you come to the village."

"Ah! akpara mamo, me lika nandura a ka ba boki, akini nde depha."
"Ah! My Master, I shall stay in the forest to search for honey, but there is little."

"nde mwaka sinana. nde kazi ndangbo."
"It is a bad year. It is hard work."

"ue sikia nanji na boki ndamo. me pati ndetina, me piki na'u."
"You go to the village with my honey. If I get more, I shall come with it."

akpara a bu boki ndamo, a siki nanji nda'e.
The *kpara* took my honey, he went to the village with it.

asibande a bi boki ndamo bokbu. ndandama nda'e!
He would say he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity!

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ake me daphi umand'o, me bu boki ngbokbu, kumande me pisibi.
I quickly climbed up again, I took all the honey from the place where I had put it. 539 222 439

me simi ya dodo a sia n'apa a kapa banama bame.
I came down to return to the camp and shared it with everyone.

me tambi, me tambi, me tambi. me kidi apua libo mangbo.
I walked, I walked, I walked, I arrived at the big river.

tokwaba a wanzi pika. me lufu. "ha! tudu a me pedi a me mandula? me sao mabo?"
Darkness began to settle. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?"

me daphi kua me mangbo, me langi neko.
I climbed up into a big tree, I lay there.

ame mangondo moki liso. me oni kurahwa isa ebaré.
Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke. I saw far away two firebrands. 539 776

"mondea na tamba kifa, na isa ebara bende? nde ketiba!"
"Who is walking in the middle of the night, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit!"

me kobi nengo. m'oki liso kali.
I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice.

"a miki mamo, miki mamo; miki mamo mu ma?" liso a tata, mozee nengo.
"Ah! My child, my child; where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very old person.

me moboki nengo. "Ah! tatamua kaba me amemangondo? nde tata mamo nengo?"
I was very afraid. "Ah! My grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"ah miki mamo mu ma? au moli a pedi, au a bungi?"
"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost his way?"

me kobi nengo, akini isa ebaré akidi tina me.
I kept quiet completely, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree.

nde keti nengo, akini akeoki tatamamo.
It was truly an evil spirit, but it had turned into my grandmother.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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TABLE 3a

FOREST/VILLAGE EXCHANGE

P
*177
• 439
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439
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To illustrate the major areas in which an exchange of goods or services does or could take place.

The Village

	Forest Produce	*Village Produce*
SHELTER:	Phrynium leaves, small saplings, firewood.	House poles; large saplings; leaves; mud for walls; wood for doors, furniture, etc.; clothing.
FOOD:	Meat, rarely nuts and honey.	Bananas, manioc, peanuts, rice, corn, beans, palm oil, dried fish (trade).
LABOR:	Partial hut-building, guarding plantations, carrying goods to market, drawing water, entertainment.	All major building, furniture-making, marketing, plantation work, clearing, canoe-building, fishing, road work.
SKILLS:	Effective medicines.	Pottery, metalwork, toolmaking, divination, ritual specialization (circumcision).

The Forest

SHELTER:	Phrynium leaves, saplings, firewood, clothing, furniture.	Nil
FOOD:	Meat, mushrooms, fruits, nuts, berries, roots, honey.	Bananas, manioc, corn, beans, palm oil, rice (with relevant utensils).
LABOR:	Hut-building, bark-cloth-making, hunting, gathering.	Nil
SKILLS:	Effective medicine, manufacture of hunting equipment, dance and song.	Metalwork (metal tips for arrows and spears, blades for knives and axes).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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TABLE 3b

ACTUAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN VILLAGE FAMILY AND MBUTI FAMILY DURING FIVE-DAY VISIT OF LATTER TO EPULU VILLAGE

P 177* 439 •

Brought for villagers:

One *mboloko* antelope (enough for two adults for one meal)
Two loads of leaves (enough for ⅛ roof, or for one over-all temporary repair)

C 177 439

Work done for villagers:

P 461 177*

Woman:
husks rice: four hours
watches over cooking: twelve hours
helps fetch water: two hours
carries one load of bananas to market: three hours
takes part in two dances: two evenings

Man:
fetches one load of firewood: four hours
helps re-leaf roof: three hours
takes part in two dances: two evenings

Two children: watch plantation for three mornings

P 177* 439

Obtained during stay from the villagers:

Village food for four, or five, days
1½ packets of cigarettes
1 bottle of palm oil
1 musical instrument (*lukembi*)
2 arrow points
1 ax blade
1 bottle of beer
1 shirt
1 bar of soap

C 177 439

Taken back to forest after five days:

1 stem of bananas (enough for the family for fourteen meals)
manioc (enough for four meals)
beans (enough for two meals)
corn (enough for three meals)
peanuts (enough for one meal)
½ bottle palm oil
1 bar soap
1 handful of salt
1 handful loose tobacco

[*Table 4 is located inside back cover.*]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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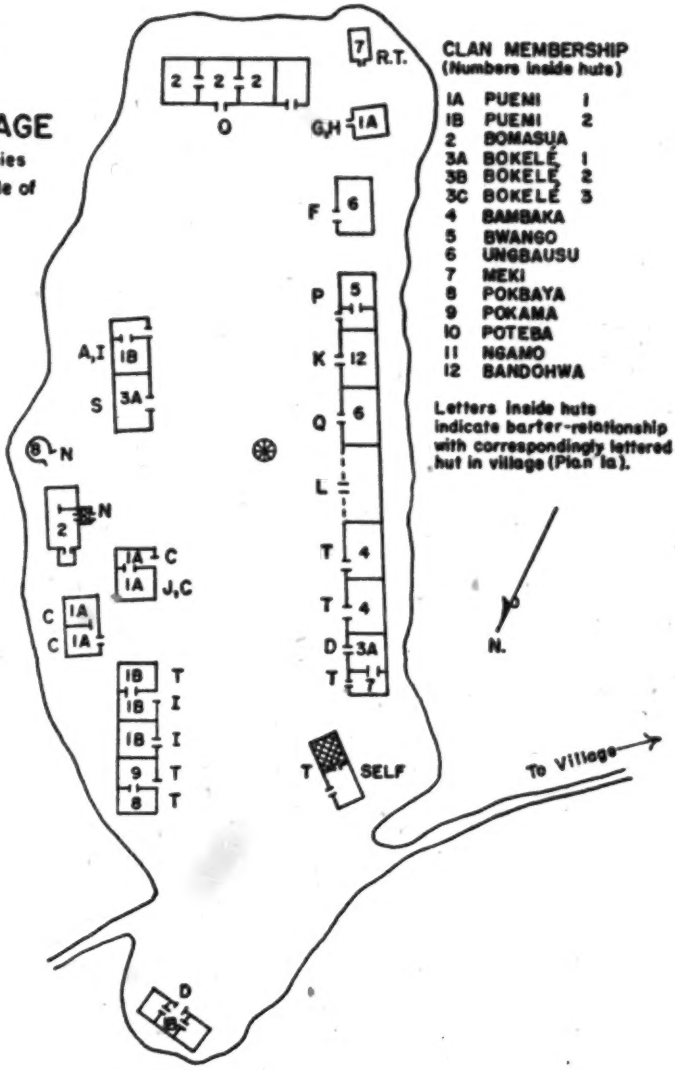
Plan Ib
EPULU VILLAGE

Camp of Pygmies
(About twice scale of Plan Ia)



CLAN MEMBERSHIP
(Numbers inside huts)

1A	PUEMI	1
1B	PUEMI	2
2	BOMASUA	
3A	BOKELÉ	1
3B	BOKELÉ	2
3C	BOKELÉ	3
4	BAMBAKA	
5	BWANGO	
6	UNGBAUSU	
7	MEKI	
8	POKBAYA	
9	POKAMA	
10	POTEBA	
11	NGAMO	
12	BANDOHWA	

Letters inside huts indicate barter-relationship with correspondingly lettered hut in village (Plan Ia).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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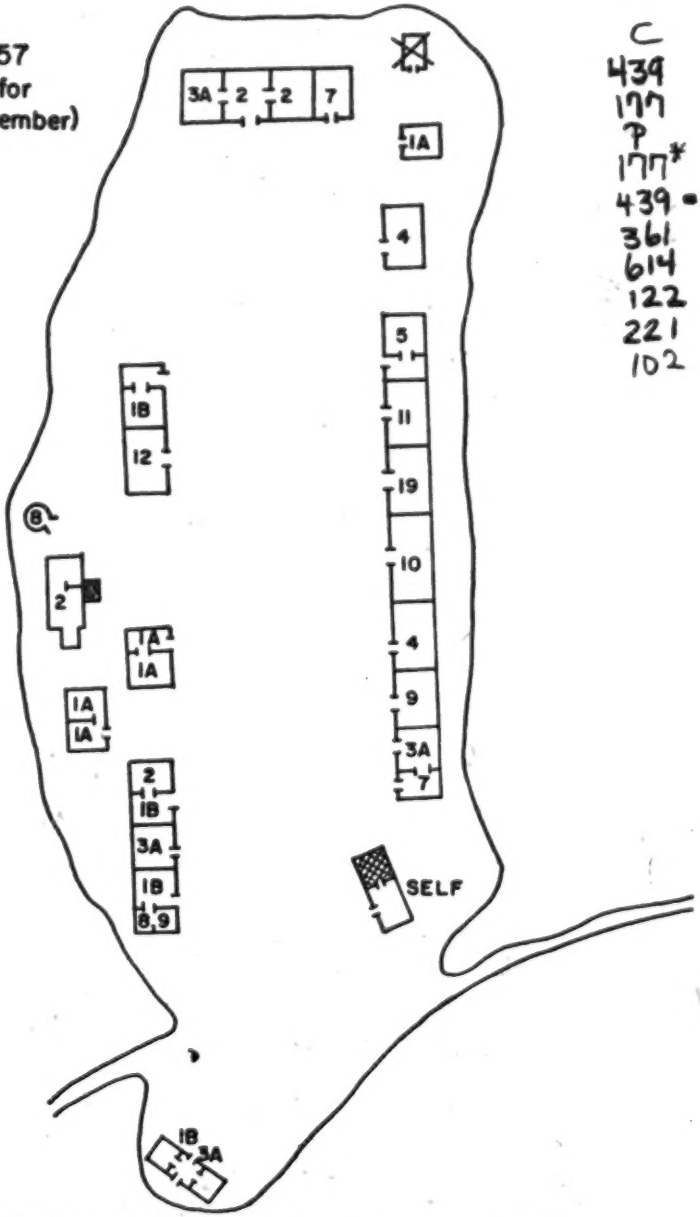

PLAN 2a–d *Village camp of Epulu Mbuti, October 1957–March 1958.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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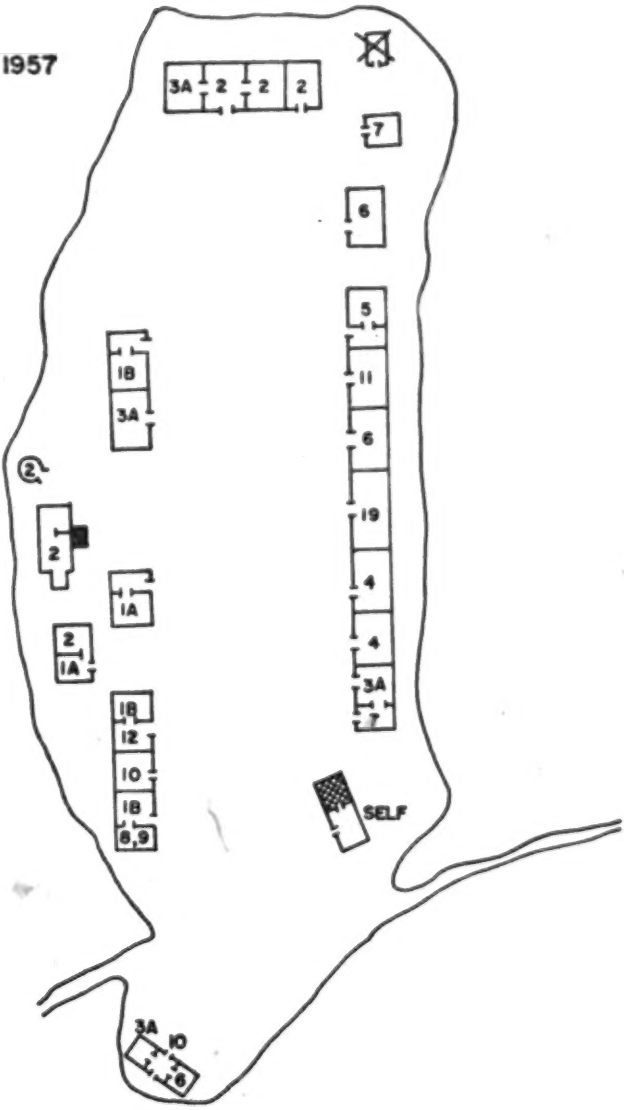
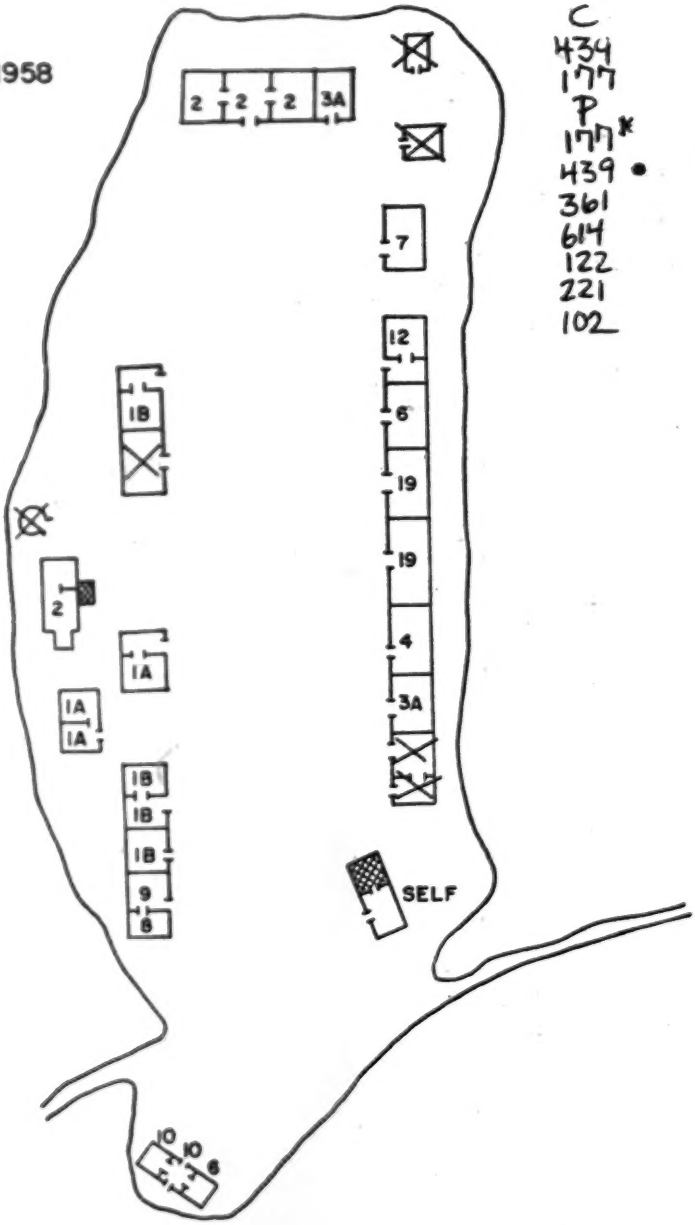
Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958



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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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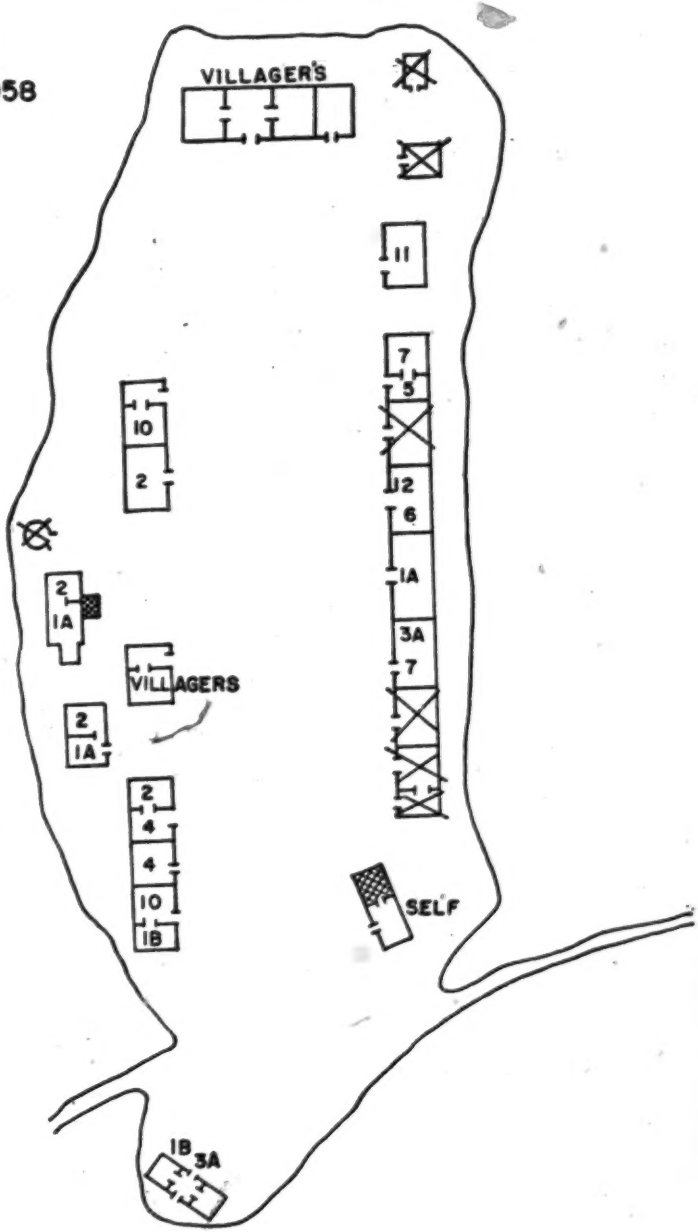
WAYWARD SERVANTS

Plan 2d
MARCH 1958



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Pygmies F04
Mbuti

[Information on begging and stealing of food from villages, since the practice is not regarded as a crime or symptom of Pygmy indigence but something the villagers simply tolerate, will be found under 177]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 224 go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart,
[202] bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the
[535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories
[157] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he
439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he
177 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes. 538 439 177

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my [224] [251] 538 439 177 776 [186] [769]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down
439 the trail.
177
776 "As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits.
[186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda,
177 Ekianga's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the
[776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She

P 123 177 439 obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was

P 123 177 well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each

C 832 [576] other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 [513] [372] That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

C 648 123

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439 177
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza,* [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was sus-
pected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground,
they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and
imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled
the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it
sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing
as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Sur-
rounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around,
faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men
who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing
in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored, well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his baraza, waiting to do him some small favor.

Masisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time been attached to a noble of the BaBira tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them, or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village. Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent one of his daughters, or his adopted son Madyadya, to help the chief and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself. Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

basket with two legs of antelope as a gift for Kapamba's wife. The camp watched the chief leave with few regrets. They had only allowed him to stay because he had brought a quantity of food with him.

Manyalibo's wife returned two days later with her basket full to overflowing with delicacies from the village. She had told Kapamba that she did not want to stay longer without her husband, so he had no option but to allow her to return.

Manyalibo's son-in-law, Ausu, was even more of a renegade. His "hereditary master" was André, the chief of a powerful Islamic village just beyond Eboyo. André's father, old Effundi Somali, had been a child when Stanley brought his relief expedition through the forest to rescue Emin Pasha. He used to tell stories of the dreadful wars that were fought in those days, and of the trail of destruction that Stanley had left behind him. While the old man was alive André had worked as head cook at Camp Putnam, but now he was chief in his father's place.

Part Bira and part Ngwana, André inherited all the traits of the latter. In his dealings with Europeans he could be charming and helpful; he could also be cunning and crooked. With other villagers he was proud and avaricious, and he had a supreme contempt—which he could disguise whenever it suited him—for the Pygmies.

A few years earlier, when Ausu had been hunting forest pig, a boar had charged him and wounded him badly, ripping his stomach and one leg. André had taken Ausu into his own house and cared for him, nursing him for months until he was well again. This was done under the guise of friendship, and I have heard André tell the story many times to illustrate how enlightened he is. But I have also heard Ausu's comment that André had done no more for him than he would have done for a valuable hunting dog. A Pygmy is not unresponsive to genuine kindness, and Ausu would not have left André soon after recovering if there had been any such kindness in the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoulders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal, and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading, cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

against him and have him put in jail. As the tribunals are all Negro, with no Pygmy members, even the most obviously distorted charge against a Pygmy is bound to succeed.

Ausu decided that if this was André's attitude he was not going to give him a single franc. On the day of the payment I went with him to the Station de Chasse, saw him get the five hundred francs, and joined the director in advising him to climb over the fence and return through the forest rather than to leave by the main gate. And sure enough, as I left, there was André with half a dozen of his men, waiting. When he saw he had been tricked he went to the paramount chief of the area and had a court order made out for Ausu's immediate arrest and confinement to prison. But Ausu was already back in the forest, and in time even court orders are forgotten. And so with all his show of authority and superiority André was unable to do anything; trying to pursue a Pygmy in the forest was a task no villager would undertake for any amount of pay.

There are those, like André, who really believe that the Pygmies are inferior and are meant to be treated like slaves, but for the most part the villagers are much more sensible and realistic. If they want to have control over their Pygmies, they know it must be based on something other than threats of physical force. But even the most benevolent of them regard the Pygmies much as the Pygmies regard them in turn—as a kind of convenience. I know of only one villager who was almost accepted by the pygmies as one of themselves. That was Kaweki, the fisherman.

Kaweki was a not-so-young bachelor of the BaBira tribe. He claimed to dislike women, saying they made far too much noise and cost far too much money. Most of the time he was in the forest, catching fish in dams and traps, drying them, and sending them down to market with his Pygmy friends. This struck the other villagers as an undignified, not to say an unsafe, procedure. But Kaweki was not one to care about what others thought.

593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

584 [836] [571] [439] [186] 584 [583]

nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 114 I asked Kenge if he would like to come with me and was not surprised when he packed off Maliamo to stay with his mother. Nothing would have stopped Kenge from making our projected tour of the forest. We decided to circle the area by following the road around the fringes, stopping wherever it seemed expedient and set-
P [122] ting off by foot. I took a supply of notebooks and pencils, a typewriter, and a couple of changes of clothes. Kenge not only brought two changes of clothes, specially purchased at the local stores for the
P [186] occasion, but also a huge old charcoal-heated flatiron. He said that we would probably be going through large cities and meeting big people, and he wanted to show them that we were not savages.

Our first stop was the headquarters of the BaNdaka chief, at the village of Bafwakoa. It was a comfortable day's drive, and we arrived late in the afternoon, having stopped at almost every village on the way. The news of our coming had gone before us, in the strange way that news travels in Africa, from village to village. When we reached Bafwakoa, Chief Kachui was sitting out on his veranda waiting to greet us, surrounded by his official advisers and some of his family.

C Kachui was an old man, and a leper, and he knew enough of
522 Europeans not to offer to shake hands with strangers. But we had
563 met several times before, and he clasped both my hands warmly in
P 115 his and made me sit down beside him. I introduced Kenge as a friend,
123 and with great aplomb the powerful old man called for another chair to be brought. This was the first time, I am sure, that such an honor had been done a Pygmy by this severe and conventional chief. We talked a long while. I made it quite plain that he could talk freely in front of Kenge, and he did so. He said that he "owned" several hundred Pygmies, and they were really more trouble than they were worth. "Here it is, time for the cotton crop to be brought in, and
P [439] still I can not get the Pygmies to come back from the forest. They say the hunting is too good, but if it is, then why do I get no meat?

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 563 P 177 184 We did meet some Pygmies, however, and they laughed and told us that no Pygmy would ever come near Isiaka; there were plenty of other villagers who gave them much more in return for their meat, while Isiaka always expected them to work on his plantations for nothing. This, in fact, was the picture we got wherever we C [186] stopped. The villagers throughout the forest complained bitterly about the Pygmies, saying, "They eat us up until we are ready to die"—meaning that the Pygmies take from them but give little in return.

P C 177 439 C 829 It was not until we reached the western limits of the forest and turned north that we really had any luck. Some miles east of Wamba we left the car and followed a track through the forest. At the end of a full day we arrived at a series of old established villages of the Mabudo tribe. These people had a much more realistic attitude toward the Pygmies and consequently got along much better with them. They talked freely and willingly. They said that, after all, the Pygmies had been in the forest long before the Mabudo arrived, so they had the right to live as they wished. If they preferred to stay in the forest and live like animals, that was their concern, but if they wanted to come to the villages and work for the Mabudo, that was fine. At the time of harvest the villagers all gave gifts of the first fruits to the local Pygmies, because, as they said, it was their land. And any time the Pygmies were near a Mabudo village they invariably brought in gifts of meat or honey.

P 123 There were a few Pygmies in one of the villages when we arrived, and after a couple of days they agreed to take us out to one of the hunting camps. Kenge had done some talking to them on the side, assuring them that I was not really like a villager, but just like them, a *"miki nde ndura"*—son of the forest. When he introduced me to them he proudly pointed to the marks on my forehead that proclaimed me an adult. "The villagers call him Mulefu, because he is

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

15

The Dream World

OUR RETURN TO EPULU found most of the Pygmies, except for 361
Cephu and his group, down in the village. Hunting had been excep- [439]
tionally good and over the past weeks they had dried a quantity of
meat which they were now busy trading for village produce. Their
roadside village camp had long been abandoned, and only my house
there was still standing. They all seemed to have agreed that they [342]
did not want any more mud houses, and they had made a temporary
camp just inside the forest. It was not far from one of the plantations,
and close to a stream of crystal water.

Kenge had a hero's welcome; even the villagers came to visit the

222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy
262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.

222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller
621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it
222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the
177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley
621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest.
[439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan.
621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said,
578 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco
177 and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.
[312]

Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P. 323-A]

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped inter-village and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 514 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

[P. 323-B]

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[276] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[203] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home
[535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

P 177 439 571 [426]

wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

Z 186 **Negro attitude toward their pygmies.**—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581

The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy woman it is a great rise in the scale of living to marry a Negro as his second or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

Z [595] [522]

[P.324-B]

481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

Pygmy Technology

412 197 439 **Basic tools.**—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

[P 326-A]

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
[224] all. He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles
[462] are added. The women use these for many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.
412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

[P. 326-B]

415 Also obtained from the Negroes are
177 the cooking pots that all pygmy wom-
439 en own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have
462 chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman
[824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 This technique is not easy; it is
462 much easier if two women work to-
476 gether, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[A327-A]

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

Z 237 433 435 177 [567]

ing a double profit. Slavery, therefore, was a by-product of these raids, and not the primary objective, which was to obtain ivory. When the white men came in, they said to the Negroes, "Why deal with these Arab slavers? Sell your ivory to us, and we will leave you alone." Thus, ivory became an important item to the Negroes, and the more they could get of it the better.

P 224 177 439 Z 439 563

The pygmy could never, by himself, kill enough elephants to stop them from trampling his host's gardens. He could, however, kill enough to swell his host's supply of ivory and increase his host's capital. So a pygmy who was an elephant hunter became a special favorite of his Negro host and would get special gifts and favors in return for the ivory.

P 411 Z [325]

The pygmy elephant hunter uses a special spear. Its handle is three to four feet long; its blade is leaf-shaped, of thin iron, about eight inches long and four wide. It is Negro-forged, of soft iron; the pygmy hunter sharpens it on a stone, until it is razor sharp.

P 224

His technique of hunting is daring and simple, and takes as much skill as that of a Spanish matador. He tracks the elephant, which is not difficult, until he knows from the spoor that he is close to it. When he hears the elephant's bowels rumble, he goes along even more quietly, until he sees the elephant through the underbrush. He then approaches the elephant silently, up wind; he jabs his spear as far as he can into the elephant, gashing the belly just behind the ribs; then he pulls it right out again. The elephant at this point usually turns, and the pygmies say that if you as much as wink at this moment you are a dead pygmy.

The man stands stock still, so the elephant can't see him. Then he goes through a sequence of stab and jump and stand still, as many times as he can. Every time the elephant looks

[P. 331-A]

224 get one cut of one animal, another cut of another, depending on what part they played in the capture of each. In any case, even if there is only one animal, everyone will get something to eat. This does not mean that all families eat equally well, however; some have more than others, some better cuts. There is both a reward for special luck and prowess, and a charitable mechanism for those who have shown neither. Sometimes the net hunters catch an okapi; in this case there is enough meat to feed the camp for a week, and everyone eats and eats well.

The meat is cut up by the man who killed the animal, or anyone who knows the rules. In any case there are always arguments. The man who makes a [626] mistake is cried down; they all know [571] the rules, or think that they know them. Government, as far as distribution of spoils is concerned, is by argument and common consent without specific leadership in any individual—the typical pygmy way of making decisions and ordering events.

In the case of the hunter who catches his animal all alone, without help of any kind, the carcass belongs to him alone. Theoretically, he and his family could [626] eat it all up if he wished, but there is little chance that this would happen; he would not dare face public opinion. He would be labeled a mean man and [439] would suffer for it in the end. It may happen however that he is behind in his gifts to his Negro host. In this case he will take the carcass uncut into the village, to avoid trouble from that quarter, and the other pygmies will not hold this against him, provided that there is other food to eat.

[171] The division of spoils after an elephant hunt follows the same principle as it does among the Indians of Tierra del Fuego or Lower California when a whale washes ashore—regardless of who may be responsible there is a

[P 333-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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CHAPTER 7

Flux and Instability

Not yet having examined the forest context, we cannot completely dispose of the question of economic dependence or interdependence. At the moment, it appears that the Mbuti do not need the villagers except for luxuries which may in time become necessities, and it equally seems that the villagers do not need the Mbuti except as laborers on the plantations, in particular with the cotton harvest, and this is a very recent need introduced by Belgian administration. The most that one can say about the economic aspect of the relationship is that it appears to be one of mutual convenience. The villagers *could* hunt (and in areas where there are few or no Mbuti, they do) but they prefer not to go into the forest if it can be avoided. The Mbuti *could* live successfully off the forest at their indigenous level of technology, but trade with the villagers makes life that much easier.

If we look carefully at daily life in any village, the economic aspect of the relationship fades even further into the background. Mbuti can occasionally be seen bringing in from the forest meat or other forest products needed by the villagers, such as the *fito* saplings and phrynium leaves for their houses. More often they will be seen helping with odd domestic chores, such as fetching water or firewood, house-building, or guarding plantations. Mbuti women help the village women pound manioc and to thresh and winnow the locally grown dry rice. They also help the village women carry loads of plantains to and from the market.

But mostly, if any Mbuti are to be seen at all, they will be seen lazing on the *baraza* of their *kpara,* being fed and offered ends of cigarettes, or bribed with liquor to put on a dance that all the villagers will come to watch. Such dances are wild and erotic, accompanied by anything from one to three or four drums, never by song.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

TABLE 3b

ACTUAL EXCHANGE BETWEEN VILLAGE FAMILY AND MBUTI FAMILY DURING FIVE-DAY VISIT OF LATTER TO EPULU VILLAGE

P 177* 439 C 177 439

Brought for villagers:

One *mboloko* antelope (enough for two adults for one meal)
Two loads of leaves (enough for ⅛ roof, or for one over-all temporary repair)

P 461 • 177*

Work done for villagers:

Woman:
husks rice: four hours
watches over cooking: twelve hours
helps fetch water: two hours
carries one load of bananas to market: three hours
takes part in two dances: two evenings

Man:
fetches one load of firewood: four hours
helps re-leaf roof: three hours
takes part in two dances: two evenings

Two children: watch plantation for three mornings

P 177* 439 C 177 439

Obtained during stay from the villagers:

Village food for four, or five, days
1½ packets of cigarettes
1 bottle of palm oil
1 musical instrument (*lukembi*)
2 arrow points
1 ax blade
1 bottle of beer
1 shirt
1 bar of soap

Taken back to forest after five days:

1 stem of bananas (enough for the family for fourteen meals)
manioc (enough for four meals)
beans (enough for two meals)
corn (enough for three meals)
peanuts (enough for one meal)
½ bottle palm oil
1 bar soap
1 handful of salt
1 handful loose tobacco

[*Table 4 is located inside back cover.*]

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours. [461]

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts. [P. 327-B]

[ARCHERS]

613 A number of lineages are associated into
614 clans, but these are widely dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 The huts are built in a circle around a clear-
342 ing by the womenfolk of the individual families.
[462] Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to
[341] form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (Efe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.174-B]

285
252

FIG. 11. Fruit press, archers, Kilo District, East Ituri. An unusual utensil, found in the hunting camp of an eastern archer band, used for extracting juice.

GATHERING

Meat, however, forms only about 30 per cent of the diet (Schebesta, 1941, 11). The archers' staple is essentially vegetarian, and this is provided almost exclusively by women. First place goes to the plantains, sweet potatoes, and peanuts acquired from the villagers in return for meat or service. But the forest itself provides an abundance of roots, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and edible fungi, all of which the Pygmy uses. Schebesta gives no details as to the exact proportions of these various foodstuffs consumed, so it is impossible to get any idea of the dietetics of this group. He also mentions the place of snails and grubs, termites and ants, larvae, and certain types of snake in the diet. Fish form only a small part of the diet, but the womenfolk catch crabs and small fish in the shallow streams, using their hands or small nets.

262 [462] [439] [226]

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 22 The direct contribution of the children to the food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
individual family and only indirectly with that
592 of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[854] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
621 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
287 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those
412 of the archers; the beating ends may have one
of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make bark-cloth.

[462] [476] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity calling for cooperation between men and women.

[P.197-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [373] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [252] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a [463] Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [P.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

A fourth factor might be added: While the 184
net hunt quickly scares animals away from the 182
area around the hunting camp, necessitating 224
frequent changes of site, the archery technique 361
neither depletes the game so quickly nor
frightens it away. An archer band can therefore
remain confined to a smaller area, near the
village, while the net hunters sometimes must
wander several days' march away from their
patrons. The more nomadic group also has [262]
constantly fresh supplies of vegetable growth at
its disposal, thus decreasing the need, which is
apparently felt by the more settled archers, for
plantation products.

Thus at once we can see the possible eco- 184
nomic, social, and political implications of the 182
difference in hunting technique and how these 12
implications follow in fact. 224

Gathering occupies a similar position of 222
social and economic importance in each type of 184
community. It is regarded primarily as the 462.
work of women, though, wherever it calls for
tree climbing, it is undertaken by men. Among
[P 244-D]

[p. 245-A]

222 both groups it appears that food acquired by
184 gathering is more prominent in the Mbuti diet
462 than the product of hunting.

222 Honey gathering, a primarily male activity,
221 is the only major seasonal activity. There are
184 indications from both groups that the Mbuti
[462] regard this as a festive season and that it was possibly once of greater social significance than it is now, when recreation and variety are more easily had through contact with the villagers. Nonetheless it is still more important to both groups than can be accounted for by its economic aspect alone.

27 There is not enough information on drinks,
262 narcotics, and stimulants, nor on food restric-
128 tions, to allow for these to be placed in a systematic framework.

439 With regard to trade, we have no details for either the net hunters or the archers on this extremely important point of contact between the Mbuti and the villagers. Trade with villagers exists in both Mbuti groups, and both Schebesta and Putnam attach great importance to it. Neither, however, explains it satisfactorily.

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[182] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P. 245-B]

PLATE 30

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.
824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women, but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
591
352 1,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
516
462
342
824

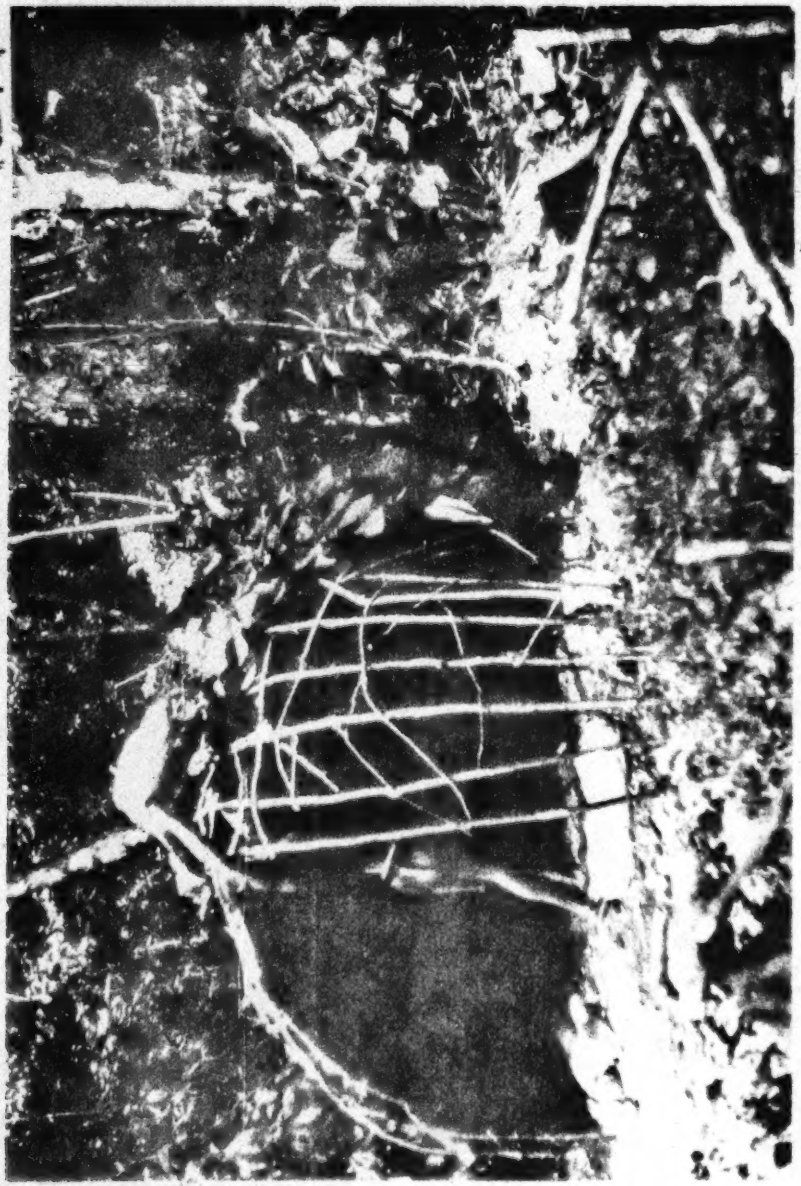
/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P.293-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

342
• 462
824
352



/Plate 30-B/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P 293-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

531
386 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

PLATE 33 2/A

AN MBUTI GATHERER WITH HER TYPICAL BASKET AND TUMP LINE,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

• 462 Women and girls do nearly all the gathering, though a man may pick any mushrooms or
482 fruits he happens across on the trail. Women are also responsible for the maintenance of
222 fire. Not knowing how to make fire, women always carry a smoldering ember, as does this
372 woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves.

1/A, /Plate 33 appears on page 299--Analyst/

[P. 298]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
462
482
415
392
291
301

[P.299] /Plate 33/
/Caption appears on p. 299/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 36 [1]

COLLECTING HONEY, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

222 a. Honey is generally found high in the treetops in the fork of a limb or in a bole. More
462 rarely, it is found in the main trunk a few feet above the ground. Only when the hive is in
412 a fallen trunk on the ground itself do women collect honey; at other times it is exclusively the work of men and youths. An ax or adze is used to enlarge the opening, the bees are then smoked out, and the honey is withdrawn by hand.

322 b. As with the rest of Mbuti food economy, honey is eaten as gathered, never stored.
262 Comb sections are eaten raw; the liquid is usually warmed over a fire and drunk. If the
252 honey contains too much dirt, it is wrapped in leaves and soaked in water which is then
[251] drunk.

1. /Plate 36 appears on page 305--Analyst/

[P. 304]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
• 462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[672 low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
614 of the huts themselves.
613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

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are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

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her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. [287]
A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

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765 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they
152 should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death
765 at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not
[783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an-
[594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby
• 462 female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their
[171] women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

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[171]

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

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Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

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Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

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no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a *capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age,

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death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[9]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[9] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

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contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

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224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[614] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

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685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

578 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
*177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
186 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
436 the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission.
[621] Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[953] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[204] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

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222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
• 462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

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533 765 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 462 881 765 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more importance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 182 181 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of concern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death, but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are [561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

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"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti [illegible]tion to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 761
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

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602 561 121 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionalization of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 561 562 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 462 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the interdependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines. [224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during [222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[193] [2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *tatá* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko*, *miki a kali*.

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is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[8]

[8] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: *"Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'ata, bapapa, ofu . . . père, grand-*

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[P296-B]

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[142]

18. Moké, an elder and a peacemaker, with two of his adopted families. It is considered no shame for an Mbuti male to fondle and care for the needs of even the youngest children.

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[P.276-E]

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31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

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[222]

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
137 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
589 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
[462] had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
[578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

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Opposite: Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.

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Ageronga's wife prepares a bundle of *mongongo* leaves for thatching her hut.

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[P 72-D]

224 4% 28% some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [482] [251] [372] The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 777 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

224 156 620 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

!81 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [197] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent spe- [358] cialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the *molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval* by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away
[237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted
[412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either
[386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of
287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in
• 462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the
[516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and simplicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or

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286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

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husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled *"Ayiiiiii?"*—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwaná name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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P C 123 593 blanket, no matter how annoyed with me he was. These villagers—they were just animals.

When I awoke in the morning I hardly dared open my eyes, but a tentative exploration proved that the other half of the bed was empty. I thought all was well after all. Amina had cut her losses and left at dawn. But when I had put my trousers on and stooped through the low entrance of the hut into the camp, there she was. She was sitting on a log beside the hut, quietly fanning the fire and cooking my breakfast, just as every other wife was doing for her husband. Kenge was making it very obvious to everyone that he was eating with the bachelors, who were making it obvious that they had not slept in my hut that night. Everyone else studiously ignored my appearance, except old Moke, who was walking past on his way to the stream to bathe. He looked at me sideways, shook his head and gave a little knowing old laugh. And as he walked on he shook his head all the more vigorously and laughed all the louder.

I was about to go after him, thinking that at least I could ask his advice, but Amina caught hold of my trouser leg and said, "There is no need for you to go to the stream to bathe. I have brought you water—behind the hut." So I went behind the hut and washed, and then sat down and had breakfast, while Amina went to join the other women and chat with them. While she was gone Kenge strolled by and elaborately asked me if the food was all right. He also asked me, rather loudly, if I had slept well. Amina answered from across the camp, "Yes, he told me to mend the leak in the roof!" This proof of domestic bliss brought howls of mirth from all around, the more infuriating because I could not see what was funny about it. Then Kenge told me that this was what men always said to their wives when they wanted to be allowed to sleep in peace.

P C 462 356

That night, Amina and I came to an agreement. She was to stay with me and cook my food—and mend leaks in the roof every night.

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Mbuti

765 562 The men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 562 993 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned" the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 372 182 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalise with the dance of life.

765 993 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again, and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 P 583 462 [581] P [601] [561]

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583

Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593

He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

412 hole goes the narrow end of the ax.
[177] This is essentially a Neolithic type of
[439] hafting.

Perhaps the Negro will give him
[313] only the ax head, without a haft. In this case the pygmy will cut down a thin sapling, or a tree branch, just the right thickness, and use it bark and
[284] all. He splits this with his knife, at one end. Then he wraps the split and the blade which he has thrust through it with twine or rattan. The pygmy will use the Negro-hafted ax on the ground, but if he is climbing a tree and needs an ax while up there, he will take along one of his own hafting by preference, because it is lighter.

Both men and women use these axes. The women also have knives of their own, of the same manufacture. These knives are about six inches long, leaf-bladed, double edged. The handle is simply a thick tang, twisted, and thus is all one piece with the blade. In some cases, however, small wooden handles are added. The women use these for
[462] many purposes—for peeling bananas, and preparing other foods for cooking; to cut monocotyledonous leaves for roofing, and to split the stem. In general, it is the all-purpose woman's tool.

412 The man's knife is larger and single
177 edged, a kind of small machete, made
439 in Germany. The Negroes obtain them from white men by trade and give them to the pygmies. I once tried giving them American machetes, of the kind prized in Central America, but they were too large and too heavy.

412 The men use these machetes for cutting
[313] lianas, tree limbs, and so forth. For
[322] small woodwork, however, such as whittling an arrow shaft, they are more likely to use an arrowhead or spearhead, which is nearer the right size.

Axes and the two kinds of knives and arrowheads and spearheads are the only cutting tools the pygmies have or know how to use.

[P. 326-B]

415 Also obtained from the Negroes are
177 the cooking pots that all pygmy wom-
439 en own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have
462 chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman
[824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 This technique is not easy; it is
462 much easier if two women work to-
476 gether, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[A327-A]

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 PYGMY ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

[P. 327-B]

224 When they have arrived at the right location, the men set up the nets in a line and stand by to tend them; the women spread out in a circle to beat. Often the pygmies will have dogs which they have borrowed from the Negroes, barkless dogs with wooden bells tied to their collars. Each woman cuts a lot of twigs and makes a little broom with them. She beats the bushes with it, and cries out, "Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo!" over and over again. The young children, except for the babies which are being carried, are made to keep out of this.

[198] [825] When the women sight an animal and it heads for the nets, they change the tone of their baying; either they identify the kind of animal by this means or indicate that an animal in general is coming. When the animal rushes up to the net and entangles itself, the man who is tending that part of the net grabs the animal and kills it with his knife or spear. He will then beat his hand on his arm pit, and the others will come up to see what he has killed. Sometimes, however, the animal sees the net, or a man moves, and the animal leaps back into the line of women. Such an animal can well escape, for the women are not prepared to stop it. However, when a woman engaged in beating sights a slow animal, such as a turtle, pangolin, porcupine, or even a rat, she will dive for it and pop it into her basket which she carries on her back, and go on beating. [462] This is merely incidental gathering; slow animals are women's game.

During the course of a single day a pygmy band may set up their nets, conduct a drive, take the nets down, and repeat the process as many as seven times, each time in a different place. If the clouds collect early, they will go home. If there are no clouds and they have a good bag of game, they will still go home, but if it is dry and they

[P.329-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

TECHNOLOGY

372 Fire making is totally unknown, even as it is to some of the neighboring village tribes, according to Putnam. Glowing embers wrapped in phrynium leaves are carried everywhere, even on short journeys. They are also used, as described by Schebesta, for light at night and for [416] fighting off invading ants. Another form of [373] light (Fig. 31a), in the shape of resin torches [314] (KiBira: *kasuku*), is sometimes used, but at no time is wood specially cut (such as the *akata* mentioned by Schebesta) to make firebrand [252] torches. Campfires are always made the same way—three logs, their ends pointing to the center, where kindling is placed and where cinders form on which cooking is done.

411 Poison is used on untipped arrows, as described by Schebesta. These arrows are carefully protected by leaf covers until used. They are much more widely used than the metal-tipped arrows, largely, as the Mbuti admit themselves, because they are such poor shots.

Sometimes spearheads are also untipped, the wooden points being fire-hardened, but there is no evidence that these are poisoned, and they are becoming rare.

462 In none of the normal routine work in a Pygmy camp such as that described by Putnam [463] is there any specialization, except in so far as certain tasks are divided between men and women.

[P 201-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[P 201-D]

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561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufactures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture. [463]

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, being also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who [223] 732 734

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

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the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

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[P.108-F]

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6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their Ipara, are fed as part of their "payment."

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exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[9] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[9] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

and its name changes to the Ituri. This is where the forest becomes the home of the BaMbuti, all the way through to its easternmost fringe, north as far as it is dense enough to cast its protective shade, and for unknown hundreds of miles to the south, where it is still unexplored. This was the home of the Pygmies thousands of years before Europeans thought of Africa itself as anything much more than a myth.

To be back was wonderful, but the changes at Camp Putnam were so drastic that I wondered if I had done the right thing in returning. Now that Pat was dead the name of the district had been changed to Epulu, the name of the river that ran past his old home. And more than the name was changed. A few hundred yards on, past the turning to the old village of Camp Putnam, the road crossed the river by a rickety wooden bridge. The bridge was as rickety as ever, but the forest on either side had been cut down, and backing onto what had once been Pat's estate was an ugly modern motel, built by an enterprising Belgian who hoped to attract tourists. The main attraction was that on the other side of the road the government had established a *Station de Chasse* for the capture of forest animals, particularly okapi, and for the training of forest elephants. Between these two innovations down by the bridge and the old entrance to Camp Putnam stretched the mud houses of the workers, with a few tiny African stores and an establishment proudly calling itself Hotel de Bière. The village of Camp Putnam remained unaltered. Even the old mud mansion still stood.

Not only the changed appearance of Epulu was disconcerting; so was the fact that this new community was attracting Pygmy labor, particularly since Pygmies could be paid even less than other tribes. I found that several of my old friends were working either at the Animal Station or the motel, buying their food with money at the local stores, instead of freely roaming the forest hunting and gathering for their needs. One of them, a youth called Kenge, had

One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.

• 164 Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
[SS] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, showing it to me with infinite pride.

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[234] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

3t Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families.

It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while. The Pygmy was able to do for him all the necessary chores that necessitated going into the forest and could bring him game that supplemented an otherwise largely vegetarian diet. And in latter days, with the compulsory maintenance of larger plantations, the Negro found the Pygmy a useful source of additional labor. But for all of this he had to pay, and he was always uncertain how long any one Pygmy or group of Pygmies would stay with him. They were frequently miles away in the heart of the forest, and if the hunting was good no amount of coaxing would bring them back.

For the first week back at Camp Putnam, I found the villagers going out of their way to be generous to "their" Pygmies. The Pygmies wandered about idly, hanging around wherever they found food cooking, occasionally responding to a request to help with some kind of work. The village blacksmith, a man of many parts, adopted Masisi's family, though Masisi himself would have nothing to do with him. He said that Baziani was a trouble-maker, which he was, and that he was after Masisi's daughter, which was also true. But Baziani was wealthy, and Masisi's children spent most of their time in his baraza. They were well fed and looked after, and treated more as friends than anything else. Baziani, in return, made use of them to run errands, usually connected with his virtual monopoly of the local hemp market.

Baziani was genuinely fond of the Pygmies. In the evenings he used to bring out his drums and the Pygmies would gather around and dance. After a while Baziani would relinquish his part as a drummer, acknowledging the superiority of his friends. Then he sat back in his cane chair and watched with a contented smile. He was one of

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the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored, well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his baraza, waiting to do him some small favor.

Masisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time been attached to a noble of the Balira tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them, or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village. Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent one of his daughters, or his adopted son Madyadya, to help the chief and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself. Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

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[P.108-F]

PC 342 324 291 571 142

6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their *kpara*, are fed as part of their "payment."

PC 571 265 424 291 142

[NET HUNTERS]

000 new net. About 12 different kinds of bark can be
287 used for the making of barkcloth, differing not
287 only in color but also in texture. The ivory bark
412 beaters are always hafted (Fig. 22), unlike those of the archers; the beating ends may have one of three forms of grooving (Fig. 23), the dia-

[284]

FIG. 22. Bark beater, *kolea*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. While wooden beaters are
[237] sometimes used, more frequently the ends of small elephant tusks are hafted and used to make barkcloth.

[462] [1] In fact, net making is a major and constant activity
[476] calling for cooperation between men and women.

[P.197-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571]
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[p. 201-D]

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Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

224 184 The Pygmy has no use for traps or pits. These require too much work and are, by his standards, inefficient. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti can be classified as net hunters or non-net hunters or, conversely, as archers or non-archers. Putnam states that this adherence to either hunting technique depends on the prevailing villager custom, as the villagers supply the Pygmies with both nets and arrowheads. Later, he modified this view because the Pygmies are, in fact, making nets all the time by adding to and subtracting from their existing nets, as mentioned above. [Schebesta (1933) refers to the Pygmies as making their own nets.] This division into archers and net hunters is also significant with regard to social organization, says Putnam (1948, 328), since "The degree to which co-operation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band."

[221] [414]

[p. 202-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

648
184
177
571
[439]

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

621
562

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[582]
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[p. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [p.212-A]
621 In a band of archers. Women are vital to the
• 476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[562] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

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Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families. 628 574 [984] [613] [184]

Occasionally two or even three bands join to form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each 628 476 361 [579] [621]

[P 228-D]

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[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 [p 229-A] 476 361 578 621

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

P [428] Z [628]

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *beghe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[199] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[434] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
• 484 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and
[p 244-3]

[p. 244-c]

mutually dependent and equally important role in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Archery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, with the cooperation of two or three men. It is not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes. 224 476 621 562 184

3. The net hunt, demanding close cooperation and lack of specialization, is associated with a more egalitarian political system than that of the archers. While Schebesta described an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful lineage heads, Putnam vigorously denies the existence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers. 184 554 561 224 621 [114]

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Little can be said of inter-band relationships as there are so few data. Neither type of band has any need to cooperate with neighboring bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occasions when there is a particular profusion of game. Among the archers joint hunting would be necessary in order to make use of the *begbe* beating technique. Among net hunters two or more bands might combine either when the individual bands fall below economic level or when a particular profusion of game requires more nets than are possessed by the single band. With the net hunters such association could become permanent, whereas with the archers it would never be necessary as the band is of such small optimum size. 628 476 224 184

The difference between the archers and the net hunters in their relationship with the villager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Putnam, is one of both degree and kind. We have seen that with their less efficient hunting technique the archers must rely more on vegetable products, and how, with the women's sphere limited to gathering, the women have more time and opportunity for gathering from the villager plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy 184 182 224 439

[P 247-D]

the world of the supernatural. The Pygmy is 538
anxious to preserve the normal, the *status quo*. 183
Although one could hardly determine this with any certainty from the legends alone, they certainly confirm the notion, which is of particular significanec with reference to Mbuti religious thought. We return briefly to this point below.

The second section dealing with social relations also reveals a center of interest on food, 538 181
the importance of the food quest being implied repeatedly. Also emphasized is the importance [476]
of cooperation, not only between members of the same family, but between all members of the hunting band. These legends tell us that [577]
vice and virtue are scarcely understood as such, that the dominating quality is cleverness, with its converse, stupidity. But, as pointed out, this is a borderline world. Whereas cleverness may 538
be of use to a Pygmy in his normal everyday 181
life, it is really a quality associated with his 183
dealings with the animal and supernatural worlds. In fact, one legend, not mentioned, quite distinctly tells us that in everyday life it is not good to be too clever, but better to be normal. An elephant hunter who loses his normality (by failing to accept food offered to him, and failing to join in the conversation) is
[P 269-D]

621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*197 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

[881] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
• 476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
*[177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
[622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

[P.93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band *is*, we 621
have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the 423
only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the 121
band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial 131
boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows [222]
or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good [314]
bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family 423
exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, how- 222
ever. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first 314
opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When 476
the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight 621
departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory 423
and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central 131
value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[872] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

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594 621 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsibility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 86 The age group functions as a major institution of education, instructing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 857 583 [476] As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Children scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trapping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 626 627 [765] Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its members, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Further, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

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512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
56 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
855 has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if
he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
462 with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
56 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
496 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
594 but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
252 and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [482] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [554] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 56 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 482 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 578 152 626 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be almost deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the [496] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the encroaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the encroaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seeking a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge occur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-operation as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge, Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation. Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their 472
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But [522]
I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 476 28 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 [482] [251] [372] The women have little to do by way of perparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 [237] Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a fam- 224 777 ily had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

3c Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

415 Also obtained from the Negroes are
177 the cooking pots that all pygmy wom-
439 en own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have
462 chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman
[824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 This technique is not easy; it is
462 much easier if two women work to-
476 gether, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[R327-A]

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts.

[P. 327-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

religious association (*molimo*) and of the women's religious association (*elima*); songs of the men's main economic activity (hunting) and of the women's (gathering). It is perhaps not quite justifiable to make the subdivision according to sex, as, in hunting and gathering among the net hunters, both sexes hunt. Most of the gathering songs concern honey gathering which is primarily a male occupation. Nor, in fact, does the classification into sacred and secular stand up to full scrutiny, as, in a sense, all songs are sacred as all are related to forest activities and the forest itself is sacred (pp. 258–259). 533 [078]

Unlike the archers, the net-hunting Mbuti make extremely little use of musical instruments of any kind, except for the resonant sticks used in accompaniment to their forest songs. For one thing, a truly nomadic group with only the most basic means of locomotion and transport, namely, the human body, can hardly afford to accumulate possessions beyond the absolute necessities—even less so with bulky nets as an additional item to be carried when camp is moved. Some net hunters know how to make and play notched end-blown flutes, with even greater skill and precision than the neighboring villagers, but they are rarely made. A *lukembi* (*sanza*) is the only instrument 534 [184] [48]

[P. 234-D]

so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. "*Apa nde Kaweki,*" he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets. 512 22 [286] [857] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water. 364 514 [184] 515 [48] [823]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed 133 [131] by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly [137] forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost im- 133 possible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to 484 cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, [491] and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the 133 efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be 823 found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or 133 hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for 000

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by [481] swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without [179] difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[177] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-
tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies * three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4483, Music of the Ituri Forest

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily. 481 484 186

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright. 484 224 [115]

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke. 131 484 [114]

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm. 222 [114]

222 [482] Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles and hitched them[2] to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 484 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we came up behind the women who had started early. They had also [222] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the [482] small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been [136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 484 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

[2] [i.e., bundles of mushrooms, - Analyst]

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
[516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
825 had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond. 361 342 412 [123]

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds. 342 314 48 114 123 [821] [487]

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground 314 114 123 [412]

was. He told me it was the *kumamolimo,* "the place of the molimo," and now that everyone was here we were going to start the festival. The food that had been collected from hut to hut was to feed the molimo, because the molimo was a hungry animal that ate a great deal. He added pointedly that it smoked a great deal too, and when I gave him several packets of cigarettes he solemnly put them with the food in the molimo basket.

About an hour later, when I was in my hut, I noticed that Makubasi and Ausu were standing outside, obviously wanting to say something. Usually they were not backward about interrupting, and I was puzzled when Ausu beckoned with his head that I should come outside. He whispered in my ear that a few of them were going off to get the molimos, as we were to start the festival that night. Masimongo, Kenge's brother-in-law, had said that he, as well as Manyalibo, wanted to bring out his molimo, and make it a doubly great festival. Half a dozen youths were waiting to see if I would go with them, but they told me that the place where the molimo lived was a long way off and we would have to run all the way and return when it was dark.

Of course I said I would go, and we started off immediately. But halfway across the camp Masimongo leaped into my way and shouted that I was not to go. For a moment there was a loud and sharp argument, most of which I could not follow. Finally Njobo, to whom everyone always listened, said that he had seen me in the forest and knew I could travel as well and as fast as the others, so that I would be safe. Masisi then objected with a shrill torrent of words, saying that the molimo was none of my business. For a moment I felt like saying I would not go, as I certainly did not want to cause any bad feeling. The others were already moving off at a run, down the path through the glade, not waiting for me.

Njobo pushed me on the shoulder and said to follow quickly, if I was sure I could keep up and would not be afraid of traveling in the

765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
• 481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly to Masimongo and Masisi, that the molimo had already sung to me
[885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lelo, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Ausu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was
[487] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

4

The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched the ground but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Ausu, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night.

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up.

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Ausu said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway."

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Ausu took the end of the

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were 765 562
left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was 123
whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had 186
"walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an 481
obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who [522]
had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so 115
quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now 123
it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes 122
a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the 765
next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese*, the Great Ones— 765
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123]
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
• 481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. "What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

734 481 123 sense, and she must not refuse. Did she want her child to die like other cripples who had been unable to fend for themselves?

Reluctantly she agreed, but Lizabeti, as soon as I reached for her, burst into tears and dragged herself back into the farthest corner of her mother's hut. Masisi started to go in after her again, but Kenge called to him to leave her alone, and handed his crutches and those we had made for Lizabeti to the eagerly waiting children. Soon it was the most popular game in the camp. Even Masisi and Maipe tried "walking on one leg." I saw Lizabeti's tear-stained face peering from the door of her hut to watch.

The next morning Asofalinda came over to me and said that Lizabeti wanted to try this new game, but if she fell once she would never be allowed to try again. Not a soul left the camp that morning; they all wanted to see what would happen. Between us Kenge and I lifted the girl, who was bravely trying not to cry, and put the crutches under her arms. We showed her how to hold them with her hands at the sides, and how to take the weight off her good leg and swing it backward and forward. The greatest difficulty was getting her to trust that leg enough to move her crutches on in front of her. But little by little, moving one crutch at a time, she got more confidence. I went in front to catch her if she fell, and Kenge held her lightly around the waist from behind. Lizabeti began to walk. Kenge let go, and then, as she realized that Kenge was not even holding her, that she was actually walking upright, like the other children she had watched from the ground all her life, her face became contorted with fear and she stumbled. Kenge caught her just in time. He swung her high into the air with a triumphant shout to drown her wails of terror, and all the children joined in, laughing and chanting their congratulations.

734 481 123 152 We had almost completed a circle of the camp, and I looked over to see if Asofalinda had noticed Lizabeti start to fall. I was just in time to see her bury her face in her hands, her whole body shaking as she

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

4: Putnam E-5 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Z P 561

which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

P 481

The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

P [186] P [142]

The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing; the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

P [113]

[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-79.

[P. 325-B]

481 lengths of 20 feet or so each from some flexible liana, and passes the first around the tree trunk, which may be as much as six feet thick. Then he sets the second liana in place in the same manner, and passes the two under his shoulders. He sits parallel to the trunk, which he faces, and grips with his feet. While bracing against one liana, he moves the other upward, then braces on it while moving the other. In this way he can climb up the slick, limbless bole of the tree, to where the first limbs branch off, some hundred or more feet above the ground.

When he reaches the first branches, he takes off his lianas and walks along the limbs like a tightrope walker or structural steel worker, free of the limbs, with nothing to hold in his hands. When he has accomplished his mission he comes down again the way he went up.

Pygmy Technology

412 197 439 **Basic tools.**—The keynote to the simple and specialized pygmy technology is the fact that they do not have to make any of their basic tools, but instead obtain effective iron cutting tools from their Negro hosts. This eliminates much work and the need for much skill in toolmaking, and provides them with more efficient instruments than they could possibly make for themselves at a food-gathering level of technology.

When a pygmy needs an ax he will beg one from his Negro host. Perhaps the Negro will give him a whole ax, haft and all. The blade is a triangular piece of iron, made locally by Negro smiths, and set in a solid wooden handle, adzed out of a larger piece of wood. The handle has a hole which has been burned through it from side to side with a hot iron. Through this

[P 326-A]

P
224 Although between themselves the pyg-
433 mies have little division of labor, in another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

P
Z
224 This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy
433 spends all of his time hunting, the Negro only a portion of his. The pyg-
[481] my depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

P
224 Throughout the pygmy country, the pygmies can be classified either as net
[101] hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

P
[621] Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

[P. 328-A]

224 have little game they will keep on until nearly dark.

There is a difference in value between net positions in a net hunt. The central position is best because it catches the most animals, and the flanks are the worst. The pygmies have a whole vocabulary to express the details of net hunting, including a whole group of verbs for net setting in various positions. There seems to be some rule about who sets his nets in which spot, but this has not been recorded.

[192 193]

If a big animal, like a buffalo, comes toward the nets, the men will try to get them down and let him rush through, for they do not want to foul and tear the nets or to encounter the dangerous animal. If the large animal does strike the net, however, it may delay him long enough for the nearest man to rush up and spear him.

Most of the animals they catch are no larger than a dog or goat; for example, a kuchinda is about that size. The hunter cuts its throat and carries it around his neck, with hind and front legs on opposite sides. The average day's bag is about half of an animal of this size per man. If they have caught an okapi, however, the hunter cuts it up on the spot, and they cut small lianas to tie up the pieces with. The women also will carry some of it in their baskets. Almost always the meat goes directly to the camp after a hunt, where it is divided. Only after this will the share of the Negroes be carried to their village.

[481] **Bow and arrow hunting.**—In bow and arrow hunting, the pygmy relies not on his endurance but on his ability to move through the forest silently; that is his greatest skill and greatest asset. He can track an antelope to a thicket where it has lain down to sleep, and shoot it from five yards' distance before it wakes up. He shoots machine-gun style; he will pump five ar-

[P. 329-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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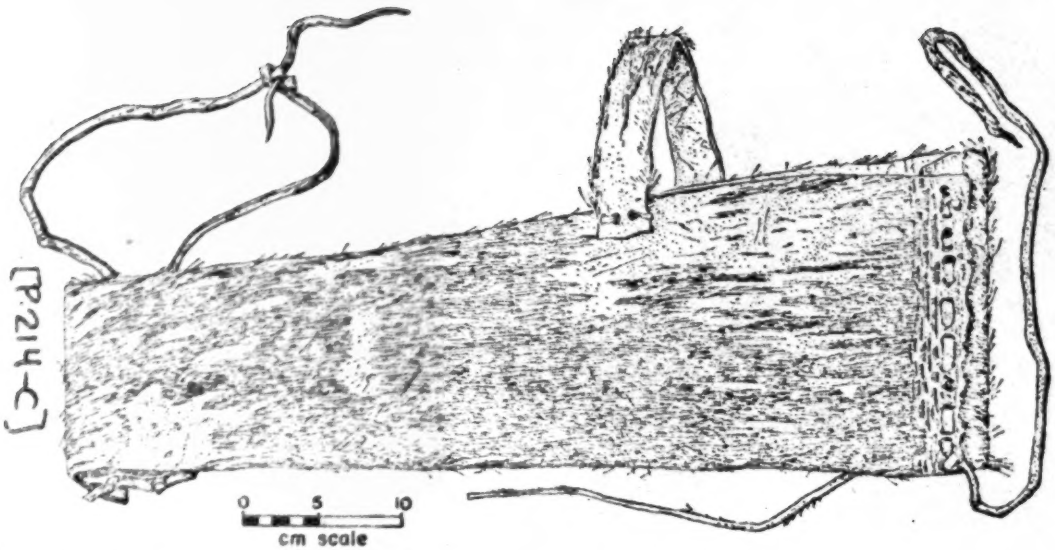

[P214-C]

FIG. 44. Baby-carrying sling, *koko*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. The sling is used relatively rarely and usually only on long treks on which the women will also be carrying loads. Otherwise, the baby is sat on the hip and is held loosely by one arm.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

439 torily. Schebesta (1952, 42–43) involves himself
114 in a blatant self-contradiction by saying at one
[181] point that the Pygmy culture is static and conservative because the forest provides him with an abundance from which he can satisfy all his needs. Elsewhere (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) he writes that the Pygmy could not survive without the villager plantations. Both Patrick and Anne Putnam would reinforce the latter statement from their experience of the Epulu Mbuti, but only in so far as luxuries, such as plantains, have become necessities. Putnam asserts that
439 the Pygmy could, when he wanted, support
433 himself from the forest alone, and sometimes does. There can be little doubt about this latter point, as a hunting group may be 10 days away
[482] from the village. Transportation of adequate supplies of bananas over so great a distance would be impossible, particularly among a net-hunting community in which the women are required for hunting as well as gathering. The
[462] archer woman, for whom gathering is a full-time
[222] occupation, might just as well gather in the vil-
[184] lager plantation as in the forest, particularly as, according to Schebesta (1952, 148), archer bands are always situated close to villages.
439 More information is badly needed for an accurate assessment of exactly how fundamental this trade relationship is and how far it is a
[P 245-B]

PLATE 33 2/A

AN MBUTI GATHERER WITH HER TYPICAL BASKET AND TUMP LINE,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

462 Women and girls do nearly all the gathering, though a man may pick any mushrooms or
482 fruits he happens across on the trail. Women are also responsible for the maintenance of
222 fire. Not knowing how to make fire, women always carry a smoldering ember, as does this
372 woman, wrapped in fire-resistant leaves.

1/A, /Plate 33 appears on page 299--Analyst/

[P. 298]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P 299]

/Plate 33/
/Caption appears on p. 298/

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

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9. The Mbuti village baraza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[3]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[3] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

224 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the
• 482 camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or
578 acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt
152 returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be al-
626 most deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the
[476] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time 222
throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti [252]
to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of [224]
the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark [482]
tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There [602]
is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much [422]
more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but 222
insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are fre- 533
quently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the 789
elima songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity, [778] [776]

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women 224
were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed 46
behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they 626
had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game 578
was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not [535]
go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and [482]
the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of gen- 578
eral shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and [261]
are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will [857]
find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on [883]
the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but 626
these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen 578
such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The 224
only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-E]

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31. Cephu's wife, carrying an ember of the family hearth wrapped in fire-resistant leaves, and with her carrying basket on her back, sets off after the hunt. She will act as a beater with the other women and children, and will gather wild foods on the way.

[224]
[462]
[222]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

3

The Making of Camp Lelo

484 WHEN KENGE WOKE ME the sun was not yet up, and the birds were still silent in the trees. It was three days after Balekimito's funeral, and the previous night it had been decided in a general discussion that we should all leave early in the morning and build a camp at the Lelo River, several hours' walk away.

[482] Already the Pygmy village was alive with women bundling up their household possessions in the baskets they would carry on their [224] backs. The men were busy checking their hunting nets, examining their arrow shafts and testing their bows, or sharpening the blades of their spears. The children were running about in the semi-darkness,

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko,* a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[177] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

222 [482] Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles and hitched them[1] to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 484 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we came up behind the women who had started early. They had also [222] [482] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been [136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 484 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

[1] [i.e., bundles of mushrooms, - Analyst]

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up [516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo [825] had seen a *sondu,* a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor- [136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take [151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived. 482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their 361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they 342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men 481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she 533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young 361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put 342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping 412

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 4% 286 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by [482] which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case [251] the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from [372] the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 825 Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart [237] and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a fam- 224 777 ily had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo,* as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

000 the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

C 563 A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the P 170 forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move 439 among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The [136] mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and P brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoul- [482] ders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with P a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to C be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over [686] to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal, and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading, C cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not [694] give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

342 462 476 live in the house, will hold the two sticks in her hands, and the second woman, with both hands free, will do the wrapping and tying. After they set up the first woman's house they will go to work on the second woman's. Once they have tied the uprights into a dome, they weave in horizontal pieces in the form of hoops, to complete the frame, leaving an opening as doorway.

Then the women take the sarcophrynium leaves which they have collected, and nick the stems with their knives. These leaves have no midribs; they are palmate like grape leaves. They slip the notch in each stem over a place on a cross hoop, and soon have the whole house completely shingled; this roof will be watertight in the rain, and will last in all likelihood as long as they need the house, which is only from two [46] to three months. The whole house-building operation takes only two hours.

482 283 285 **Basketry and cordage.**—Each pygmy woman has a basket which she carries on her back when out collecting or when shifting camp. They plait these baskets themselves out of rattan and other fibers. The woman carries the basket on her back by means of a fiber tump line over her forehead. She will use a similar tump line to bring home her family's ration of plantains from the Negro village. There is a good reason for the use of the tump line here; in the forest it would be impossible to carry a head load very far without its being knocked off by a limb. The forest Negroes also use tump lines and back loads.

224 433 Pygmy Economic Activities

Hunting is the principal occupation of the pygmies; it is their principal reason for being able to maintain their relationship with their Negro hosts. [P. 327-B]

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

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162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

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361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

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361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

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621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[p. 335-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-A]
224 [201] animal with his knife or spear. He claps his armpit to signal his success to his companions. The women by the tone of their shouting and the men by their arm-clapping (KiBira: *kombo*) can indicate not ~~only~~ when and where game is put up, but the kind of game.

In a day's hunting this process may be repeated as many as seven times, if the rain holds off. But if the first few casts of the nets are successful the Pygmies return to camp. They make no provision for the storage of meat or any other food.

If large game, such as buffalo, is driven toward them, the Mbuti try to lower the nets to avoid their being damaged; otherwise, the buffalo will probably tear its way through, though it may be delayed long enough for the hunters to spear it. Antelope is the game normally caught. The hunter carries the dead animal [483] around his neck back to the camp for division. If a larger animal, such as an okapi, is caught, it is cut up on the spot and carried back to the camp in the women's baskets. There all the meat is spread out and the division takes place

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

PLATE 34 2

NET HUNTING, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

224 a. Net hunters on the trail. The Mbuti are naturally well camouflaged and can conceal
• 484 themselves with ease against the foliage. Although net hunting demands cooperation between men, women, and children, the men and youths generally set off by themselves. Spears are carried for protection and for killing large game that might fall into the nets.

b. Net hunters setting up the net. Youths help their older brothers, or sons their fathers, as the net is stretched through the undergrowth for up to 300 feet, joined end to end with the nets of other hunters to form a vast semicircle into which the women and children drive the game.

1, /Plate 34 appears on page 301--Analyst/

[P. 300]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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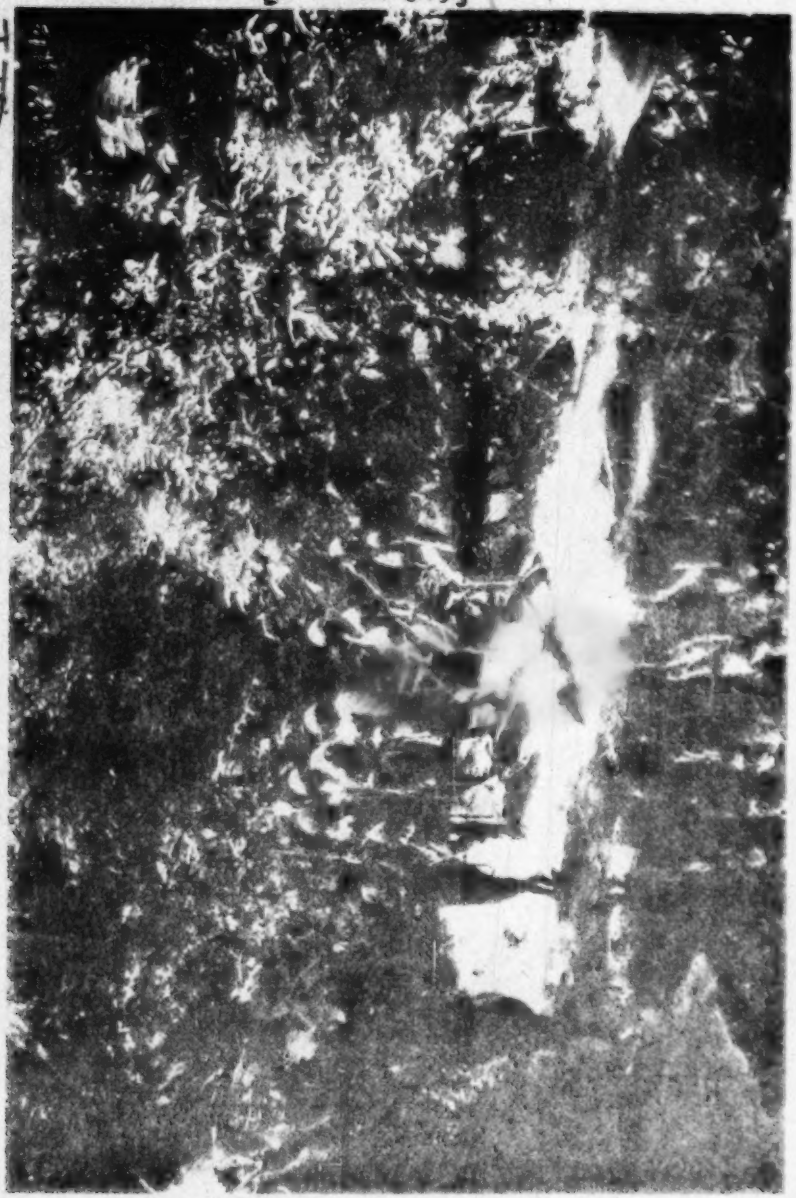

/Plate 34-A/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

4: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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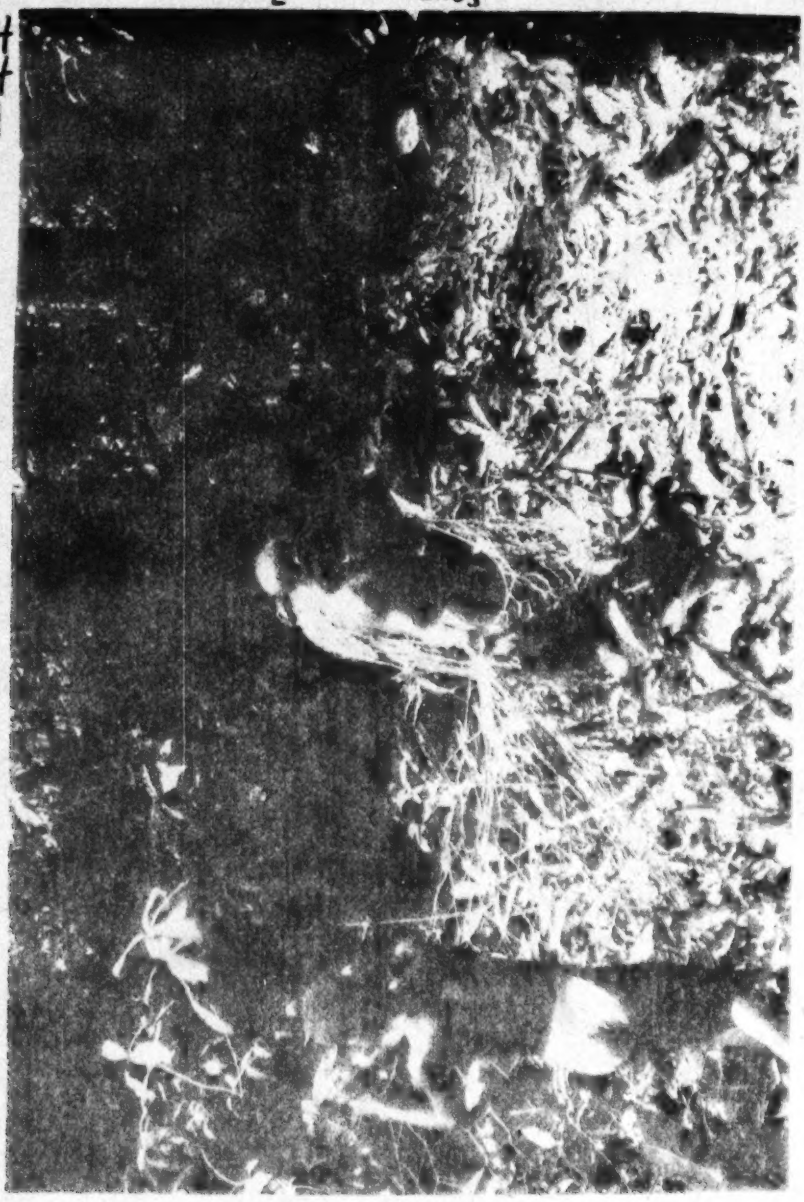

/Plate 34-B/

/Caption appears on p. 300/

[Page 3]

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
621 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

[A] [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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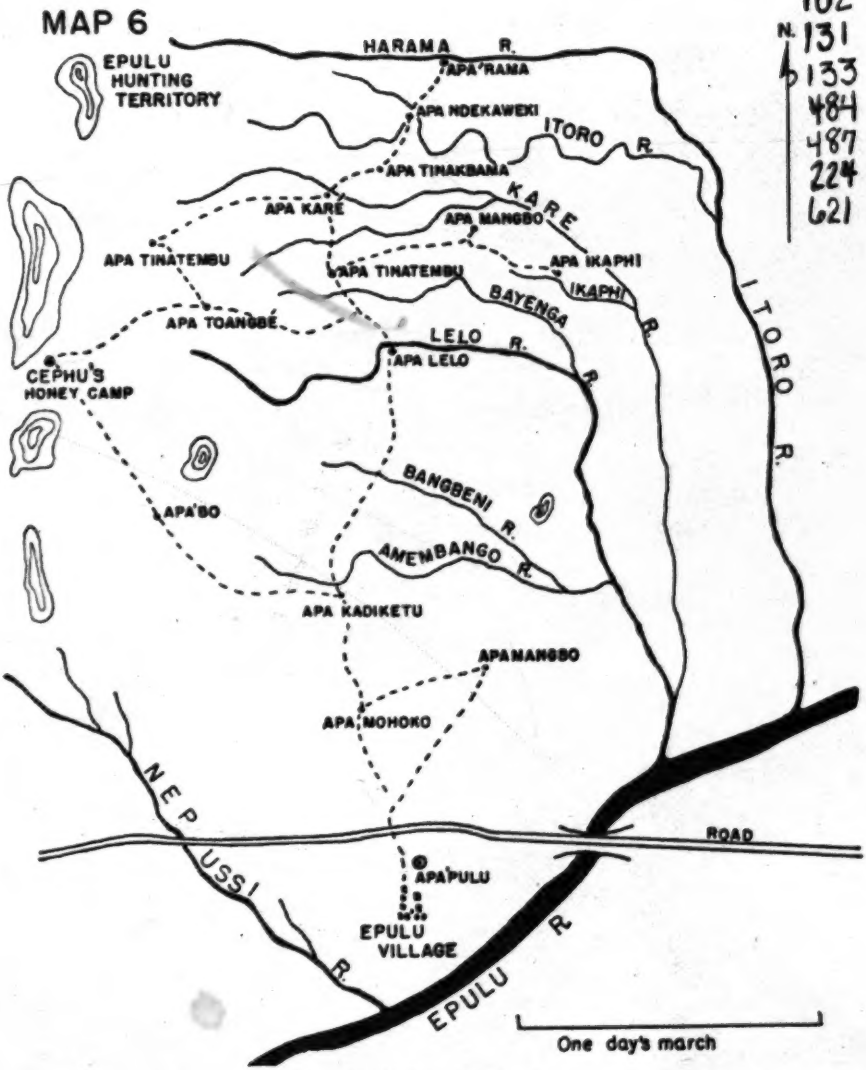

The Epulu hunting territory.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

3

The Making of Camp Lelo

• 484 WHEN KENGE WOKE ME the sun was not yet up, and the birds were still silent in the trees. It was three days after Balekimito's funeral, and the previous night it had been decided in a general discussion that we should all leave early in the morning and build a camp at the Lelo River, several hours' walk away.

[482] Already the Pygmy village was alive with women bundling up their household possessions in the baskets they would carry on their [224] backs. The men were busy checking their hunting nets, examining their arrow shafts and testing their bows, or sharpening the blades of their spears. The children were running about in the semi-darkness,

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko,* a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

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482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[177] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies * three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4483, Music of the Ituri Forest

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

BaNgwana are the most disliked of all the neighboring Negro tribes, 481 484 186 and among the Pygmies they are derided particularly because of their slow, ungainly gait, and as being the least able to walk in the forest as you should be able to walk—swiftly, silently, and easily.

Kenge was full of surprises. In spite of the apparent sophistication 484 224 evidenced by his attachment to Western clothes and scented soap, [115] he still knew his way about the forest better than most Pygmies, and he certainly had a sharper eye for game. We stopped several times while he and another youth stalked carefully up to a tree where they had seen something. Each time they shot their arrows and stood poised on the balls of their feet, silent and motionless, only to relax and clap their hands in disgust and shake their heads as they explained to each other why they had missed. And each time all I could see of the bird or monkey was a shaking of the branches as it fled in fright.

After about two hours we came to Apa Kadiketu—the Camp of 131 Kadiketu. Nobody was sure who or what Kadiketu was, but that was 484 what the spot had always been called. This was where I had first [114] lived in a Pygmy camp, and it was strange to pass through the same place now. There was not a sign of a hut; just the faintest outline of what had been a campsite and a slight tangle of undergrowth showing that some clearing had once been done. Kadiketu was not quite halfway to the Lelo River, and we stopped there for a few minutes to have a smoke.

But even while we were resting, squatting on our bundles, Kenge 222 and his friends were looking around. Before we left they made a [114] quick foraging expedition and returned in as much time as it took me to hitch up my bundle and try to find some way of fastening the tump line so that it relieved my aching shoulders. A typewriter and a load of paper and notebooks wrapped up inside a thick blanket made the load awkward and heavy. Each of my companions had handfuls of mushrooms, great fluffy pink things, fresh and firm.

222 [482] Tearing large leaves from the undergrowth they made small bundles and hitched them[2] to their belts, using the stems of the leaves for twine.

481 484 Not much farther on we heard loud singing ahead of us, and we came up behind the women who had started early. They had also [222] [482] been gathering mushrooms, but they had larger bundles, and the small children were carrying them in their arms. Unlike the men, the women ambled along slowly, sometimes chatting, sometimes singing. This was not simply because they were happy to be back in the forest, but because by going slowly they could keep an eye open for edible roots and fruits, and by singing and chatting loudly they scared away any of the animals that might otherwise have been [136] startled into attack. There are few dangers in the forest, but there are plenty of buffalo and leopard that would attack without question if you came on them unawares. Even two Pygmies (and they never travel singly if they can help it) will shout and clap their hands as they walk along the forest trails in single file. The only time they are silent is when actually hunting.

372 484 We passed the women and children, and shortly afterward we passed a second group, those who had left before dawn. They were still sitting around the fires they had built to cook themselves a meal. Every woman, when moving camp, carries with her a burning ember wrapped heavily in fire-resistant leaves. None of these Pygmies knows how to make fire. The first thing they do when they stop on the trail for a rest is to unwrap the ember and, putting some dry twigs around it, blow softly once or twice and transform it into a blazing fire. I have never learned what the knack is. Many a time I have been blowing and fanning my fire, trying to get it to come up, when a little slip of a girl, or a boy almost too young to walk, has come along, knelt down, and given two little puffs that have sent the flames leaping upward. It is damp and cool in the forest, and at any time of the day it is pleasant to sit around the fire; but at

[2] [i.e., bundles of mushrooms, - Analyst]

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, 372 484 keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by 484 recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now 133 and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main [515] stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into [821] the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally 361 arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. 484 It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most 361 114

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up [516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo [825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor- [136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take [151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

• 484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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• 424

A group of men sets off for the hunt, some carrying their hunting

[P.72-F1]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224
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nets, others spears or bows and arrows.

[P. 72- F 2]

know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 765 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765 534
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting 322

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

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so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. *"Apa nde Kaweki,"* he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house, built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut, calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister. Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Father," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak, but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484 •
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

P C 224 [186] Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often. They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any P [522] Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an elephant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

P 484 This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge P 484 609 was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been perfectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

FOREST HORIZONS

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on 114
from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the 484
neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's
march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would
have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made
our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted 609
wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been ex- 484
tremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to
eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He ex-
ploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a
novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area
and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives.
There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly
concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and
how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most
time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of
them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met
a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of
us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me 609
so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which 123
they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from 186
behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard 826
joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it [825]
lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and 609
taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience 177
beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups [114]
of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he
saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, movie-
makers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis;
it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

224 away he stabs him, and every time the elephant turns he stands still. The elephant can run faster than a man, and the pygmy's only hope is to wound the animal so badly that it will be unable to catch him before he gets away.

Finally the elephant goes charging off with one or more wounds in his intestines. The hunter, with his spear in his hand, returns to the camp. Perhaps the other men will be there, but they may be out net hunting. In the latter case he waits until they have all assembled, and as soon as they are together he tells them his story. There is much excitement; men, women, and children crowd around him and inspect the spear. They may say, "Hmmm, only that much of the tip is bloody, probably he won't die. Let it go." But if the spear is bloody way down to such and such a point, then the elephant has a serious wound and they will follow him.

[484] In the latter case the whole camp goes together. The women load on their babies and cooking pots, and their bunches of plantains. The men take their weapons, and they leave only an old man or two to watch the camp while they are away. They will follow the elephant two or three days, until he finally lies down and dies of peritonitis. Sometimes he has been dead for some time when they reach him, and he may be blown up like a balloon and rotten. Still they will eat him, for rotten meat, if thoroughly boiled, is edible.

224 796 When a group of pygmies reaches a blown-up elephant, a special ceremony takes place. A man other than the elephant hunter cuts a square of skin off the elephant's side. He cuts this up and puts pieces into the mouths of everyone. Then he cuts another layer, and passes this around, and another layer, until he comes down to a point where the body wall is very thin, and

[P. 331-B]

621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[p. 335-B]

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
621 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
822 means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)^A was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

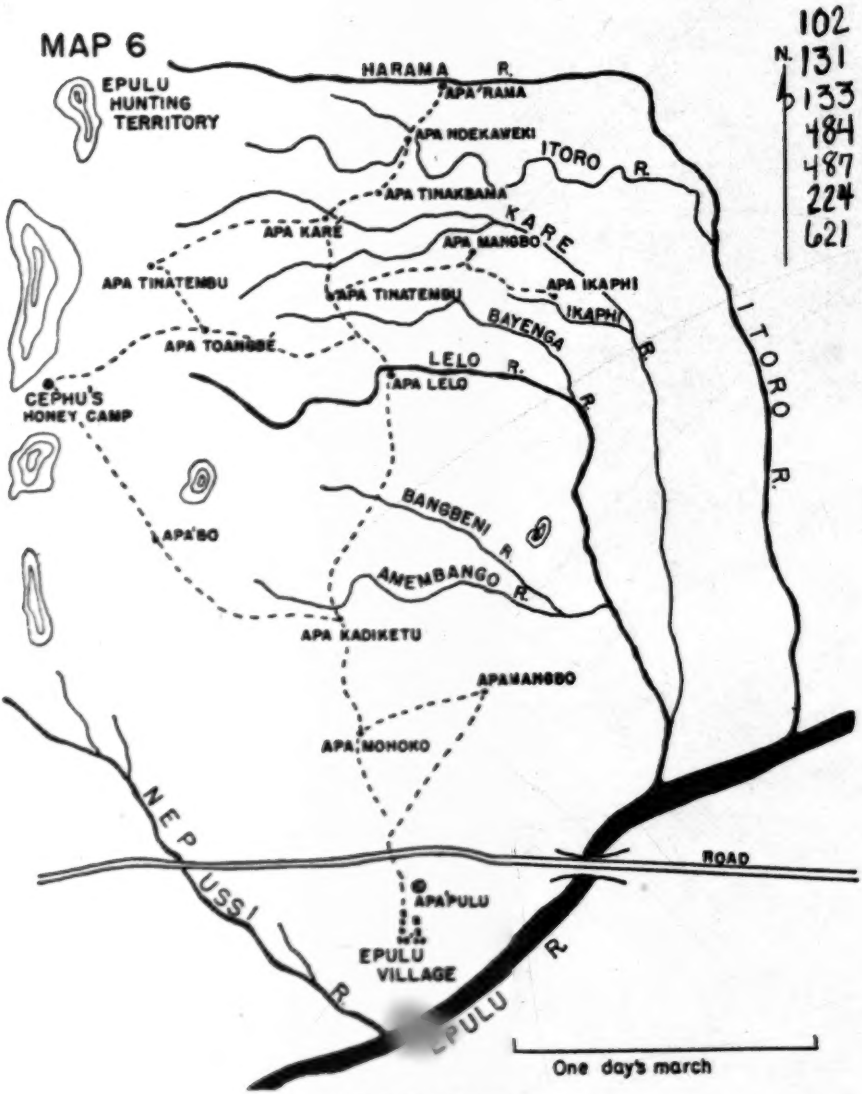
^A [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

102
103
133
487

MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

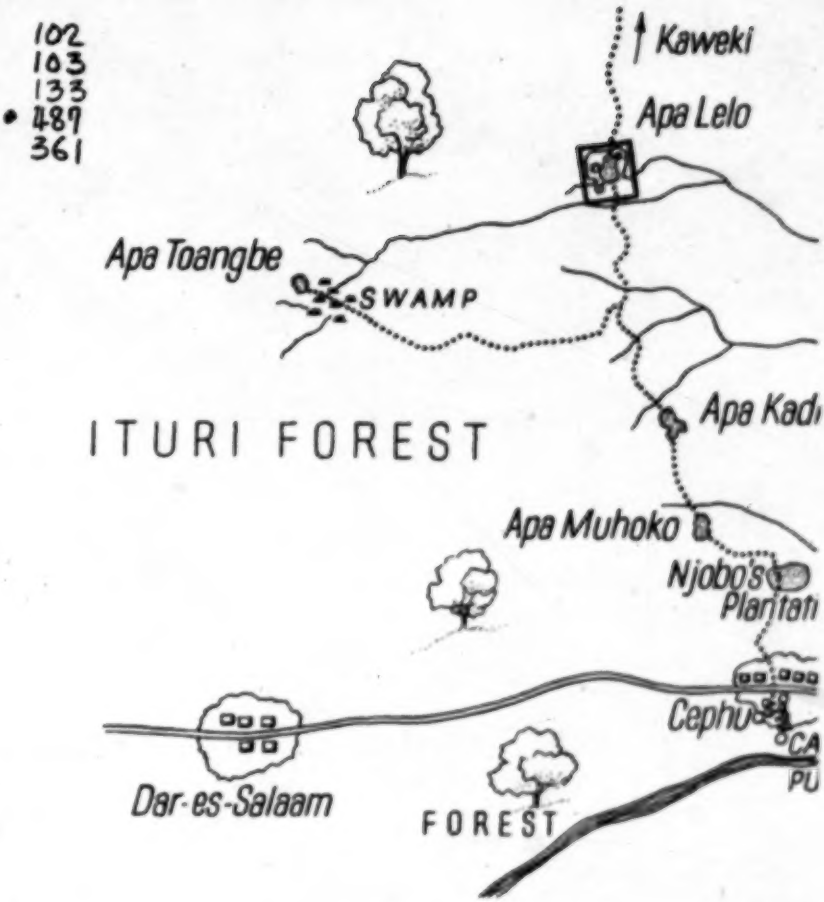
*Now Republic of the Congo
[P. 10-B]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

102
103
133
487

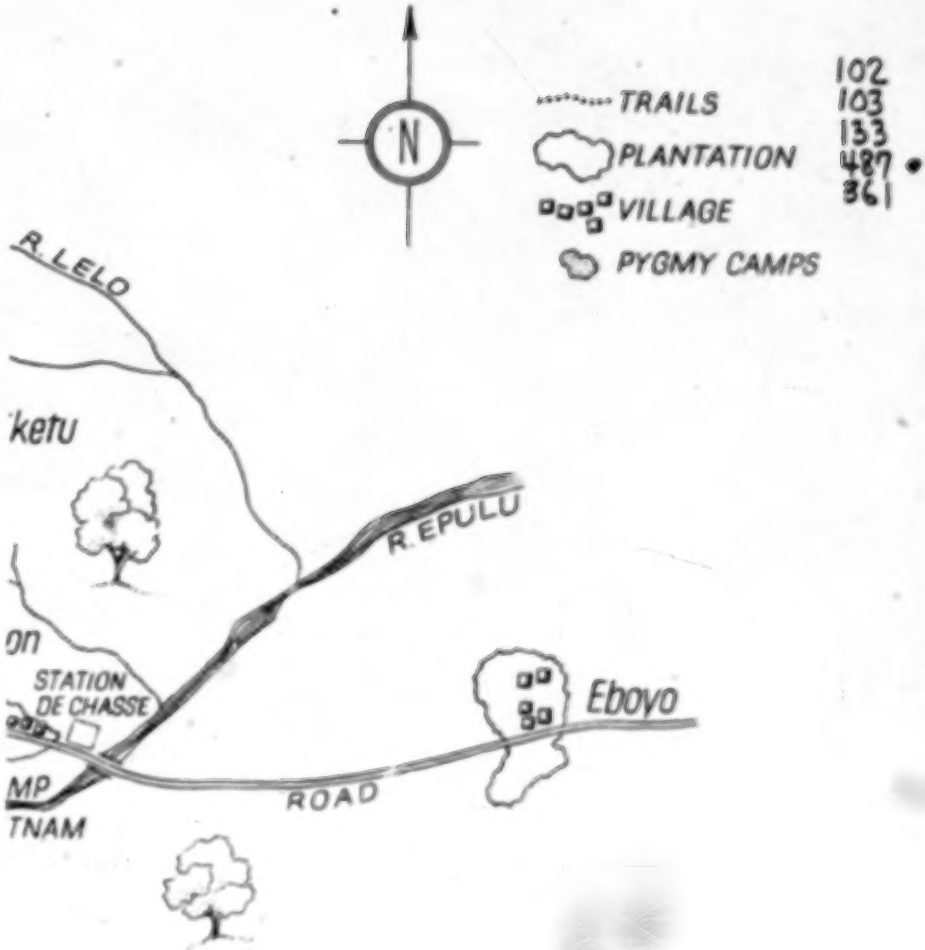
Area of Map 2
[P. 10-C]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Area of Map 3

[P. 10-E]

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4459, Music of the Ituri Forest

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly to Masimongo and Masisi, that the molimo had already sung to me [885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lelo, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Ausu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was [487] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

4

The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched the ground but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

765 534 422 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [987] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that *would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet* and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest. 881 574 533

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her. 881 574 [487]

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba 881 832

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [823]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[2] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[2] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

491 middle to get a better view of the way the supporting lianas were fastened, he urged me on, saying that it was not natural to be standing there in the middle of the air over a dangerous river.

114 On the far side we came to a camp, and there we found some relatives of the Epulu Pygmies, including one girl who was well known to us both—Makubasi's first wife.

797 We stayed there for the night and then moved on up a trail that
177 led to the Protestant mission of Biasiku. This was headed by an American misionary, the Reverend Charles Bell, and his wife. They had been in the Ituri for about as long as Father Longo and Pat Putnam had. As soon as they heard that we were staying in the camp down by the river they made arrangements for us to stay at the mission, and without knowing that we were on our way Mr. Bell set out on foot to issue the invitation in person. I had a special reason for accepting it; I wanted Kenge to have a fair notion of the way different missions operated. I certainly had no desire to see him converted, but having given him a taste of missions it seemed fair that he should have an all-round picture, and earlier during our trip we had had an unfortunate experience with a different Protestant mission.

At that mision prayers were said in public about five times a day, mention always being made of any converts who might be ill, however slightly. Prayers were also made requesting the Almighty to provide a road into the forest so that the mission could have easier access to the Pygmies, and thanks were offered for a new automobile that had been acquired. All this was perfectly understandable to the villagers, with their own tradition of witchcraft. They merely thought this a particularly powerful form of magic. Kenge was skeptical. "How is their god going to put a road into the forest when the white man can't do it?" he asked.

But one day, while we were there, a wounded Pygmy was brought in. He had been gored while hunting and was groaning with pain.

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *ensumba*, *isumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *ensumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

into paste. Then, using a finger, she daubs the fresh cloth, which may be white, fawn, brown, or blue, with bright splotches of red. If she is using the fruit juice she carefully collects it in a cup made from the hard shell of some forest fruit, and with little twigs she draws fanciful patterns of straight lines, crisscrossing the cloth with unconventional Pygmy geometry. When the cloth is finished she throws it over the roof of her hut to dry, and looks around for something else to do.

Women usually work in twos or threes for company, and nearby a friend will be attending to some other womanly task. They spend hours at a time making the elaborate belts which hold the bark cloth in place. The material culture of the BaMbuti is minimal, and simplicity and utility are usually the main characteristics. But there is nothing simple about the belts they make. A single belt takes several weeks. First the vine has to be collected, dried, and shredded. Then the strands are tied around a stout twig in the ground. The woman holds the stick firmly between her toes and pulls a number of the strands to form the core around which she braids an outer binding. There may be as many as two hundred braided lengths to a single belt, bound decoratively in the center. Each end is worked into ties for fastening the belt tightly so that it will not only hold the bark cloth in place but also support knives, machettis, and the bundles of roots and other things that Pygmies tie to their belts while on the trail, to leave their hands and arms free.

The same vine, nkusa, is used for making hunting nets. After it has been shredded it is deftly rolled on the thigh, one strand being rolled into the end of the next so that when two strands are twined together a woman can present her husband with a length of stout cord long enough to add several feet to the family hunting net. Net-making is virtually a full-time occupation, and one in which both men and women indulge whenever they have both the spare time and the inclination. Few occupations are strictly reserved for either men or

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
592 individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[854] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

593 861 Both parents have an equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively, 514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from 264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimina- 361 tion takes place close by, two factors favoring the frequent moving of camp.

[P. 177-B]

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, with the exception of termite hunting which is conducted at whatever time of the day or night termites are found to be swarming. 512 222

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninterrupted throughout the year, except when camp is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account that birth arouses the least public interest. The band welcomes each birth gladly but at the same time accepts it as no more than its due. The wives of its menfolk are expected to produce children; it is their primary function in the eyes of both the band and their husbands, and even in their own eyes. 844 [512] 844 621 [562]

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual blood is an important factor in conception (Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the connection between coition and conception (1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hearing the opinion expressed that repeated coition would hasten the hour of birth. 842 833 [841]

[P 177-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

412
284
824

FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner. [512] [356]

[P 194-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 202-C]

The net-hunting technique is similar to that of the *ègèe* described by Schebesta (1952, 133 ff.) but with the notable absence of the leadership of an "elder." The decision as to when and where to hunt is made during the evening preceding the hunt, in conversation among all the hunters around the campfire. Whereas rain puts an end to both net hunting and tracking, lack of rain (causing dry leaves to crackle underfoot) is disadvantageous only to trackers. Like the beat hunt, net hunting relies on the *amount* of noise that can be made. 224 184

The net hunt calls for a minimum of seven nets, each married man owning a net. Unmarried men may also own nets if they have proved their prowess as hunters. It is usual in a normal camp of about 17 huts for the majority of men, women, and children to join the hunt. If the camp is large, some members stay behind and perform their various subsidiary chores such as the repair of nets, the manufacture of bark-cloth and twine, gathering, and so forth. The women joining the hunt carry their babies on their backs; boys and young men are armed with bows and arrows or spears; and the heads of families carry their nets and spears. Various 224 [422] [512] • [854]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 203-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [P.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets.

512 22 [286] [857] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water.

364 514 [184] 515 [481] [823]

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

• 512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84 CONCEPTION AND CHILDBIRTH

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also. 845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and [17] Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

512 224 561 [855] of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

[462]

224 561 476 422 [594] The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 183 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 535 [252] The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is being done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted. Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

224 535 226

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846 if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853 father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843 pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512 hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521 they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594] women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lullabies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [533] [561] Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512 huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354 sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276] the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165] occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512 cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462] bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287] may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512 groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264 is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594] youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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512 264 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to [576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even [868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[785] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
• 512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married. If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 572
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [865]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

5

The Crime of Cephu, the Bad Hunter

765 533 EVERY NIGHT the men gathered to sing the songs of the molimo, and every morning the youths awakened the camp with their shouts and yells. This went on week after week, yet the daily life of the hunting group continued as though nothing particularly unusual was [152] happening. The men were more sleepy in the mornings, and sometimes tempers were short, but never for long. The necessities of hunting and gathering for a living did not allow it.

• 512 As soon as the camp was light and there was no further danger of the molimo's making an appearance, the women emerged from their huts and went down to the river to bathe and to collect water

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the virie strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512.

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Mbuti

512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away
[237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted
[412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either
[386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of
287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in
462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the
[516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

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husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled *"Ayiiiii?"*—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

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Mbuti

512 224 [202] go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 [157] Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 439 199 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

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Mbuti

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
181

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
527 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
514 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

119 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *pando*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
(151) Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

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Mbuti

8

Molimo: the Dance of Death

• 512 THE LELO RIVER flowed on, rising and falling endlessly; the men went out to hunt and returned with meat; the women went out to gather and came back with mushrooms and nuts and fruits; the children laughed and played. Old men and women did a little foraging in the vicinity of the camp, then sat in the cool shade and told one another about all the things they had done when they were young and would do all over again if they had the chance. At Apa Lelo one day followed the last in this happy-go-lucky way as though this was all there was to life.

ooo But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food,

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P 765 514 177

the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177

The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513

O[illegible]e Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was la[illegible] afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

P 881 P [832]

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 361 241 512 [313]

Chasse as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

361 M7 621

In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to 000
Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in 356
front are kept clean. 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes 52
in which children and adults may take part, the [535]
dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *paliengbe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well.

The dance takes place on every possible 53
occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes.

Legend telling and mime are other important 538
means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta 536
(1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that 513
the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo.

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 324 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*kuribu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [178] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
• 513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
595 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the
482 sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave
484 so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
• [513] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping
[177] mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[224] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[186] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks themselves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
• 513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with sm...e from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
578
688

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

2r Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 123 177 521

women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 P 123 177 439 P 123 177 C 832 [576]

The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doube. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 [513] [372]

That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 C 648 123

It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.
765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.
[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 765 574 177 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

P 881

P [832]

THE WORLD OF THE VILLAGE

The familiar night sounds of the forest were replaced by the cries of drunks coming home from a dance at the nearby Hotel de Bière, where an antique Victrola ground out records of the African version of the Calypso, imported from the coast. In the Negro village there were constant fights—not the wordy fights of the Pygmies, but good old-fashioned fisticuffs. These were likely to occur at any time of night, depending on how late it was when an outraged husband, returning from a rendezvous with his current girl friend, reached his own hut to find his wife in bed with someone else.

In our small Pygmy village the fires were all brought inside at night, and the smoke helped to keep away the mosquitoes. The doors were pulled tight shut, and nobody slept out in the open. Just an occasional murmured comment on the noise made by "those black savages" was all that was heard, none of the usual cheerful gossip that used to go on every night until, one by one, the hunters fell asleep.

But in the very dead of night I could hear the sound of crickets from the forest, reminding me that it was, after all, not so far away, and all around us. Sometimes when the moon was full I wandered around the sleeping village, to the edges of the plantations. There the forest stood up into the night like a great black wall, surrounding this small circle, cut so ineffectively out of its very heart. It rose up all around, confident in the knowledge that it would soon claim its own and grow back more thickly than ever, where it had been cut. There were several such abandoned villages nearby, not long abandoned; yet already the forest towered above them in the unsmiling triumph of inevitability. The forest destroyed everything but its own. Only against the machine age, which had barely reached it, was it powerless.

In the very early hours the forest made itself felt, but close as it was it faded far away with the coming of dawn. The morning sounds of cocks crowing, goats bleating, and the elephants of the Station de

[ARCHERS]

593 861 Both parents have an equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively, which occupy most of their time. Refuse from the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimination takes place close by, two factors favoring the frequent moving of camp.

514 264 361

[P 177-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

361 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

[514] Camps are moved every month or two because in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[124] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[340] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the pri- 512
mary concern of daily life among the net hunt- 22
ers. The net hunt is considerably more reward-
ing than the other form of hunt, although it
probably occupies as much time. Care and [286]
maintenance of the nets are also laborious and
time-consuming. Women gather not only as
they accompany the hunt, but also on those
days when the hunt stays behind in the camp.
The children make a not inconsiderable contri- [857]
bution to the family food quest. A common 512
occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and 283
women to assist each other in the making of
twine from *mkusa* vine. This twine is used pri-
marily in the repair of hunting nets.

As with the archers, elimination takes place 364
not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried 514
away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. [184]
These practices not merely create an unpleas-
ant smell after some weeks, but also attract
armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, how- 515
ever, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and
the favorite recreation of the children is playing
about in the shallow streams. The men assert [481]
that they can all swim but are never seen doing [823]
so; they are certainly much afraid of deep wa-
ter.

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
186 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
[621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[p. 335-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The prepa ation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

• 515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (Efe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies themselves and hung around the dog's neck (Fig. 7i).

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-A]

Care of Body

515 According to the Putnams, the net hunters
302 take much greater care of their bodies than
[184] Schebesta's archers. They bathe frequently in the shallow streams near the camp, inspect each other carefully for bugs and lice (acquired inevitably when sleeping on the ground), and shave their heads for purposes of cleanliness rather than for esthetic satisfaction. Oil, when available, is rubbed into the skin. On ceremonial occasions, when they visit the Bantu village, palm oil is used, often mixed with *nkula* paste to add to its natural deep red color.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The only domestic animal, as with the arch-
184 ers, is the hunting dog, but this, although highly prized, is not so important to the net hunter as to the archer and tracker. Even among the larger net-hunting bands there may be only one or two dogs.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets. 512 22 [286] [857] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water. 364 514 [184] 515 • [481] [823]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the 881
end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There 584
is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample [836]
opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last [832]
two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For 881
the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire 832
band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable 533
candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, 881
and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise 783
of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early 515
hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable op- 584
portunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies * three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4483, Music of the Ituri Forest

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way
across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen
tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top
of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only
paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride.
He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food
and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-
clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they
turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Many-
alibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting
as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down
their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their
houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets
down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with
bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been
examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night
before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest
behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each [284] about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house, built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut, calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into two by a leaf screen, the outer-half being a kitchen with a drying rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister. Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Father," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak, but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
301
888
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302

/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/
[P. 287-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P.293-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 31 1/4

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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287
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883
177

Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1/4,/Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
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412
883
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/Plate 31/

[P 295] /Caption appears on p. 297/

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 37 1

MUSICAL BOW, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

534 533 411 [516]

Mbuti music is almost entirely vocal, the voice being accompanied by wooden clappers. The musical bow is used sometimes to accompany the telling of legends or simply for personal amusement. As here, it is most often simply the hunting bow, tapped with an arrow, the mouth acting as a resonator.

1, /Plate 37 appears on page 307--Analyst/

[P.306]

9

Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
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411
• 516
302

/Plate 37/
/Caption appears on p. 306/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P 108-B]

E
622
344
352
291
516

2. The village headman's *baraza*, used for receiving visitors and holding public discussions.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 108-E]

142
516
342
302
291
854

5. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring roofing leaves into village for village houses.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

361
344
352
142
291
516

9. The Mbuti village baraza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

142
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415
853
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10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.108-I]

P
352
142
516
533
C
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352

11. An Mbuti hunter amuses himself in the village by playing a village-made zither.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R 108-L]

C
881
292
342

15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching *nkumbi* during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

P
516
142
881
304
152
C
[152]

16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult, but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant. 621 593 578 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours. 593 593 516

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal." 593 [564]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-A]

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[412] [439] 21. A young Mbuti mother, sitting on a log, prepares mushrooms, using a village knife. Another such knife lies across her left foot. It is probably the most widely used utensil for which the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, though still not indispensable.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-A]

142
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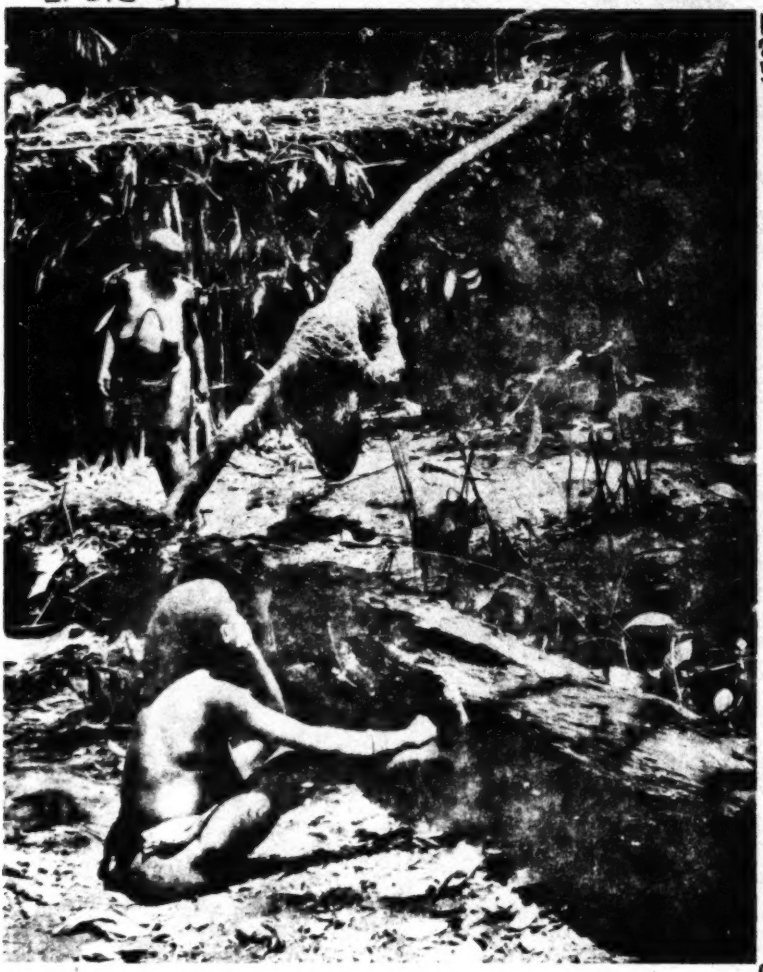

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

[578]
[593]
[152]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P276-B]

142
854
516

[462]

28. Moké, an elder and a peacemaker, with two of his adopted families. It is considered no shame for an Mbuti male to fondle and care for the needs of even the youngest children.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-C]

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29. A hunting fire is lit to announce to the forest that the hunt is setting out. Hunters on their way will pass by, but no special ritual is performed.

[224]

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up
• [516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo
825 had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor-
[136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take
[151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

and moved on. Yet when we had cut enough and were at the far edge of the mongongo grove, they knew exactly where each bundle had been put, and retraced their steps gathering the leaves as they went. Only then, when all the leaves were collected together, did they relax and talk, and pick a few wild berries with which to refresh themselves. Then they cut lengths of vine and softened it by running it quickly from hand to hand, pulling it sharply through the fork of the thumb. They laughed when I tried this and cut myself. With this vine they tied up the bundles, gave me the largest, and we set off on the way back, as fast as we had come.

As we came through the glade on the hillside above the Lelo we heard the voices of women and the laughter and shouting of children from the camp across the river, and when we got down lower and were wading through the cool stream, washing off all the dirt and perspiration, we could see long columns of smoke spiraling lazily upward through the trees. The camp was coming to life.

The clearing was full of activity. About twenty families had arrived, and each had already put up the framework of its little house. Arobanai and Loku, Ekianga's two senior wives, put their houses side by side at the north end of the camp, leaving a space for Ekianga and Kamaikan when they came out. Masisi's eldest son, Ageronga, helped his wife build their house between Masisi's and Loku's. Old Sau had already almost finished her hut, between my hillock and Arobanai's but closer to Arobanai, on the far side of the path that led off to the Lelo. Masamba was finishing the frame for her house; mine was complete, except for a few extra sticks and leaves needed for the doorway. She had done mine first. Now she squatted down making her own home, driving the saplings into the ground with sharp thrusts, each time in exactly the same place, so that they went deeper and deeper. When she had completed a circle she stood up and deftly bent the fito over her head, twisting them together and twining smaller saplings across, forming a lattice frame-

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

[284] Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to • 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Opposite: Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.

000

Ageronga's wife prepares a bundle of *mongongo* leaves for thatching her hut.

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[P. 72-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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824

Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
361
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A Pygmy camp. This one is Cephu's.

[P.72-J]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 *Opposite:* A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

Old Moke (in a sloth-skin hat) listens as Cephu tells a legend.

142
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538
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[P 72-L]

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

512 the others who have stayed behind from the hunt have any number of ways of occupying themselves, if they do not want to sleep.

The first time I ever visited a hunting camp I heard its many sounds some fifteen minutes before I finally walked into the clearing. First I heard a sharp, hollow, tapping sound. Then the whole orchestra of children's voices, loudly gossiping women and chattering men blended with the hammering and occasional shouting and snatches of song. In the camp there was only a handful of people; but they were all busy, and when Pygmies are busy they are noisy.

287 A youth was standing beside a fallen tree trunk, pounding away [237] at a narrow strip of bark with the end of an elephant tusk, hafted [412] simply into a wooden handle. He was making the bark cloth that is the main clothing of the Pygmies. Although more and more of the men are getting used to the European-style clothes of the villagers, in the forest they still prefer bark cloth, which is easy to make and costs nothing. There are several vines that yield a suitable bark. After a strip has been cut it is laid over an outstretched leg while the artisan chops casually away at it, removing the outer bark. Then it is either [386] soaked in water or mud, the mud giving it a bluish color, or softened by smoking it over a fire. After that it is spread over a fallen tree trunk and beaten with an ivory tusk. It spreads out into a soft, supple cloth, the texture varying with the type of bark.

386 There are many fashions in bark cloth, not only in the choice of 287 a particular bark, but in the way it is dyed or decorated, and also in 462 the way it is worn. The women nearly always do the decorating, using *nkula* bark to make a red paste, or the gardenia fruit, *kangay*, for black dye. On certain barks the juice of a citrous fruit stains the [516] material blue. As often as you see a man making cloth you will see a woman sitting down, legs straight out in front, as always. Her simple tools lie around her, and the bark cloth is spread over her thighs. If she is using the red nkula, first of all she has to rub two pieces of the wood together, with a little water to turn the powder

[P. 251-A]

ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held only during the *nkumbi*.

Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band is visiting a village, it may come down to the main meeting place in the evening and dance. The villagers expect it and regard it as one of their forms of entertainment, though they say they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

When the two groups meet on both festive and ordinary occasions they keep apart from each other. There is no leisure activity in which they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti camp beside the village, on the edge of the plantation where the forest begins. This physical disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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533
796
881
517

PLATE 38 7

Girls' Hoop Dance, Epulu District, Central Ituri

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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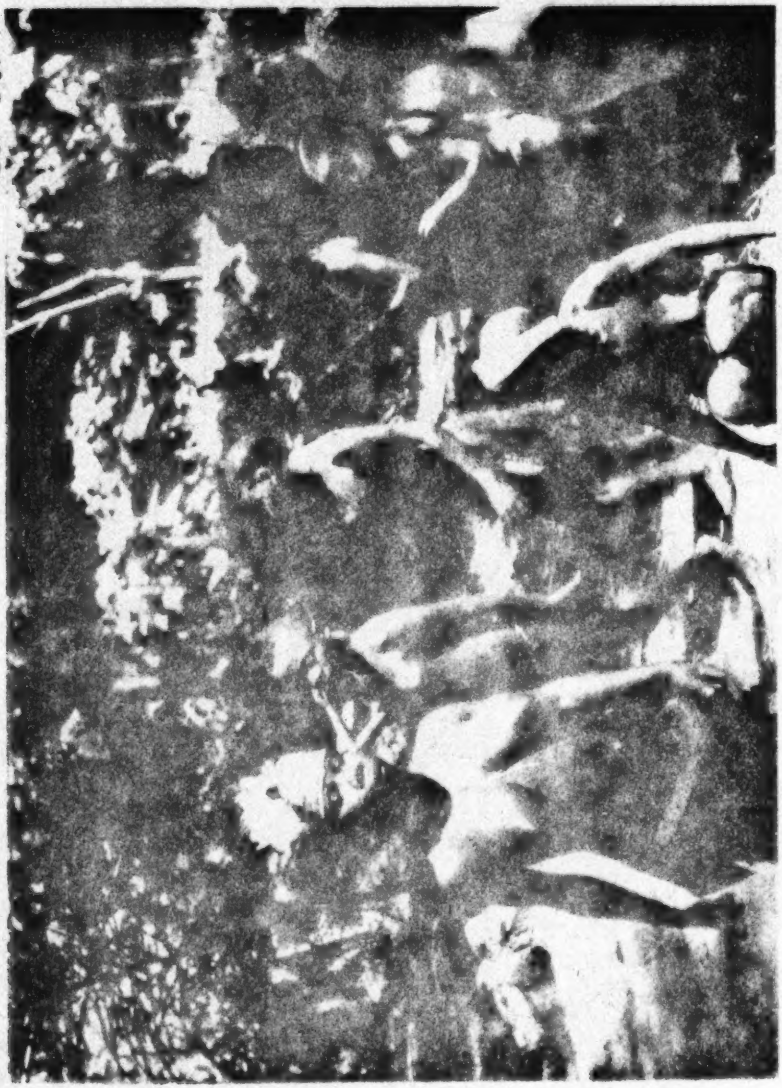
535
796
881
583
517



[P309] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [965]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

222 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ring-
527 ing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
517 [533] cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
602 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had
224

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are
517 about on a level with white men. There
521 is little chance for extensive conversations during the daytime while out
571 hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some people are quiet, others are noisier.
[157] Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to 000
Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in 356
front are kept clean. 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes 52
in which children and adults may take part, the [535]
dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *palienghe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well.

The dance takes place on every possible 53
occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes.

Legend telling and mime are other important 538
means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta 536
(1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that 513
the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 754 439 P 439

tion de chasse. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

P 754 *177 P [521] P [186] [192]

There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbafu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lullabies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [533] [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks themselves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number 177 525 thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the [151] Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but 177 they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get 186 a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies 574 have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the [828] criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have 648 some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more 177 Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two 123 servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and 177 a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and [262] sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of [521] her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 P 123 177 439 The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 177 P 123 177 C 832 [576] [513] [372] That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 C 648 123 It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village.

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake.

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

883 would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and
179 buy themselves beer."
52
[273]

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who
52 was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself
[152] up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo
[765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been.
533 The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it
[535] with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

593 152 [581] bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that [836] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, • 521 with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, 583 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was 584 not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and 584 saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

• 521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pygmies seem to be a little less talkative
571
[P.333-B]

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are about on a level with white men. There
517 is little chance for extensive conversa-
521 tions during the daytime while out
571 hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some people are quiet, others are noisier.
[157] Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-C]

The general observations that can be made from this collection of legends are: 538

1. The Mbuti of the Epulu are remarkably little concerned with matters relating to origin and tradition.

2. Their legends can be classified under three main sections: legends concerning their social life, legends relating to the animal and human kingdoms, and legends concerning the supernatural. In fact, the second section falls in part into social relations and in part into supernatural relations, but we mention it here to show the correspondence with Joset's (1948) classification for the archers.

While there are no professional storytellers among the Epulu net hunters, there are individuals who have a greater mastery of the art than others. They seem to hold an important position in the community, especially in relation to the activities of the *molimo* society. The storyteller and the clown seem to occupy a privileged position and to have a definite role to play in the men's society. Whether this also applies to the women of the *elima* is not known (p. 216). 538 564 [515] [522]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
CONGO - KINSHASA F01

of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
561 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[648] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
522 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

554 156 522 626 627

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit. 554 521 156 [626]

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father. 554 156 157 [555] [626] [595] [593] [626] 156 554 842

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a 554 156 157 595

began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

 152

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the 621
frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or 578
in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his 626
fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends [593]
with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between [522]
the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is gen- 578
erally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in 621
his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately 626
involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp [522]
clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rig- 627
orously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
[184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
• 522 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be affected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342 476
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their [522]
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside. 765 562

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard. 123 186 481

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo. [522]

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire. 115 123 122

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the 765

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them- [522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside, and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 137
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522] •
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P Kenge asked in amazement THE FOREST PEOPLE
C if the Mabudo actually came so far
224 into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often.
[186] They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any
P Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an ele-
[522] phant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

P This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide
484 suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge
P was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while
484 he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been per-
609 fectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] 84 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

[NET HUNTERS]

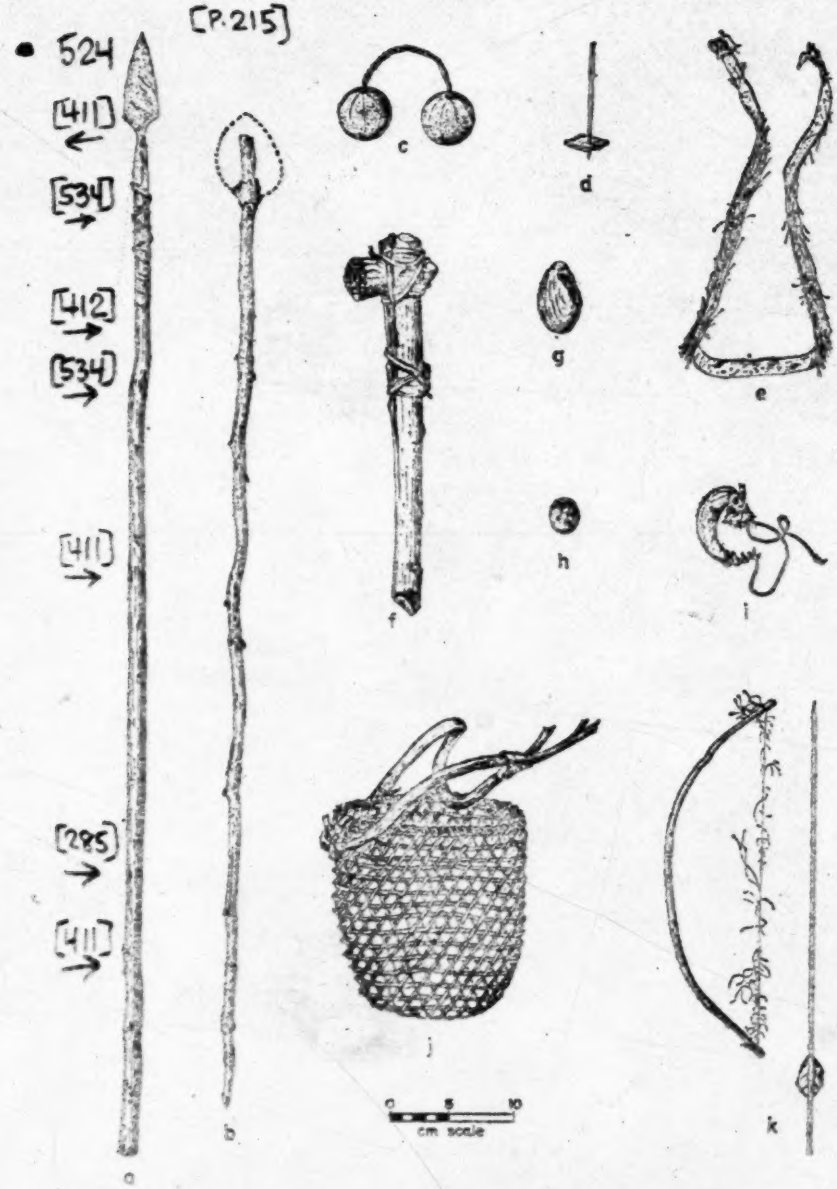


FIG. 45. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ekonga*. b. Fire spear, *iswakamaboki*. c. Castanets, *kolokbenje*. d. Top, *tokiya*. e. Baby sling, *koko*. f. Bark beater, *kolea*. g–h. Seed whistles, *pho'u*. i. Wrist protector, *asuba*. j. Basket, *so*. k. Bow, *mange*, and arrow, *api*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
• 524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[862] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the ground, and any who are timid or slow get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 222 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 535 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomes.*" No satisfactory translation

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

152 A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [881] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

all we could carry to bring back for dinner. The hill was ringed with streams, each one fresh and clear until it reached the swamp.

On the way back, having made a complete circuit, we were just nearing the camp when I noticed a huge old tree, one of those with great buttress roots joining the trunk some fifteen feet above the ground. It was completely dead, standing up white and naked among all the greenery, its lifelessness seeming all the more pitiable in the midst of such luxuriance. Most of its branches had already come crashing down, and only one or two jagged stumps were still jutting out from the main body. Kenge gave it a critical look; then peered in the direction of the camp a few yards below. "It should just miss our house!" he said quite seriously.

As a matter of fact it did. One night we were awakened by a sharp cracking sound, followed by a loud groan. This was repeated, and after a while a number of Pygmies, each with a flaming brand in his hands, stood out in the clearing, listening. "It's not going to fall yet," they said, and went back to sleep. Kenge had not even bothered to get up, but I could not sleep. I must have laid there for a couple of hours, listening to cracks as sharp as a rifle going off, and the intermittent groaning. Then the groaning got louder and more continuous, and in a flash Kenge was up and outside, yelling at me to follow. Just as I cleared the doorway the old tree came down, slowly and reluctantly, clutching at all the lesser trees that stood in its way. They were living, and it was dead, but it smashed its way on downward to the ground. The tremendous din of its collapse was followed by a light pattering of broken branches and twigs, and then silence. Kenge said, "You see, it did miss our house." So it had, by no more than six feet.

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For the first day or two I noticed the children playing in a vine swing that they had rigged up for themselves, and I watched the crippled Lizabeti as she eyed them longingly. Several times, when the other children had gone scampering off into the forest I saw her

pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself 824 524 • almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what 734 strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why 734 Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better 481 with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. 123 "What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most [152] truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

221 And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season
621 they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

114 But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Masisi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to
221 the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the
• 524 dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from
526 the highest branches, and on these the youths practiced their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line
221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all
535 was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P. 231-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
181

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
527 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
574 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

177 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
[151] Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [84]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, 535 [831] [372] [84]

[P 212-D]

621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

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621 they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

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221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all
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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

Dance and Festivity

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

[P. 250-D]

[P. 253-C]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, 177
including some of the ordeals. They not only 186
knew the initiation songs, but were taught them 881
by their mothers, who even more than their [857]
uninitiated male children were supposed to be
in complete ignorance of such matters.

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the 177
instructors did not come with them, and the 881
ganza had only occasional visits from one vil-
lager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting
camp. There were no ordeals during this time,
no singing except when visited by the solitary
villager, and no other form of instruction by the
Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The
boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to [527]
be, for both children and the adult members of
the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors
of the initiation school.

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the 177
ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, 861
they could scarcely avoid respecting the physi- 881
cal discipline imposed by the various ordeals
they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic

3a Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
181

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
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43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
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sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the [821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in front are kept clean. 000 356 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes in which children and adults may take part, the dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *paliengbe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well. 52 [535]

The dance takes place on every possible occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes. 53 •

Legend telling and mime are other important means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo. 538 536 513

[ARCHERS]

Art

There is no evidence of any plastic or graphic 531
art among the archers, other than designs used 532
in body painting, described by Schebesta (1941, 217 ff.), some of which he says are of magical significance and some purely esthetic. In this limited field there is no evidence, either, of specialization.

As means of artistic expression, music, dance, 53 •
and drama are evidently of great importance. Schebesta (1941, 243 ff.) describes these art forms and lays particular emphasis on the dance. Other, earlier sources (Schweinfurth, 1874; Burrows, 1898; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924) frequently mention dance and also the importance of mime among the Mbuti. Of the form and function of music, Schebesta has little to say. He mentions the use of villager instruments, particularly the drum, sanza, and zither, also others such as the musical bow, rattles, flutes (Fig. 15b, c), and pipes, and resonant sticks used by women for beating time to dances. He merely mentions the existence of singing, apart from the dance.

Of dance Schebesta (1949, 252–259) gives 535
more detail. He writes (1941, 243): "The principal, if not the daily entertainment of young

[P 187-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 188-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P 188-C]
obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 [83]

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53 •

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion. 774

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-A]
535 net hunters. They have not only social but
[533] also religious meaning. Schebesta's (1941, 252–253) classification of dances as sportive, mimetic, or erotic would also apply to the net hunters, with the addition of religious dances about which we know little. Also, like the archers, the net hunters separate the sexes in dance. There are circular and erotic dances which correspond almost exactly to Schebesta's (1941, 253–256) description of those of the archers.

• 53 If the band is near a village, they may borrow or steal drums, but the drum, resonant sticks, and handclaps are the only accompaniment (apart from song). A style of dance which uses an orchestra of eight or nine single-pitch bamboo pipes, much in vogue among the villagers, is sometimes copied by other Pygmies in the district. The players stand in a circle. Each player blows his pipe after his opposite number, forming a melodic line. The melodic line and the rhythm are altered by changing both the order of playing and the time lapse. The performers dance as they play and are joined in the dance by others. It is essentially the same style of dance as the *makata* (musical stick) dance seen at the time of *nkumbi*.

·1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

531 This account of music among the villagers in
191 the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each
533 one of these four points. Though the music of
191 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifi-
184 cally considered, it appears from all the known material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the
533 Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme
534 percussive effects are obtained by resonant
184 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted,
[191] there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

• 53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 235-C]

latter little is known in detail. Song is sometimes used when legends are told and is frequently mentioned in them. Dance and mime are even more closely connected. 53 •

The subject matter of Mbuti drama seems to correspond, as might be expected, with our classification of the subject matter of legends, but the former places greater emphasis on events of the day, particularly hunting. In default of detailed and accurate accounts of dramatic art and all attendant circumstances, the only generalization that seems permissible is the evident lack of interest in personal problems and a preoccupation with the maintenance of the relative status of the human (Mbuti), animal (villager), and supernatural worlds. 536 [181]

With reference to specialists in song and dance, as with other art forms, some individuals who have greater skill than others achieve a measure of renown for their skill. A mediocre hunter who is a good singer or dancer or legend teller is a far more important person than a moderate hunter who is none of these things. 555 53

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *toré* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), *is for the villagers a magical protection against* 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 There seem to be no significant points of di-
• 53 vergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold
[121] equally well among the archers. It is simply one of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721
184 Here, as in the previous section, the similar-
114 ity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light
[975] of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely
[192] important question when he questions Sche-
[776] besta's assertion that the *toré* society is an integral part of the religious system of the archers and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.
[P.248-B]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.273-C]

hunters rather than as Efe, Aka, or Sua—the linguistic division made by Schebesta which does not correspond to any sociological division. It may well emerge that there is a better classification, according to structural principles rather than purely economic differences, but at the moment this cannot be seen.

The survey also reveals a strange contrast between an apparently simple social structure and primitive material culture and a highly developed artistic sense. It seems worth while for the future field worker to pay particular attention to myth and mime, noting all the surrounding circumstances and not only the subject of representation. Similarly music is of obvious social importance and should be fully treated, with special attention to the social context. We might in this way gain some insight into the Mbuti system of values, which not only would be of significance itself but would immeasurably help our understanding of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

In treating the Mbuti art forms, we must 182
determine both their function and their mean- 53
ing, to see how far they form part of the social structure, possibly as regulative mechanisms, and the values they express, maintain, or enforce. In so doing we can reach the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system which promises, from the material presented here, to be of particular interest and to provide useful material for comparison with the magico-religious systems of other forest peoples, hunters and gatherers.

The Mbuti-villager relationship is probably 177
the major problem that arises from the survey. 439
We try to show, particularly by citing the 1954 *nkumbi* initiation, that this relationship is not a straightforward symbiosis based on necessary trade amounting to a division of labor between the two people. Such a division of labor exists, but it is an outward symbol of the relationship rather than its inner core. In studying this problem we are studying social change which is likely to assume a different form for each hunting band we consider. There are practical 177
grounds for the difference between the relation- 439
ship of the archers to their villager neighbors 184
and that of the more nomadic net hunters to

[P. 273- D]

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
• 53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Art

There is no evidence of any plastic or graphic 531 •
art among the archers, other than designs used 532
in body painting, described by Schebesta (1941, 217 ff.), some of which he says are of magical significance and some purely esthetic. In this limited field there is no evidence, either, of specialization.

As means of artistic expression, music, dance, 53
and drama are evidently of great importance. Schebesta (1941, 243 ff.) describes these art forms and lays particular emphasis on the dance. Other, earlier sources (Schweinfurth, 1874; Burrows, 1898; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924) frequently mention dance and also the importance of mime among the Mbuti. Of the form and function of music, Schebesta has little to say. He mentions the use of villager instruments, particularly the drum, sanza, and zither, also others such as the musical bow, rattles, flutes (Fig. 15b, c), and pipes, and resonant sticks used by women for beating time to dances. He merely mentions the existence of singing, apart from the dance.

Of dance Schebesta (1949, 252–259) gives 535
more detail. He writes (1941, 243): "The principal, if not the daily entertainment of young

[P 187-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 188-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

or by being heated and smoked over a fire. The resultant barkcloth may be worn in its natural color, dyed red or blue, or be painted with simple designs (Figs. 25–27), The dyeing and painting are done by women, using a special mud for an over-all blue dye, the juice of a citrous fruit for blue line designs, and *nkula* (elsewhere *ngula*) bark, scraped with another piece of bark (Fig. 24), with water added while scraping, for 287 386 531

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 200-A]

[412]

FIG. 24. Block and scraper of wood, *nkula* (also *ngula*), net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri; used with water for the extraction of the red dye most commonly employed in the decoration of barkcloth.

[P.197-D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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• 531

[P.198-A]

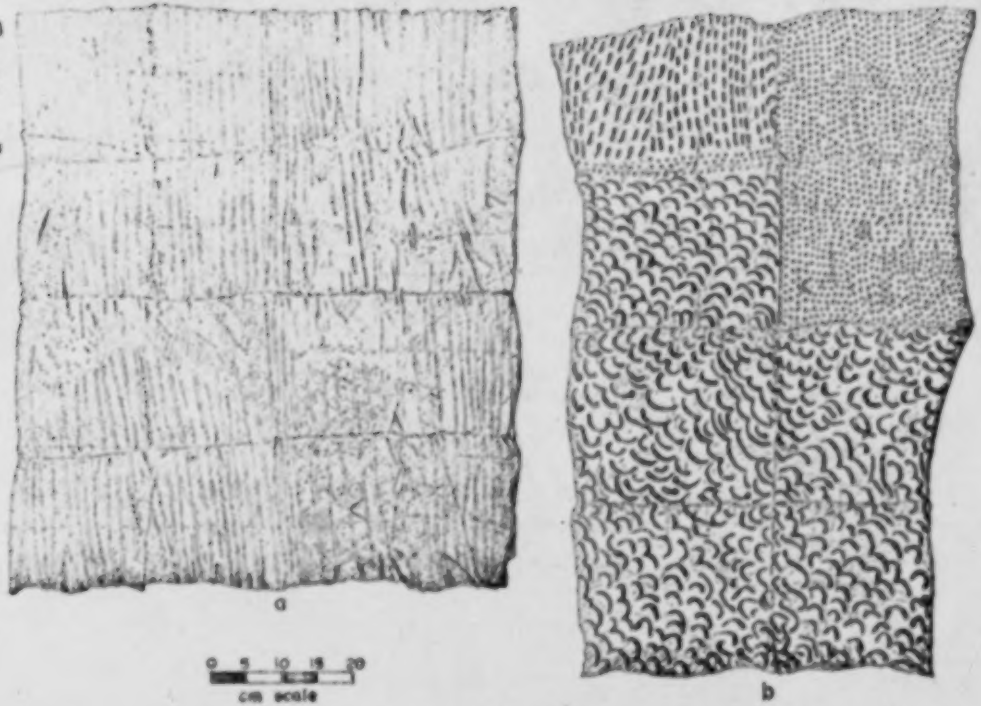

FIG. 25. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *epo'u* vine. b. Made of *esele* vine.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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531.

FIG. 26. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *ekoko* vine. b. Made of *esele* vine.

[P. 198-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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• 531

[P.199-A]

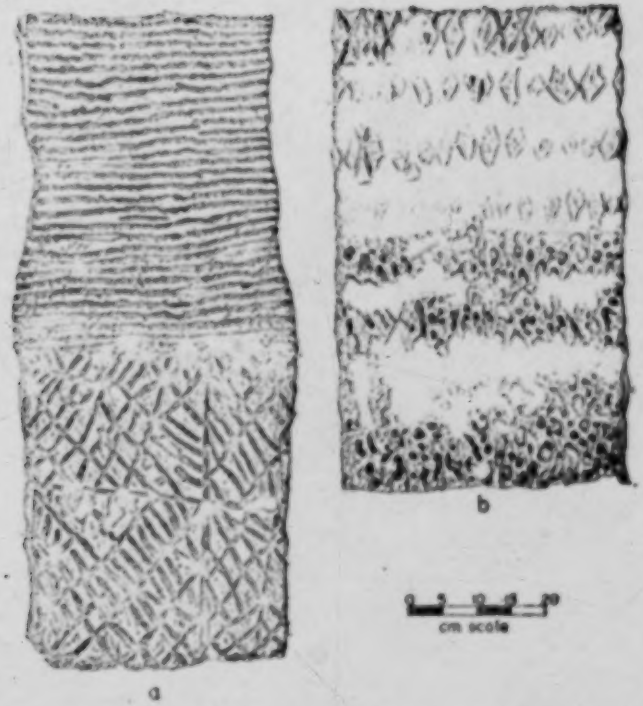

FIG. 27. Barkcloth, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.
a. Made of *lt'ungbe* vine. b. Made of *akbanda* vine.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtapo-
sition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
824

291
285

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 194

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

531 191 This account of music among the villagers in the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each one of these four points. Though the music of 533 191 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifically considered, it appears from all the known 184 material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the 533 Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme 534 percussive effects are obtained by resonant 184 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also [177] properly be described as percussive. As noted, there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 32

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, HAMMERING AND DECORATION,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

287 a. The stripped lengths of bark are softened in water or over a fire and then hammered
412 out with the end of an ivory tusk. Usually such hammers are hafted, though sometimes they
237 are used, as is the more rare wooden hammer, without being hafted. The tin can, the grass,
177 and the banana leaves indicate that this camp is in the near vicinity of a village.

b. Decoration. Women do all the decorating of barkcloth. They smear red *nkula* paste
287 onto the cloth with their fingers, or use small twigs to trace outlines in the black juice of
462 the gardenia fruit or the blue dye obtained from certain citrus fruits.

• 531
386 A 1, /Plate 32 appears on page 297--Analyst/

[P. 296]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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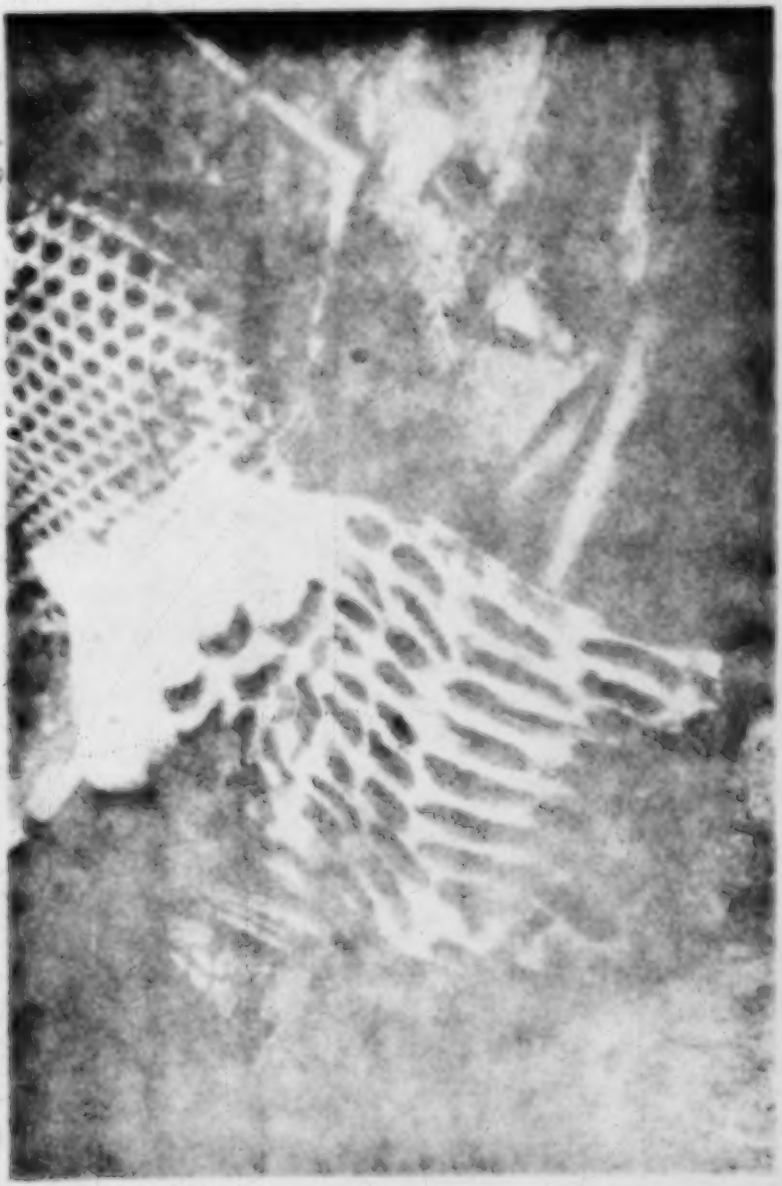

/Plate 32-B/

/Caption appears on p. 296/

[P 297-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Art

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[P.187-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 188-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

ZP 881 534 [114] [575] ZP 881 ZP [532] [292] P 881

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

P
B
881
532

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

P
58
621

fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

P
58
628
613
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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

• 532

FIG. 49. Wood carvings, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Carving of standing male. b. Carving of tree. Such carving is done by the Mbuti extremely rarely and only in direct imitation of the villager carvers.

[MM]

[P. 220-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

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Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

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[P. 233-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-C]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

Z B 575 576 534 [535]

P Z [533] •

P Z [562] [858]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 210-A]

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222

[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *ebimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayabisi*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *nghenghe*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[184]
[533]

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [84]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, 535 [83] [372] [84]

[D 212-D]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-A]

535 the dance through fire, is reserved for special re-
[372] ligious occasions among the net hunters. Secular
[84] dancing takes place at any time of the day, any day, but nearly always there is dancing in the evening, and, when the moon gives enough light, the dance may continue through most of the night. Except for the religious dances, men, women, and children take part in the dancing together.

533 Song is even more important to the net hunters. There is not much information in the Putnam material, except that different types of song exist for men and for women and for different occasions, but from my own observations among this group there are, as with dance, clearly two major divisions. One is between secular and sacred, and the other is between songs proper to men and songs proper to women. Certain songs are sung only by members of the men's religious association, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*), and those proper to members of the women's association, the *elima* (Schebesta: *elimo*). Then there are songs for hunting and songs for gathering. Each of these

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84 CONCEPTION AND CHILDBIRTH

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also.

845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and

[!??] Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C]
sundown they return to their hut, which they 881
enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533] •
taught to the new initiates by the old woman in
charge. The women of the camp sit outside and
also sing, having armed themselves with whips
made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to [613]
her lover, who may be of the same band but
must be of a different lineage. He must fight his
way into the hut, through the women armed
with whips and against the shower of missiles
hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the
old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be
serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881
young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836
had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering
his maiden. He remained with her all night. The
next day he was bound with vine and kept a
prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was
then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed
to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [831]
(i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [613]
try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [837]
of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

[NET HUNTERS]

claim compensation from him. The women guardians also could make it easy or difficult for the candidates, according to their inclinations. Any man, having fought his way through, had to secure the girl's permission before he slept with her. But reliable Mbuti informants reported that a large number merely fought for the prestige acquired and sought no intercourse with the girls. Outwardly, there is no change, except that instead of firing arrows from their bows the men fire fruit peel, and the fighting is less severe than that described in the tales of olden times. Exactly what happens inside the hut is not known, but the festival is evidently an opportunity for young men to prove their valor, and for young maidens to prove their womanliness, each one attesting to his or her readiness for marriage. There is unfortunately no evidence as to how far the opening of the *elima* constitutes a betrothal, nor how frequently it is followed by marriage. 881 836 [554]

During the course of the *elima* the girls are under certain food restrictions, which include a prohibition on all meat. *Elima* singing goes on all night. Presumably, as with the *nkumbi* initiation of boys, this is a period of discipline as well as of education. Apart from the special *elima* songs, apparently special dances are 881 [533] [535]

[P 216-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

Z 585 628 563 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and P 172 585 Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). Further, P [533] [535] even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 571 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P 221-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *torí* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (190.-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

ble then that there may be different types of instrument, but evidently not used in conjunction. Anne Putnam further mentions having heard sounds that she took to be animal sounds but that may in fact have been singing pots as described by Schebesta (1952, 279). The only instrument that she or her husband mentions, however, is the trumpet, and no description of it is given. 534

This instrument is an essential part of the proceedings; its use marks the difference between two grades of *molimo* meeting. A meeting in which the trumpet is not used does not carry the significance that one with the trumpet does. There is no information as to exactly when it is used and when not, but it is recorded that the trumpet is heard during meetings following death, during serious illness, or during some crisis affecting the welfare of the band as a whole. It is frequently associated with song, accompanied by split-stick clappers, *banja* (Fig. 52) that are apparently peculiar to the *molimo*. [533]

534 575 796

A third grade of meeting is that from which women and children are not excluded, during

533 575 796

[P 225-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[P.226-A]

534

FIG. 52. Split clappers, *kanja*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung.
535 Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in
536 that it is known by all that the songs effect
[536] some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

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533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
796 treat. They know that certain songs have more significance than others, and, on hearing these, they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordinary meeting of the men to develop to this extent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
534 The women in any case have been aware of
796 whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet, they take their children and shut themselves in their huts. None will come out, even to cross the clearing. The men sit close together around one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trumpet echoes their song, sometimes coming close, sometimes going far away into the forest. The *molimo* may come right into the camp itself and install itself, unseen, close to where the men are
[535] sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly start dancing through the fire, scattering the ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly afterwards the participants go to bed. The singing may last only two or three hours, or may con-

[P. 226-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam 575
material. Once a meeting is begun, it may con- 796
tinue nightly for as long as a month. It is ob- [533]
ligatory for all members to attend, and those [534]
who are away visiting return to take part. Visi- [574]
tors in the camp also take part if they qualify
as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, [292]
sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and
feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs 575
that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplica- 796
tory but are mainly repetitions of one or other 533
of the names of the God of the Forest, or affir- 576
mations of his goodness and omnipotence. The
songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is un- [182]
doubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

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That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

[P. 226 - D]

f: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 227-A]

575 reached a climax (drums were being used, un-
533 usual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*),
534 the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one
782 of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a
796 present tonight." Another said that there was nothing to give. Then one of the more important but younger hunters said, "We'll give it water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out and saw water being thrown over a figure that seemed to be white and that was playing the trumpet. The figure did not flinch and continued playing, while the hunter who suggested throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward the trumpet left, and the men sang without the drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

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575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

796 Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at that time. 575 533 765

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not clear and which took place down near the village. One villager took part. The trumpet and the performer, covered with a cloth, were carried in from the forest on a crude litter and disappeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed. 796 575 534 533 796 [114]

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have witnessed were of the more serious kind, following the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally a period, early in the night, during which the men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh- 765 533 [534] [535] [831]

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all
the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coincidence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meeting, described by Anne Putnam. It is the custom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

575 881 796 533 [534] [765]

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the women, and all the men had to run away every time they saw it. But then the men caught the

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[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

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In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-A]

535 net hunters. They have not only social but
• [533] also religious meaning. Schebesta's (1941, 252–253) classification of dances as sportive, mimetic, or erotic would also apply to the net hunters, with the addition of religious dances about which we know little. Also, like the archers, the net hunters separate the sexes in dance. There are circular and erotic dances which correspond almost exactly to Schebesta's (1941, 253–256) description of those of the archers.

53 If the band is near a village, they may borrow or steal drums, but the drum, resonant sticks, and handclaps are the only accompaniment (apart from song). A style of dance which uses an orchestra of eight or nine single-pitch bamboo pipes, much in vogue among the villagers, is sometimes copied by other Pygmies in the district. The players stand in a circle. Each player blows his pipe after his opposite number, forming a melodic line. The melodic line and the rhythm are altered by changing both the order of playing and the time lapse. The performers dance as they play and are joined in the dance by others. It is essentially the same style of dance as the *makata* (musical stick) dance seen at the time of *nkumbi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-C]

dance observed by Mrs. Putnam the man who first speared the leopard was wounded but nonetheless took part in the dance. The other two men involved in the killing protected him as much as they could from their attackers and guarded him as he cut the leopard down. Onlookers said that he would not have been thought a coward if he had not taken part, because of his wounds, but he had chosen to do so. 535 224 825

Song, used in conjunction with dance, as described by Schebesta, also has a separate function and operates as an art form in its own right. This, at first, Schebesta (1933, 301) denied, but later (1936b, 27; 1948, 259) he conceded the greater importance of song over dance. Among the net hunters there is a very clear division of song into four main categories, each of which can be distinguished by style and technique alone, and a fifth subsidiary category of play songs. The main categories are, as briefly mentioned above (p. 213), religious songs and secular songs, each subdivided according to sex, i.e., songs of the men's 533

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

religious association (*molimo*) and of the women's religious association (*elima*); songs of the men's main economic activity (hunting) and of the women's (gathering). It is perhaps not quite justifiable to make the subdivision according to sex, as, in hunting and gathering among the net hunters, both sexes hunt. Most of the gathering songs concern honey gathering which is primarily a male occupation. Nor, in fact, does the classification into sacred and secular stand up to full scrutiny, as, in a sense, all songs are sacred as all are related to forest activities and the forest itself is sacred (pp. 258–259). 533 • [078]

Unlike the archers, the net-hunting Mbuti make extremely little use of musical instruments of any kind, except for the resonant sticks used in accompaniment to their forest songs. For one thing, a truly nomadic group with only the most basic means of locomotion and transport, namely, the human body, can hardly afford to accumulate possessions beyond the absolute necessities—even less so with bulky nets as an additional item to be carried when camp is moved. Some net hunters know how to make and play notched end-blown flutes, with even greater skill and precision than the neighboring villagers, but they are rarely made. A *lukembi* (*sanza*) is the only instrument 534 [184] [48]

[p. 234-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.235-A]

534 that a Pygmy would think of carrying with him, as it is light, portable, and most easily concealed from the villagers from whom he probably stole it. There is no record that the net hunters make any instruments other than the flute and the resonant sticks, and possibly a special musical bow which is made just as is their hunting bow but larger and with a larger section of vine as the "string." Ordinary hunting bows are sometimes used as musical bows.

533 From the material on net hunters it seems that music is virtually exclusively vocal and that, apart from lullabies and some play songs, song involves chorus rather than solo work. Men and women join in song; sometimes they merely double each other's parts (as in the "secular" songs); at other times each takes different and complementary parts (*elima* songs). Certain *elima* songs and all *molimo* songs are sung only by adult women and men, respectively.

533 171 Merriam (1953), in an examination of music from the Congo and Rwanda, writes that Congo music has four main characteristics: (1) lack of emphasis on percussion; (2) variety of instruments and styles; (3) heavy Arabic influence; and (4) considerable change currently in process.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

531 191 This account of music among the villagers in the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each one of these four points. Though the music of 533 191 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifically considered, it appears from all the known 184 material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the 533 Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme 534 percussive effects are obtained by resonant 184 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted, [191] there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[P. 250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. There is no evidence of such a practice among the net hunters, but they may call in a villager for the purpose. But here we should consider Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying the villagers with meat for some time, yet has been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as his excuse the fact that the hunting has been poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as one can judge from casual conversation among themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti have little faith in it. Further, they have their own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song may or may not be accompanied by a dance re-enacting a successful hunt, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

P 224 177 789 789 563 177 P [439]

P 224 789 533

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[P. 256-D]

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
(858) seem to be the non-participation of women and
[885] children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
(533) bers of the band, the use of special songs and
the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[P 257-B]

1: Turnbull E 4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 257-c]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their unity. Their means of communication are special songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in terms of explicit supplication. They merely call on the God of the Forest by constant repetition of his name (frequently changing from one name to another, it seems for the sake of variety and euphony), and an occasional recitation of his qualities as the source of all good in the Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the *molimo* horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

796 776 778 782 575 796 776 778 782 533 575

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women 575
are members, and participation is compulsory 796
in one's own camp or when visiting another. [885]
Communication with the forest God is again
established by means of songs, special and sa- [533]
cred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. [776]
The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern [778]
to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of pu-
berty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and
death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are con-
cerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion
of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.)
Both associations meet in the forest camp but
out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in
the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring
huts. Young children may be present. The ex- [858]
ception, when the men take part in the meeting
of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* 881
initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the ini- 885
tiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere 224
for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," 575
he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and
[p. 257-D]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 776 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] [554] [171] [181]

1, [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258- C]

Finally, it is worth taking very brief note of the function of music among the net-hunting Mbuti in so far as it throws light on their participation in the *nkumbi* and village society in general. 533 182

Music in the forest is almost entirely vocal. Drums may be used if within easy reach of the village, from which they are borrowed or stolen. [534] But drums are never used for formal meetings of the *molimo* and *elima*; rhythm is given out by wooden clappers. None of this song can be said to be secular, as it is all related to the forest. The extreme importance attached to song is most plainly seen in its usage for the *molimo* and *elima*. It is mentioned above in the survey how the Mbuti consecrate a marriage ceremony that is performed in the village according to villager custom, by singing the songs of the *elima*, welcoming the bride to the women's religious association in her new home. We also see how the *elima* songs mark the arrival of Mbuti girls at the age of puberty. *Molimo* songs mark

[P 258-D]

[P. 259-A]

533 182 any major crisis affecting the community as a whole. But, as well as these religious activities, both major economic activities, hunting and gathering, are also consecrated by special types of song. It is inconceivable that the Mbuti, who accompany every important event in their lives with song, should not consecrate the initiation 533 of their boys in this same way. But for the 881 *nkumbi* they have no music at all. As we have 182 said, in 1954 the *molimo* horn was not heard, and no *molimo* songs were sung. I suggest that other initiations, in which the horn and songs are heard, are in connection with villager institutions to which the village boys are being initiated. The only conclusion we can draw is that for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is not sufficiently significant in their forest life to merit consecration by forest song.

533 This is closely paralleled by the absence of 182 forest music (songs of the *molimo* and *elima*, 181 hunting-and-gathering songs) when the Mbuti are camped on the edge of a village. When they do, the Mbuti themselves behave as different people. In the forest they feel and observe a [098] certain restraint. Their songs are related to and emphasize their supreme value—the forest. Their daily activities are dominated by the forest and the hunt and the need for close cooperation.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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lage often comes to an end. After a few days or weeks of drinking and dancing, one evening the drum-dance is replaced by song, probably a subdued hunting song sung by a group of dejected-looking Pygmies sitting around a fire in their village camp. They get increasingly melancholy until one evening, probably a day or two after they have stopped drum-dancing, they start singing *molimo* songs. The next morning they are suddenly full of life again, and, despite all protests from the villagers, they pack their few belongings and return to the forest, singing loudly as they go.

The evidence considered suggests that there is a dissociation of two sets of values for the Mbuti—those that apply to the village and those that apply to the forest. The two sets of values, corresponding to two worlds, are accompanied by two modes of behavior. It is a case of culture contact without acculturation; such villager institutions as the Mbuti seem to adopt are adopted and are significant only with reference to their village life. The relationship between the two people is, on the one hand, characterized by various attempts to formalize it through trade, participation in various ceremonies and activities, and, on the other hand, it is characterized by a sharp opposition of two different sets of values. This opposition is an opposition of the forest to the non-forest; the humans, to the animals; the Mbuti, to the villagers.

538 776 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves in- [789] dicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice.

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 771 772 I mention one further factor, which in a way may be said to be magical, and that is the power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and

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rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. [825] 533 538

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex- 789

plained. But there is a feeling, and I cannot say 533
that it is more than that, that song has power. 538
The song may have no words; it may be a mix- 789
ture of meaningless sounds; but plainly it is esthetically satisfying to the Mbuti. These wordless songs are among the most powerful. When the father killed the bird, he killed the song, and he dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever. In real life, also, song is powerful. Membership in the religious associations of the women and the men gives the Pygmy the right to take part in the singing of songs peculiar to those associations. In fact, it imposes a duty to do so. The songs are distinguished not by their content but by their musical style and the technique of performance. It is the *sound*, rather than the word content, that matters. These songs are sung, in their most powerful form, only on occasions of the greatest distress, such as sickness or death of one of the great hunters, or failure in the chase. These are departures from normality. It has been my contention from an analysis of the function of music among the Mbuti that song is believed to restore that normality.

As well as several more obvious differences 538
from villager values, such as emphasis by the 171
[P. 271-D] 181

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PLATE 37 1

MUSICAL BOW, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

534 533 47 [516] Mbuti music is almost entirely vocal, the voice being accompanied by wooden clappers. The musical bow is used sometimes to accompany the telling of legends or simply for personal amusement. As here, it is most often simply the hunting bow, tapped with an arrow, the mouth acting as a resonator.

1, /Plate 37 appears on page 307--Analyst/

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PLATE 38 7

GIRLS' HOOP DANCE, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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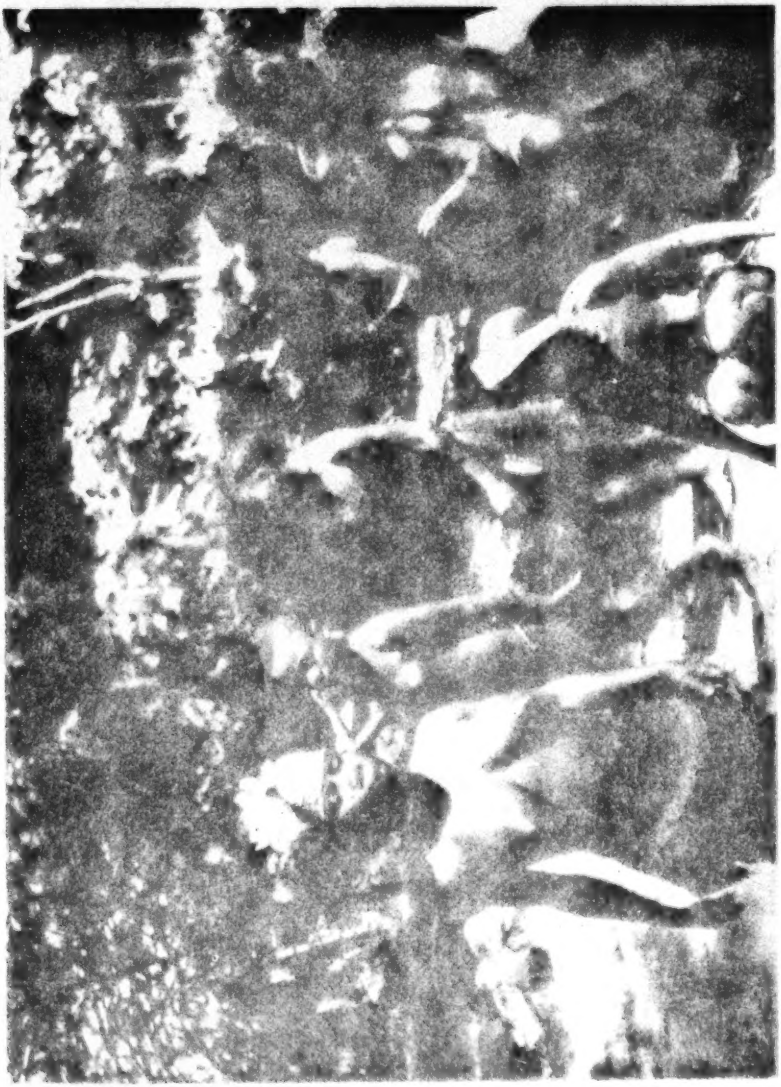

[P300] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

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oughly as possible, it seems that among both Bira and Ndaka, and I believe also among the Lesé, death is believed to put fellow clansmen of the deceased in great danger from the *keti*, or evil spirits. The object of the *molimo* is twofold, then; it must help the deceased on his way, giving him what protection it can, and it must protect the living, who will be in a state of ritual danger throughout the period of mourning.

During that period the *molimo* meets regularly, at nighttime, in the house of the senior surviving member of the clan, in whose possession the *tete* is held. Only adult male clansmen are admitted, and the sound of the *tete* is the audible evidence of the invisible presence of their totemic guardian spirit. Specially prepared food is offered to the spirit, and the rest is eaten by the men. No women are allowed to participate in any way, even by cooking the food, according to all informants. However, I had been told the same thing about the Mbuti and found it to be different, and do not accept this information without some reservation. It would seem, though, that women generally are excluded from the *molimo* of the villagers, and indeed it really is no concern of theirs.

During the proceedings, which may last an hour or so, the men wail and call out the name and/or the kinship term of address of the deceased; his praises are recited and he is commended to the ancestral spirits. At the same time, the praises of the surviving clan members are similarly recited, and mention is made of the way in which they have upheld tribal lore and observed all the rules of clan exogamy, and have increased the number of attendant Mbuti. Continued protection for the living is requested, particularly for the period of mourning. Apparently no Mbuti take part in this part of the ceremony, though there seemed to be some disagreement over this and my impression was that the associated Mbuti are not prohibited from attending, but effectively seldom, if ever, do.

Upon the death of an Mbuti the *kpara* will not only oversee the burial and funerary ceremonies and divination, he will also want to hear announced the calling together of the men of the *molimo*. Sometimes he will leave it at that, but if the Mbuti continue to stay in the village and hold any *molimo* meetings in their village camp, the *kpara* may attend one or two meetings. It is very noticeable that when he does, the meeting runs a completely different course, centering around some erotic dancing by the younger men and a small amount of singing. The *molimo* trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of

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The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *tele*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

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However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

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It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

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The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

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sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

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a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

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11. An Mbuti hunter amuses himself in the village by playing a village-made zither.

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [588]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

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her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

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effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 [621] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [554]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

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881 an injunction against eating meat, and this seems to be when the *elima* activities are affecting the hunt and the supply of game.

The rest of the *bamelima* are merely expected to be in attendance, and come and go as they please.

In the very lack of restrictions we can see that the Mbuti do not regard the *bamelima* to be in any ritual condition of danger or impurity. At such times as they are free to be among other band members in the camp they behave perfectly normally, playing with young children, fondling babies, sitting by family hearths, and so forth. But they eat separately and wash separately, so we might say that at least they are in a condition of ritual respect.

881 To begin with, the *bamelima* spend most of their time either inside
864 the hut or else off with an instructress, in the forest. Inside the hut
867 they are taught the songs of the *elima* by any older women who care to take part in the instruction. In the forest, I was told by a number of women, young and old, the girls are instructed in the arts of motherhood. This presumably includes such aspects of sexual life as are still unknown to them, which are probably few, but also use of the various herbs and treatments that a woman must know to insure fertility, an abundance of milk, easy childbirth, and abortion if necessary.

881 Girls say that certain of the *elima* songs are taught them in the
533 forest rather than in the hut, and as the festival progresses less and less time is spent in the hut, and more in the forest. For the festival is said "to rejoice the forest," to make it happy and glad. If the girls are not singing well they are told the forest will be displeased. If they are dejected they are asked if they want the forest to be sad. Everyone is expected to be happy, and as the *bamelima* go through the forest they sing to it. As with so many of the other songs of the Mbuti, the *elima* songs are either wordless, being just plays on vowel sounds, or else the words are slight and without any evident significance, such as "Ibu is a dog," "Let's get leaves," and "Oh, the mud!" Other songs sung by the *bamelima* toward the end of the festival, when they sing in public in the camp, are rather different, making rather more sense and being distinctly spicy in nature.

But the songs that are considered as true *elima* songs and which conform to a musical style of their own, are evidently sacred. When they are sung in the forest, they are sung *to* the forest. A phrase is cast at the forest and an echo is awaited before the girls continue. Even an individual girl, usually the one with blood, will sing in this

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way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the *elima* girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the *bamelima* is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

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have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the 881
end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There 584
is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample [836]
opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last [832]
two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For 881
the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire 832
band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable 533
candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, 881
and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise 783
of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early 515
hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable op- 584
portunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

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though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

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mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time 222
throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti [252]
to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of [224]
the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark [482]
tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There [602]
is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much [422]
more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but 222
insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are fre- 533
quently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the 789
elima songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity, [778] [776]

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222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

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It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

Closer to an indigenous system of punishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo* society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

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wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

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Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

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This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound. 778 822 533

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti. 533 [822]

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.) 533 881 [844] [585]

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or 000

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*. [192]

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533 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or
765 female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more impor-
462 tance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the
881 concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the
765 contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of con-
182 cern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death,
181 but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are
[561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

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ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765] I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

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822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
922 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[778] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[761] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[765] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[789] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry 752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many 757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the [224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If [75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or 778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire 796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest • 533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the [782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not [533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*, [535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and [765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although [626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

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greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

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Mbuti

765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to
[535] contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[831] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

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never lost sight of. The trumpet itself, while avowedly an "animal" 765
whose animal noises (mainly in imitation of elephant and leopard) 534
are designed to scare women and children and keep them in their huts, is the only sign of the presence of a supernatural power. The main function of the trumpet is to sing, and to pass on the song of the Mbuti into the forest. It is taken off to a distance from where it picks up the song from the men around the *molimo* hearth and echoes it on into the night. This way, the Mbuti say, the forest is sure to hear it and be pleased.

Normally a trumpet is kept high up, concealed in a tree. During a festival, however, it is kept in water except when in use, for it is considered to represent the power of the forest for chastisement. Keeping it in water keeps it "cool." It acts, it seems, as an intermediary, passing on the song of the Mbuti to the forest, but returning in the morning with power, and sometimes with anger. When it appears in the [533] morning, just before dawn, the men have had at the most an hour's sleep, and this is a signal for them to begin singing again. An adult male who fails to sing during a greater *molimo* festival is allegedly killed, and when the trumpet appears in the morning its first act is to search for sleeping men. It is held by a number of youths, who run up and down the camp in search (this may also happen during the evening). But then, to show its power, the trumpet is carried from hut to hut, the youths beating on each with branches and tearing leaves off the roofs. The huts of any troublemakers are particularly singled out, though with due regard for the process described under "Government," by which individual blame is avoided. The older men and even the women may yell at the *molimo* to go away, or to go back to the water, but on this occasion the youths are effectively in charge. There is generally a mock battle in which some of the youths will try to block the path of the trumpet, borne by other youths, or to deflect it in another direction. There may even be a tug-of-war, with some youths pulling it in one direction, some in another, though such contests are formal and enacted more as a dance than as an actual test of strength. All the time, those carrying the trumpet keep it concealed behind leafy branches, or simply by holding it between them. In the end it is carried out of the camp triumphantly as dawn breaks, and with a few defiant bellows returns to its secret hiding place in the water. A vine stretched across the stream warns women [784] and children to keep away.

It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as

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sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three 577
principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, 778
even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the 626
forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experi- 121
ence it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which [114]
kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism —is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the ob- 621
vious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological 778
determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of or- 181
ganization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total ab- 778
sence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as 533
such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have [189]
seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure 765
from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be 181
regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society 121
and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of re- 182
ligious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and 761
inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens 182
more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

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the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

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deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

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with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

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Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

There are a multitude of sounds, but most of them are as joyful as the brightly colored birds that chase one another through the trees, singing as they go, or the chatter of the handsome black-and-white Colobus monkeys as they leap from branch to branch, watching with curiosity everything that goes on down below. And the most joyful sound of all, to me, is the sound of the voices of the forest people as they sing a lusty chorus of praise to this wonderful world of theirs —a world that gives them everything they want. This cascade of sound echoes among the giant trees until it seems to come at you from all sides in sheer beauty and truth and goodness, full of the joy of living. But if you are an outsider from the non-forest world, I suppose this glorious song would just be another noise to grate on your nerves.

The world of the forest is a closed, possessive world, hostile to all those who do not understand it. At first sight you might think it hostile to all human beings, because in every village you find the same suspicion and fear of the forest, that blank, impenetrable wall. The villagers are friendly and hospitable to strangers, offering them the best of whatever food and drink they have, and always clearing out a house where the traveler can rest in comfort and safety. But these villages are set among plantations in great clearings cut from the heart of the forest around them. It is from the plantations that the food comes, not from the forest, and for the villagers life is a constant battle to prevent their plantations from being overgrown.

They speak of the world beyond the plantations as being a fearful place, full of malevolent spirits and not fit to be lived in except by animals and BaMbuti, which is what the village people call the Pygmies. The villagers, some Bantu and some Sudanic, keep to their plantations and seldom go into the forest unless it is absolutely necessary. For them it is a place of evil. They are outsiders.

But the BaMbuti are the real people of the forest. Whereas the other tribes are relatively recent arrivals, the Pygmies have been in

175 Reverend Paul Schebesta, set out from Vienna in the nineteen-twen-
114 ties to study them.

114 Schebesta's first trip was an over-all survey of the forest area, in
144 which he established the fact that this was a stronghold of the pure Pygmy, as opposed to the "Pygmoid" in other parts of the equatorial belt, where there has been intermarriage with Negro tribes. In subsequent trips Schebesta gathered material which showed that these Ituri Pygmies—whose term for themselves, BaMbuti, he adopts—are in fact racially distinct from the Negro peoples, Bantu and Sudanic, who live around them. This fact has been confirmed by later
174 genetic studies, up to the present. Though we cannot be sure, it seems reasonable to assume that the BaMbuti were the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest stretching from the west coast right across to the open savanna country of the east, on the far side of the chain of lakes that divides the Congo from East Africa.

114 But when I read Schebesta's account of the Pygmies it just did not
533 ring true when compared with my own experiences on my first trip to the Ituri. For instance, in one of his first books he says that the Pygmies are not great musicians, but that they sing only the simplest melodies and beat on drums and dance wild erotic dances. Even much later, after he had come to know the Pygmies better and had spent several years in the region, when he wrote his major work, running to several volumes, he devoted only a few pages to music, attributing little importance to it and dismissing it as simple and undeveloped. This could not have been further from the truth.

114 In several other ways I felt that all was not well with Schebesta's
177 account, particularly with his description of the relationship between Pygmies and Negroes. He gave the impression that the Pygmies were dependent on the Negroes both for food and for metal products and that there was an unbreakable hereditary relationship by which a Pygmy and all his progeny were handed down in a Negro family, from father to son, and bound to it in a form of serfdom, not only

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time [533]
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551]
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well, and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

their songs of praise to the forest, the molimo answered them, first on this side, then on that, moving around so swiftly and silently that it seemed to be everywhere at once. 123 533 534

Then, still unseen, it was right beside me, not more than two feet away, on the other side of a small but thick wall of leaves. As it replied to the song of the men, who continued to sing as though nothing were happening, the sound was sad and wistful, and immensely beautiful. Several of the older men were sitting near me, and one of them, without even looking up, asked me if I wanted to see the molimo. He then continued singing as though he didn't particularly care what my reply was, but I knew that he did. I was so overcome by curiosity that I almost said "yes"; I had been fighting hard to stop myself from trying to peer through the leaves to where it was now growling away almost angrily. But I knew that Pygmy youths were not allowed to see it until they had proved themselves as hunters, as adults in Pygmy eyes, and although I now carried the marks on my forehead I still felt unqualified. So I simply said, no, I did not think I was ready to see it.

The molimo gave a great burst of song and with a wild rush swept across the camp, surrounded by a dozen youths packed so tightly together that I could see nothing, and disappeared into the forest. Those left in the camp made no comment; they just kept on with their song, and after a while the voice of the molimo, replying to them, became fainter and fainter and was finally lost in the night and in the depths of the forest from where it had come.

This experience convinced me that here was something that I could do that was really worth while, and that I was not doing it justice by coming armed with cameras and recording equipment, as I had on this trip. The Pygmies were more than curiosities to be filmed, and their music was more than a quaint sound to be put on 123

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
• 533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them [176] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo,* but it is meant to represent the

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies * three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4483, Music of the Ituri Forest

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up [516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo [825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor- [136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take [151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived. 482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their 361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they 342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men 481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she 533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young 361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put 342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping 412

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks themselves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo,
534 which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen
123 from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional ma-
177 terials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer [533] pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534
533 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
825 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again, and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781
534 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that [534] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in [778] themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest [186] wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

765 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the 533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh- 534 ter Kondabate and her husband Ausu, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amabosu, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must ha been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

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765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
539 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was sing- 765
ing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed 533
it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but 539
the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang 825
again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important 765
it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me 533
around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that [854]
Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general 765
pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but [183]
with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all [854]
women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the [533]

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
578
688

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
578 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

115 But, most important, he[1] told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not
[533] looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[1] [i.e., Moke - analyst]

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

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5

The Crime of Cephu, the Bad Hunter

765 533 EVERY NIGHT the men gathered to sing the songs of the molimo, and every morning the youths awakened the camp with their shouts and yells. This went on week after week, yet the daily life of the hunting group continued as though nothing particularly unusual was [152] happening. The men were more sleepy in the mornings, and sometimes tempers were short, but never for long. The necessities of hunting and gathering for a living did not allow it.

512 As soon as the camp was light and there was no further danger of the molimo's making an appearance, the women emerged from their huts and went down to the river to bathe and to collect water

765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end. They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night. It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

this direction and that; even her fingers each seemed to have a dance 765
of its own. But her head was still, and her eyes were fixed on those 562
of Kondabate. 535

At this point Kondabate handed the banja to another of the 765
women standing nearby and led the young girls right into the center 562
of the men's group, dancing in a close circle around the molimo fire. 535
As they moved around, the men stood up and made room for them, 533
and now the singing came almost entirely from the women. The men just stood and stamped and clapped and growled a bass accompaniment. The girls danced more and more wildly, but their heads and eyes were always turned toward the molimo fire, no matter how violent the body movement. After nearly half an hour the old woman, still crouching, ran into the center after the girls, and turning to face them from the far side of the fire she drove them slowly backward, back until they were lost among the others at the edge of the group. The singing was quieter, and in a few minutes it faded away altogether. Not a word was spoken.

After a short rest the singing started again, and this time there was no mistaking it—the women were leading. Manyalibo's wife picked up the banja and beat them, sharply and decisively, and the girls began the song. The men followed in obedient chorus. Once again, as the song grew faster, the old woman began to twitch until her whole body was alive with movement. Then she sprang up and came into the center of the kumamolimo alone. For an instant she stood there, and her head moved sharply from side to side. It was like the movement of a bird, keeping a wary eye open for possible foes. As she began to dance she seemed to sink slowly into the ground, her knees folding up like a concertina, her body bending at the waist; but always her head stuck out in front, jerking from side to side, eyes staring and expressionless.

She circled the fire three times, looking out and upward into the [372]
night, but unseeing; then as if satisfied that she was alone and un-

765 observed she flung her head and her whole body around and faced
562 the fire directly. She was about seven or eight feet away from it. She
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• 533 advanced slowly and cautiously, two steps forward, one step back,
372 her attention riveted on the flames. The singing was louder and faster, but she refused to be hurried. At her own pace she approached closer and closer until it seemed impossible that she could stand the heat. She hesitated at the brink of the fire, her frail body gleaming with sweat, her face glowing and trembling. She made as if she was going to pounce on the fire, but whirled around at the last moment and danced quickly back to where the women were singing, watching her, eagerly and anxiously. She sat down on her haunches and accepted a steaming bowl of liko.

The singing did not stop this time but went on quietly at a slower tempo. The men made no attempt to move back closer to the fire. After about ten minutes the old lady, apparently refreshed and as full of vigor as ever, danced back into the men's circle, with Kondabate at her side. Their movements were perfectly co-ordinated, even to the twitching of their heads; as they sank down close to the
765 ground they might have been one person. But as they neared the
562 fire, again having circled it several times, the old woman sprang to
535 her feet and ran swiftly around to the far side and crouched there,
372 staring at Kondabate through the flames. They started circling once more, each keeping her eyes on the other, moving from side to side so that they were always opposite each other. But now they were closer to the fire than they had ever been and on their hands and knees they passed through the hot ashes, as though trying to reach each other through the flames.

Finally Kondabate retreated and squatted down at the edge of the circle, her body twitching just as the old woman's had done, her eyes staring and empty as she gazed at the molimo fire. The men heaped more wood on the flames, which were beginning to die down.
[533] Now they were singing as loudly as the women, stamping on the

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but 765
never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller 562
and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood 535
proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were 372
out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and [533]
gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames.

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a
more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each [831]
time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men
gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated 765
among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and 562

765 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making
562 any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned"
562 the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the
773 women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to
[462] play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had
372 asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy
182 it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again,
533 and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

765
ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides 533
she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of 765
nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old 533
woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so 824
that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt [284]
to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or 765
because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evi- 881
dently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether 881
the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger 177

would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers. The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 433
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was sus-
pected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground,
they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and
imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled
the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it
sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing
as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Sur-
rounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around,
faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men
who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing
in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
• 533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.
765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.
[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

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the young bachelors. And together with the older women they began to sing, in deep contralto tones. The men protested loudly that they were tired and wanted to sleep. But the women just laughed and sang all the louder. The elima had started in earnest. 881 [832] [533]

tain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families.

It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while. The Pygmy was able to do for him all the necessary chores that necessitated going into the forest and could bring him game that supplemented an otherwise largely vegetarian diet. And in latter days, with the compulsory maintenance of larger plantations, the Negro found the Pygmy a useful source of additional labor. But for all of this he had to pay, and he was always uncertain how long any one Pygmy or group of Pygmies would stay with him. They were frequently miles away in the heart of the forest, and if the hunting was good no amount of coaxing would bring them back.

For the first week back at Camp Putnam, I found the villagers going out of their way to be generous to "their" Pygmies. The Pygmies wandered about idly, hanging around wherever they found food cooking, occasionally responding to a request to help with some kind of work. The village blacksmith, a man of many parts, adopted Masisi's family, though Masisi himself would have nothing to do with him. He said that Baziani was a trouble-maker, whch he was, and that he was after Masisi's daughter, which was also true. But Baziani was wealthy, and Masisi's children spent most of their time in his baraza. They were well fed and looked after, and treated more as friends than anything else. Baziani, in return, made use of them to run errands, usually connected with his virtual monopoly of the local hemp market.

Baziani was genuinely fond of the Pygmies. In the evenings he used to bring out his drums and the Pygmies would gather around and dance. After a while Baziani would relinquish his part as a drummer, acknowledging the superiority of his friends. Then he sat back in his cane chair and watched with a contented smile. He was one of

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beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

C [226]

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

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molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children, even if he was a villager.

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though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the 881 841 Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children [842] should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, 881 and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

The girl enters seclusion, but not the seclusion of the village girl. She takes with her all her young friends, those who have not yet reached maturity, and some older ones.

In the house of the elima the girls celebrate the happy event together. Together they are taught the arts and crafts of motherhood [861] by an old and respected relative. They learn not only how to live like adults, but how to sing the songs of adult women. Day after day, night after night, the elima house resounds with the throaty contralto of the older women and the high, piping voices of the youngest. It is a time of gladness and happiness, not for the women alone but for the whole people. Pygmies from all around come to pay their respects, the young men standing or sitting about outside the elima house in the hopes of a glimpse of the young beauties inside. And there are special elima songs which they sing to one [533] another, the girls singing a light, cascading melody in intricate harmony, the men replying with a rich, vital chorus. For the Pygmies the elima is one of the happiest, most joyful occasions in their lives.

And so it was with happiness that we all heard that not one but two girls in our camp had been blessed by the moon.

At first it was just Akidinimba, daughter of Manyalibo's sister. 881 Akidinimba was a notorious flirt who considered herself the most 832 beautiful girl in the world. She was just sufficiently plump to be envied by less well-endowed girls, but not so plump that her maidenly

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881 In the one case Mambunia would come out of his hut in a temper
832 and send all the girls back to their house, and in the other case Asofalinda would run amok among the girls, boxing their ears until they, in turn, cried like the children they had beaten.

881 But the elima beauties did not confine themselves to their own
574 village. After all, most of the men there were relatives and so could not decently be invited into the elima house. Many strangers came to visit from other groups, but sometimes the attendance was disappointing. Then the girls would set out to visit one of their hunting
[123] camps. I followed them on one such escapade, having secured a promise first that I would be given complete immunity. It was a strange procession, the girls all oiled and painted to look their best, wearing grass skirts in imitation of the boys' initiation (an innovation that infuriated the villagers, who felt that their customs were being desecrated, and that caused open hostilities in the end), and carrying stout whips, twice as tall as they were. There were about eight of them in all, led of course by the irrepressible Akidinimba, bouncing her breasts up and down in a determined manner as she marched along the road, past the Station de Chasse, and over the bridge to the far side of the Epulu River. The villagers came out to look as we passed, but from a respectful distance. On other occasions I have seen a party such as this dive into the midst of a group of village men and women, lashing out with all their might—not entirely in the friendly way in which they would whip, say, old Tungana, as a compliment to his virility.

On the far side of the Epulu we climbed up the hill toward Eboyo, the sun beating down on us so that the chatter and laughter of the girls was almost stilled. But just before reaching Eboyo we turned off, following a trail through an old plantation and into the
881 forest. As the trees closed in around and above us, the girls began to
574 sing. They sang loudly and proudly, marching with even more de-
533 termination than before, their heads back, looking at the familiar

leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest. 881 574 533

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her. 881 574 [487]

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba 881 832

During this time the older women paid more and more attention 881
to what was going on and gathered almost nightly outside the house to join in the singing. But one evening was different in that almost every woman in the group was there. There were even some women from Cephu's group, which had temporarily detached itself and was now some miles away. They gathered early, before it was fully dark. The bright blue sky was deepening without any of the wild tinges of color that so often come at dusk, and the tiny puffs of cloud that drifted across remained a shining, fluffy white, even when the sky was almost black.

The women brought sticks of fire with them, and some of them cooked and ate their evening meal right there outside the elima house; others just sat around and gossiped, huddling close to the fires from habit, though in the village it was still warm. Inside the house the girls were singing, but the women outside did not join in. The men sat before their huts, watching and waiting. Finally the 881
door opened and the girls trooped out. The younger ones came first, 302
their bodies decorated with modest blobs of white paste made from clay; then came Akidinimba and Kidaya and their attendants, resplendent and magnificent, yet strangely shy. They must have spent hours working on themselves and one another, for they were covered with elaborate patterns skillfully drawn with fingers and thin sticks, also using the white clay. Akidinimba had taken particular trouble to paint her breasts with intricate circles of lines punctuated with blobs, something like a grapevine gone to seed, whereas the more demure Kidaya had concentrated on her buttocks, and these were covered with a hundred carefully painted little stars. Each girl had her favorite style, and each was different. They looked around coyly, to make sure they were being admired, and sat down at the edge of the group of women.

They began singing then, together with the women, much more 881
seriously than they had ever done before. They sang as though they 533

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881 533 *were* women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires. 881 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but 885 which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs 533 sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She 885 was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as 157 flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat 533 with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped 415 on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya. 881 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. 152 She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing 302

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881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
777 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
[765] dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed
[533] as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
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made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was 361
that they would be independent because they would no longer have 829
to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village 177
foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of 152
all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the 177
forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, 178
to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few 185
days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always hap- [533] •
pened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we 533
heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the 825
Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies 222
the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, dif- 262
ferent kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] [821] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

detail. All her work has the indisputable advantage of being a factual record of personal observation of a single hunting band over a period of eight consecutive years. That she is not an anthropologist is to a great extent mitigated by the fact that her record confines itself to her observations, and by the training she received from her husband. Nonetheless this factor should be taken into consideration, particularly as her previous training was as an artist. This accounts in part for the detailed and accurate descriptions of what she saw, but it also accounts for her sometimes highly imaginative presentation of the facts. For instance, when she hears the *molimo* horn at night, she (1954, 84) writes: "Where the Esamba roamed, there went death. Its eerie, lowing voice was the voice of evil." In fact this, as well as being a statement of her own interpretation of the *molimo*, is also an accurate picture of the villager interpretation. It is also significant that she uses specifically village terms, such as "Esamba" (for the more correct *lusumba* or *esumba*). Living as she did among the villagers as well as among the Pygmies, Mrs. Putnam was influenced by many of their notions and not infrequently used the villagers as informants, though she always states when the latter is the case. We must then assume that

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[P. 157-D]

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 169-A]

302 barks. The preparation of the dyes and the
386 painting of the geometric designs are a woman's
[462] art.

Care of Body

515 Schebesta says that bodily care is very much neglected among the Mbuti. He agrees with and quotes Stuhlmann (1894) who writes that the Pygmies are exceptionally dirty and are afraid of water. Schebesta also mentions the fondness of the Mbuti for rubbing oil into the skin.

DOMESTIC ANIMALS

231 The hunting dog (F.fe: *ebó*) is the sole domes-
[439] tic animal. Schebesta says that all Mbuti main-
tain hunting dogs, bought from villagers or
[534] acquired by trade. These dogs are mute; hence
the need for dog bells, made by the Pygmies
themselves and hung around the dog's neck
(Fig. 7i).

[ARCHERS]

[P.171-A]

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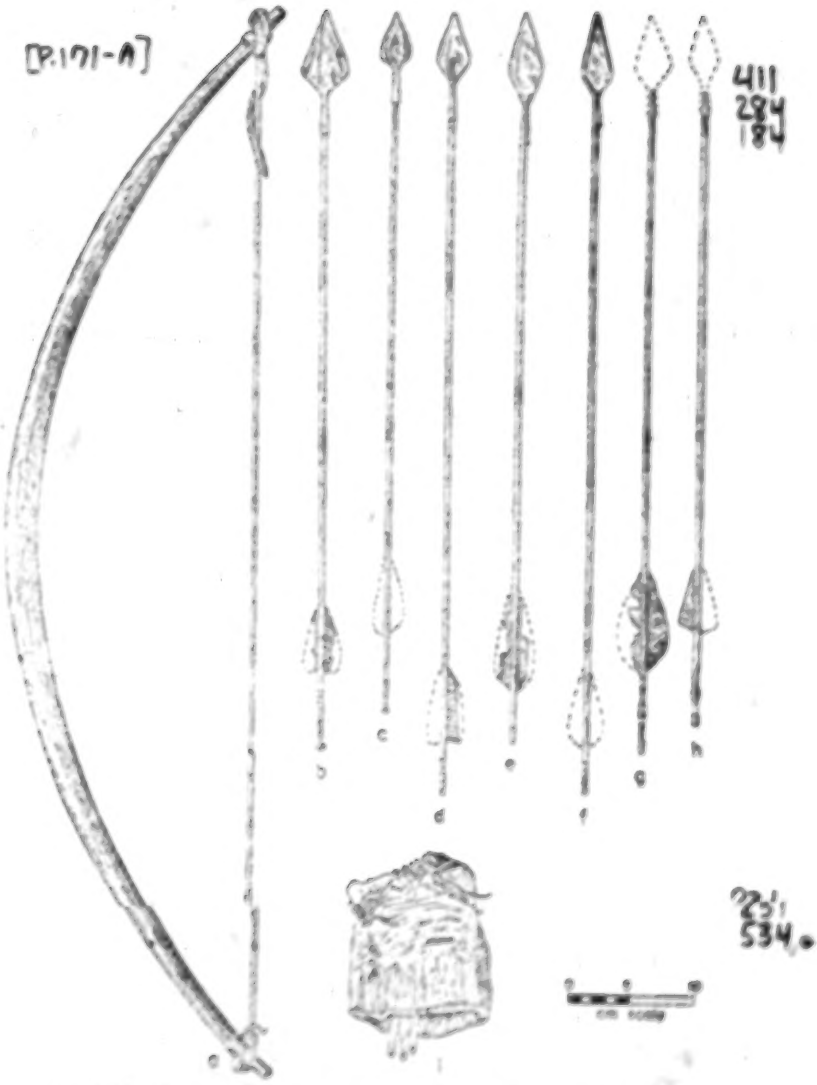

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FIG. 7. Hunting equipment of a western archer from Ndaye District, Central Ituri. a, Bow. b–h, Arrows. i, Dog bell.

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *karé* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *seghe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *karé* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

Z P 881 177 608

Z P [534] [202] •

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nkumbi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *karé* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

Z P 881 177 608 534

[P. 179-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P [P, 180-A]
Z 881 177 608 534 Z [563]

society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and the secret society) among the south Lese, namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Z P 881 177 P [578]

Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager element of initiation associated with circumcision and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element of initiation into the men's secret society (*toré*).

Marriage

P 581 584 621

Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult to determine which is the stronger, the interests of the hunting band or the interests and mutual affection of the two individuals concerned.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

[P 183-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-A]

P Z 575 346 534 P [304] times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All these instruments, he claims, however, produce sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of a leopard's claw.

P Z 575 [346] A further inquiry made among the archers in 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta, 1952, 279) and added some supplementary facts. The *toré* hut is to be found near or in the camp itself. Women and children may attend the *toré* ceremonies organized by the men. The "presidents" are an old man and an old woman. The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, implored for help in the hunt. The society, Schebesta concludes, has a religious aspect. This same study revealed the use of three wooden trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodzo*), in fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through which the performer sings into it (*iuma*); and three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

O Z [176]

O Z [534]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[p. 184-c]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

Z P 575 576 534 [535]

P Z [533]

P Z [562] [858]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies
Mbuti
Bira FO11

188 (A)

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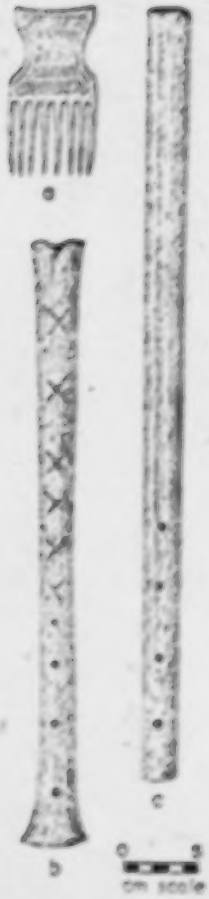

FIG. 15. Miscellaneous items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Comb. b–c. Notched flutes. These luxuries are not an essential part of hunting life but seem to be gradually becoming more common.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *toré* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
82 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
• 534 blowing of the *segbe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *segbe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his
782 "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
224 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
372 the apparently ancient *begbe* beat hunt, as is mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.203-C]

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224

FIG. 35. Magic whistle, ***mamambamamba***, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such magic is rare, though pipes and whistles are sometimes blown before a hunt in the belief that the sound will attract game.

ting up the nets, with a special vocabulary of 224
technical terms to deal with it, but he does not give the details.

When all is ready, the women, who have spread out in an opposing semicircle, start beating into the nets, calling and shouting, beating their sticks on the ground. If they see any slow game heading their way, they dive for it and

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 210-A]

415
222

[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *chimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayahisi*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *ngengbe*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
[84]
[222]
[535]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P 210-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [84]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, [p 212-D] 535 [331] [372] [84]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.215]

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[41]

[534]

[412]

[534]

[41]

[205]

[411]

Fig. 43. Toys, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Spear, *ebenge*. b. Fine spear, *imakamabali*. c. Castanets, *kolokbenio*. d. Top, *teiipa*. e. Baby sling, *duku*. f. Bark beater, *kolea*. g-h. Seed whistles, *pio'u*. i. Wrist protector, *arube*. j. Basket, *ai*. k. Bow, *mange*, and arrow, *epi*.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] [750]

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 • 881 177 P Z [535]

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

Z P 881 534 [114] [575]
Z P 881
Z P [532] [292]
P 881

[P 218-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 225-A]
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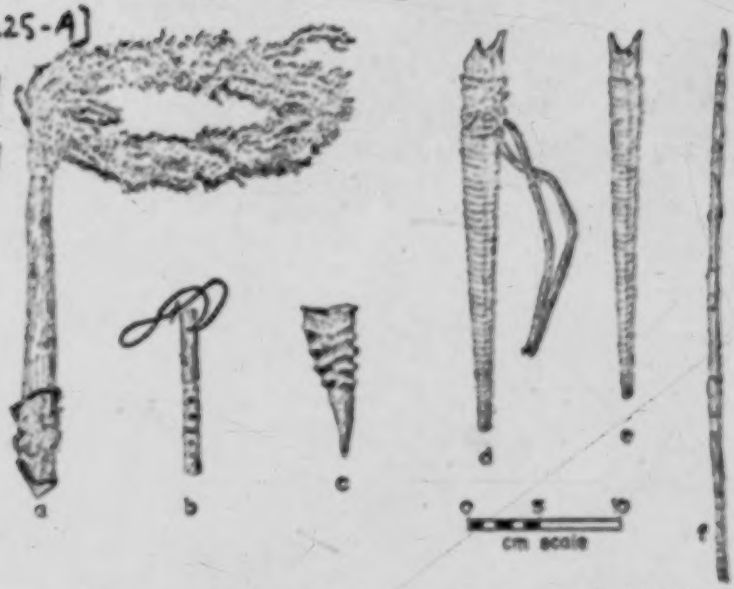

FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akbelea*, attached to fur headband; worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they [237] set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbelu*. c. Antelope horn, [P.28] *anjo*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, [222] *madi*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madi*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyongi*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing in the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[NET HUNTERS]

575 to status in the band and the fact that young
561 men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed
88 particular prowess as hunters may take a prom-
[554] inent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence
[224] of any detailed information on formal initiation
into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some
certainty, from the available material, that
among the net hunters membership is associa-
ted primarily with hunting skill.

575 With regard to the proceedings of the associ-
796 ation, all reports from this district indicate that
the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the
greatest importance to the community: various
crises, and particularly death. A fuller account
is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340);
a summary is given here.

534 The word *molimo* is used to denote the asso-
[192] ciation, its proceedings, and a musical instru-
ment. Only one instrument is reported by the
Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet.
But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions hav-
ing heard the trumpet one night and thinking
that it sounded very different from the one she
had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P 225-8]

Ir Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

ble then that there may be different types of instrument, but evidently not used in conjunction. Anne Putnam further mentions having heard sounds that she took to be animal sounds but that may in fact have been singing pots as described by Schebesta (1952, 279). The only instrument that she or her husband mentions, however, is the trumpet, and no description of it is given. 534 •

This instrument is an essential part of the proceedings; its use marks the difference between two grades of *molimo* meeting. A meeting in which the trumpet is not used does not carry the significance that one with the trumpet does. There is no information as to exactly when it is used and when not, but it is recorded that the trumpet is heard during meetings following death, during serious illness, or during some crisis affecting the welfare of the band as a whole. It is frequently associated with song, accompanied by split-stick clappers, *hanja* (Fig. 52) that are apparently peculiar to the *molimo*. 534 575 796 [533]

A third grade of meeting is that from which women and children are not excluded, during 533 575 796

[P 225-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

• 534 [P.226-A]

FIG. 52. Split clappers, *banja*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung.
575 Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in
576 that it is known by all that the songs effect
[576] some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
796 treat. They know that certain songs have more
significance than others, and, on hearing these,
they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordi-
nary meeting of the men to develop to this ex-
tent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
534 The women in any case have been aware of
796 whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting
and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet,
they take their children and shut themselves in
their huts. None will come out, even to cross
the clearing. The men sit close together around
one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trum-
pet echoes their song, sometimes coming close,
sometimes going far away into the forest. The
molimo may come right into the camp itself and
install itself, unseen, close to where the men are
[535] sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly
start dancing through the fire, scattering the
ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly after-
wards the participants go to bed. The singing
may last only two or three hours, or may con-
[p. 226-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

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That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

[P. 226 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 229-A]

505 reached a climax (drums were being used, un-
533 usual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*),
534 the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one
782 of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a
1196 present tonight." Another said that there was nothing to give. Then one of the more important but younger hunters said, "We'll give it water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out and saw water being thrown over a figure that seemed to be white and that was playing the trumpet. The figure did not flinch and continued playing, while the hunter who suggested throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward the trumpet left, and the men sang without the drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

[NET HUNTERS]

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

796 Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at 575 533 765 796
that time.

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not 575 clear and which took place down near the vil- 534 lage. One villager took part. The trumpet and 533 the performer, covered with a cloth, were car- 796 ried in from the forest on a crude litter and dis- [114] appeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have 765 witnessed were of the more serious kind, follow- 533 ing the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, [534] even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally [535] a period, early in the night, during which the [831] men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumòi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534] •
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [965]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 325
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

534 Normally, however, and when drums are not available, short resonant sticks are used. These are either smooth, giving a sharp hollow sound, or else they are split and shaved at one end to provide a totally different accompaniment. These sticks, handclaps, and leg stampings provide the rhythmic background to the dance.[1]

535 224 825 Mrs. Putnam has seen a dance in which a mask made from a leopard skin was used by the Mbuti. She also describes fully (1954, 296 ff.) a dance performed by them following the killing of a leopard. The body of the leopard is strung up to a branch or a tall stake. All the men, armed with liana whips and whips made from plaited antelope hide, gather around it. The men who are responsible for killing the leopard dance by themselves, approaching the stake. As they do so, they are attacked by the others, and have to fight their way to the leopard's body and cut it down, at which everyone gives a shout of triumph. In the

[1] It is most notable that for religious song and dance such is the only form of accompaniment, even if drums are available.

[P. 234-B]

Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

religious association (*molimo*) and of the 533
women's religious association (*elima*); songs of the men's main economic activity (hunting) and of the women's (gathering). It is perhaps not quite justifiable to make the subdivision according to sex, as, in hunting and gathering among the net hunters, both sexes hunt. Most of the gathering songs concern honey gathering which is primarily a male occupation. Nor, in (178)
fact, does the classification into sacred and secular stand up to full scrutiny, as, in a sense, all songs are sacred as all are related to forest activities and the forest itself is sacred (pp. 258–259).

Unlike the archers, the net-hunting Mbuti 534
make extremely little use of musical instru- [184]
ments of any kind, except for the resonant sticks used in accompaniment to their forest songs. For one thing, a truly nomadic group [48]
with only the most basic means of locomotion and transport, namely, the human body, can hardly afford to accumulate possessions beyond the absolute necessities—even less so with bulky nets as an additional item to be carried when camp is moved. Some net hunters know how to make and play notched end-blown flutes, with even greater skill and precision than the neighboring villagers, but they are rarely made. A *lukembi* (*sanza*) is the only instrument

[P. 234-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 235-A]

534 that a Pygmy would think of carrying with him, as it is light, portable, and most easily concealed from the villagers from whom he probably stole it. There is no record that the net hunters make any instruments other than the flute and the resonant sticks, and possibly a special musical bow which is made just as is their hunting bow but larger and with a larger section of vine as the "string." Ordinary hunting bows are sometimes used as musical bows.

533 From the material on net hunters it seems that music is virtually exclusively vocal and that, apart from lullabies and some play songs, song involves chorus rather than solo work. Men and women join in song; sometimes they merely double each other's parts (as in the "secular" songs); at other times each takes different and complementary parts (*elima* songs). Certain *elima* songs and all *molimo* songs are sung only by adult women and men, respectively.

533 171 Merriam (1953), in an examination of music from the Congo and Rwanda, writes that Congo music has four main characteristics: (1) lack of emphasis on percussion; (2) variety of instruments and styles; (3) heavy Arabic influence; and (4) considerable change currently in process.

[NET HUNTERS]

531 This account of music among the villagers in
171 the Ituri Forest region is certainly accurate. In contrast, the music of the Mbuti differs on each
533 one of these four points. Though the music of
171 the Mbuti of the Epulu District is here specifi-
184 cally considered, it appears from all the known material, including Schebesta's work on the archers and other Pygmy groups, that there is remarkable uniformity of music among African Pygmies, not confined to the Ituri or even the
533 Congo. Even in the absence of drums, extreme
• 534 percussive effects are obtained by resonant
184 sticks, handclaps, and foot stamps; some vocal effects achieved by the Mbuti might also properly be described as percussive. As noted,
[171] there is a lack of interest in instrumental music, and styles are formalized; there is no Arabic influence at all; there is no evidence concerning change, except that up to now the Mbuti have managed to preserve their distinctive musical form in the face of strong influences from all sides, which would seem to indicate resistance to change.

53 As with the archers, song and dance both overlap into the field of drama, and of the

[P. 235-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

789 224 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *segbe* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Segbe* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 534 222 *Segbe* are not to be confused with *madé* (Fig. 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the honey season.

789 821 372 Rain magic involves the covering of the campfires with leaves but evidently without much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P 240-3]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 254-C]

conversation among the *ganza* at night and in their constant burlesque.

Schebesta (1948, 508–510) says that, for the archers, the *toré* association has both social and religious functions and that membership is common to both villagers and Pygmies through the *nkumbi* initiation. Among the net hunters the term *molimo* is used instead of the term *toré*, and among the Bira villagers the word has apparently similar usage. Thus the *molimo* horn is an instrument that is sacred to both villagers and Mbuti. The villager *molimo* normally makes itself heard during the *nkumbi*, when the young initiates are introduced to it for the first time. It made no appearance at all during the all-Pygmy 1954 *nkumbi*. Evidently it was unable to appear as there were no villager boys among the *ganza*, and the villager *molimo* has a distinct totemic aspect that excludes the Mbuti. Yet for the Mbuti, in particular, the instrument is associated with their most profound magico-religious concepts, and it is inconceivable that they should regard the *nkumbi* as initiation into their own religious society without the inclusion of their version of the *molimo* horn.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[p. 256-D]

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally, it is worth taking very brief note of the function of music among the net-hunting Mbuti in so far as it throws light on their participation in the *nkumbi* and village society in general. 533 182

Music in the forest is almost entirely vocal. Drums may be used if within easy reach of the village, from which they are borrowed or stolen. [534] But drums are never used for formal meetings of the *molimo* and *elima*; rhythm is given out by wooden clappers. None of this song can be said to be secular, as it is all related to the forest. The extreme importance attached to song is most plainly seen in its usage for the *molimo* and *elima*. It is mentioned above in the survey how the Mbuti consecrate a marriage ceremony that is performed in the village according to villager custom, by singing the songs of the *elima*, welcoming the bride to the women's religious association in her new home. We also see how the *elima* songs mark the arrival of Mbuti girls at the age of puberty. *Molimo* songs mark

[P 258-D]

PLATE 37 $\frac{1}{A}$

MUSICAL BOW, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

534 533 41 [516] Mbuti music is almost entirely vocal, the voice being accompanied by wooden clappers. The musical bow is used sometimes to accompany the telling of legends or simply for personal amusement. As here, it is most often simply the hunting bow, tapped with an arrow, the mouth acting as a resonator.

$\frac{1}{A}$, /Plate 37 appears on page 307--Analyst/

[P 306]

B Turnbull E-4 S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

I: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Plate 37/

[p 307] /Caption appears on p. 306/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *lele*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east.

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives.

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect.

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish.

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152 The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[533] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.
[537]
[431]

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

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It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
461 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 152 DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [881] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

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Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

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Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

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PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*).

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role,

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

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Mbuti

but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

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822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
822 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[178] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[761] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[765] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[789] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 561
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

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never lost sight of. The trumpet itself, while avowedly an "animal" 765
whose animal noises (mainly in imitation of elephant and leopard) 534
are designed to scare women and children and keep them in their huts, is the only sign of the presence of a supernatural power. The main function of the trumpet is to sing, and to pass on the song of the Mbuti into the forest. It is taken off to a distance from where it picks up the song from the men around the *molimo* hearth and echoes it on into the night. This way, the Mbuti say, the forest is sure to hear it and be pleased.

Normally a trumpet is kept high up, concealed in a tree. During a festival, however, it is kept in water except when in use, for it is considered to represent the power of the forest for chastisement. Keeping it in water keeps it "cool." It acts, it seems, as an intermediary, passing on the song of the Mbuti to the forest, but returning in the morning with power, and sometimes with anger. When it appears in the [533]
morning, just before dawn, the men have had at the most an hour's sleep, and this is a signal for them to begin singing again. An adult male who fails to sing during a greater *molimo* festival is allegedly killed, and when the trumpet appears in the morning its first act is to search for sleeping men. It is held by a number of youths, who run up and down the camp in search (this may also happen during the evening). But then, to show its power, the trumpet is carried from hut to hut, the youths beating on each with branches and tearing leaves off the roofs. The huts of any troublemakers are particularly singled out, though with due regard for the process described under "Government," by which individual blame is avoided. The older men and even the women may yell at the *molimo* to go away, or to go back to the water, but on this occasion the youths are effectively in charge. There is generally a mock battle in which some of the youths will try to block the path of the trumpet, borne by other youths, or to deflect it in another direction. There may even be a tug-of-war, with some youths pulling it in one direction, some in another, though such contests are formal and enacted more as a dance than as an actual test of strength. All the time, those carrying the trumpet keep it concealed behind leafy branches, or simply by holding it between them. In the end it is carried out of the camp triumphantly as dawn breaks, and with a few defiant bellows returns to its secret hiding
place in the water. A vine stretched across the stream warns women [784]
and children to keep away.

It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as

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765 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as
534 sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance
778 when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used
[613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern
534 of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced
[611] emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a
[174] noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it.
[621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the impor-
621 tance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life,
771 and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as
718 it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can,
181 for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other
182 things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the *molimo* and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

40. Balekimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long *molimo* festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-L]

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41. A spot like this, in the Lelo River, was the resting place of the *molimo* trumpets used in honor of Balekimito. Vines are stretched across the stream to warn intruders to keep away. The precaution, however, is as much for fear of theft as for fear of desecration.

123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

their songs of praise to the forest, the molimo answered them, first on this side, then on that, moving around so swiftly and silently that it seemed to be everywhere at once. 123 533 534

Then, still unseen, it was right beside me, not more than two feet away, on the other side of a small but thick wall of leaves. As it replied to the song of the men, who continued to sing as though nothing were happening, the sound was sad and wistful, and immensely beautiful. Several of the older men were sitting near me, and one of them, without even looking up, asked me if I wanted to see the molimo. He then continued singing as though he didn't particularly care what my reply was, but I knew that he did. I was so overcome by curiosity that I almost said "yes"; I had been fighting hard to stop myself from trying to peer through the leaves to where it was now growling away almost angrily. But I knew that Pygmy youths were not allowed to see it until they had proved themselves as hunters, as adults in Pygmy eyes, and although I now carried the marks on my forehead I still felt unqualified. So I simply said, no, I did not think I was ready to see it.

The molimo gave a great burst of song and with a wild rush swept across the camp, surrounded by a dozen youths packed so tightly together that I could see nothing, and disappeared into the forest. Those left in the camp made no comment; they just kept on with their song, and after a while the voice of the molimo, replying to them, became fainter and fainter and was finally lost in the night and in the depths of the forest from where it had come.

This experience convinced me that here was something that I could do that was really worth while, and that I was not doing it justice by coming armed with cameras and recording equipment, as I had on this trip. The Pygmies were more than curiosities to be filmed, and their music was more than a quaint sound to be put on 123

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them
[176] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Kenge uses a hunting bow as a musical instrument.
[P. 72-E]

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

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765 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo,
534 which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen
123 from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional ma-
177 terials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer
[533] pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Ausu, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night.

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up.

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Ausu said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway."

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Ausu took the end of the

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534
533 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
825 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again, and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781
534 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that [534] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in [708] themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest [186] wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

765 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the 533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh- 534 ter Kondabate and her husband Ausu, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amabosu, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
534 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge. 765 533 578 688

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes. 765 533 535 88

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and 765 882 533 534

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
598 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a mysterious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting

765 they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from
534 the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be
422 bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twist-
[824] ing them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had
534 originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights be-
422 longed to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off,
534 he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet.
123 He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost
[487] on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mon-
[139] gongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick
[824] bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about
[784] three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765 534 123
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed."

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765 when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534 123 for old men to talk about these things. 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888 outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322] talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411] Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115 him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157] shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by 765
the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering 533
from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, [136]
and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them [152]
with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two 765
trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh 534
and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had 177
to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers. The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations 177
among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing. They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped. They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.
765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.
[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by 765
a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it 534
back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village.

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered 765
the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty 761
to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good 765
life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged 372
the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and 778
power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god.

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end 765
the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 594
177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372]
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534]
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their ap- 621
pearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to 000
Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in 356
front are kept clean. 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes 52
in which children and adults may take part, the [535]
dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *paliengbe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well.

The dance takes place on every possible 53
occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes.

Legend telling and mime are other important 538
means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta 536
(1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that 513
the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 178-C]

Dances are organized by the women to celebrate the birth of twins, whether or not both live. Schebesta (1948, 409) mentions the fact that, although the neighboring village tribes have similar feelings about abnormal births, they content themselves with evading unhappy consequences by magical dances and other rites. Schebesta (1948, 409) suggests that superstitious terror and fear of attendant sanctions drive the Pygmy mother to the more violent way of avoiding danger. He writes that all abnormal infants are also put to death immediately following birth, either by the mother or by her female attendants; the men are never permitted to see these monsters. They too are buried in the house, which is immediately abandoned. 845 [535] • 845 847

Postnatal Care

The mother surrounds her child with every care and attention until she again becomes pregnant, and even subsequently if the child is not yet able to look after itself to some extent. 846

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [989]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

182 (D)

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[2]

P 764

P [765] [535] [114]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *karé* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

P M 764 179

P M [608]

[2] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P. 182-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-C]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

Z P 575 796 534 [535] P Z [533] P Z [562] [858]

[ARCHERS]

Art

There is no evidence of any plastic or graphic 531
art among the archers, other than designs used 532
in body painting, described by Schebesta (1941, 217 ff.), some of which he says are of magical significance and some purely esthetic. In this limited field there is no evidence, either, of specialization.

As means of artistic expression, music, dance, 53
and drama are evidently of great importance. Schebesta (1941, 243 ff.) describes these art forms and lays particular emphasis on the dance. Other, earlier sources (Schweinfurth, 1874; Burrows, 1898; Geil, 1905; Christy, 1924) frequently mention dance and also the importance of mime among the Mbuti. Of the form and function of music, Schebesta has little to say. He mentions the use of villager instruments, particularly the drum, sanza, and zither, also others such as the musical bow, rattles, flutes (Fig. 15b, c), and pipes, and resonant sticks used by women for beating time to dances. He merely mentions the existence of singing, apart from the dance.

Of dance Schebesta (1949, 252–259) gives 535 •
more detail. He writes (1941, 243): "The principal, if not the daily entertainment of young

[P.187-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 188-B]

[ARCHERS]

535 and old, men and women, is the dance, which is accompanied by music and song." Most of the instruments Schebesta (1941, 244–253) describes serve to accompany dance. He makes three classifications: sportive, mimetic, and erotic dances. The former are not mere exuberant acrobatics, but follow certain choreographic rules; he does not give the rules. The usual form of dance is circular, he says: an outer circle composed of women and an inner circle of men, with the drummer in the center. If there are only a few dancers, the men may dance solos, leaping one by one in toward the drummer, then back to their places in the still-moving circle.

[372] Schebesta also mentions the existence of fire dances, one of which he witnessed on the occasion of a birth in the camp.

535 831 Erotic dances generally involve two lines of dancers, one line male, one female. Each woman comes out of the line in turn and makes an

[P. 188-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P 188-C]

obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 [83]

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion. 774

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [184]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, 535 [831] [372] [184]

[P 212-D]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 213-A]

535 the dance through fire, is reserved for special re-
[372] ligious occasions among the net hunters. Secular
[84] dancing takes place at any time of the day, any day, but nearly always there is dancing in the evening, and, when the moon gives enough light, the dance may continue through most of the night. Except for the religious dances, men, women, and children take part in the dancing together.

533 Song is even more important to the net hunters. There is not much information in the Putnam material, except that different types of song exist for men and for women and for different occasions, but from my own observations among this group there are, as with dance, clearly two major divisions. One is between secular and sacred, and the other is between songs proper to men and songs proper to women. Certain songs are sung only by members of the men's religious association, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*), and those proper to members of the women's association, the *elima* (Schebesta: *elimo*). Then there are songs for hunting and songs for gathering. Each of these

[NET HUNTERS]

claim compensation from him. The women guardians also could make it easy or difficult for the candidates, according to their inclinations. Any man, having fought his way through, had to secure the girl's permission before he slept with her. But reliable Mbuti informants reported that a large number merely fought for the prestige acquired and sought no intercourse with the girls. Outwardly, there is no change, except that instead of firing arrows from their bows the men fire fruit peel, and the fighting is less severe than that described in the tales of olden times. Exactly what happens inside the hut is not known, but the festival is evidently an opportunity for young men to prove their valor, and for young maidens to prove their womanliness, each one attesting to his or her readiness for marriage. There is unfortunately no evidence as to how far the opening of the *elima* constitutes a betrothal, nor how frequently it is followed by marriage. 881 836 [554]

During the course of the *elima* the girls are under certain food restrictions, which include a prohibition on all meat. *Elima* singing goes on all night. Presumably, as with the *nkumbi* initiation of boys, this is a period of discipline as well as of education. Apart from the special *elima* songs, apparently special dances are 881 [533] [535]

[P. 216-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.217-A]

881 taught to the *elima* initiates. In one such dance
• [535] witnessed by Mrs. Putnam, the girls held arrows and cut one another, and the women struck them with whips.

There is no information from the Putnam material as to any particular ceremony to mark the end of the *elima* (but see Turnbull, 1960a, 198 ff.).

INITIATION: *nkumbi*

Putnam's notes on the initiation of boys concern a net-hunting band and are particularly interesting, as they describe an initiation that occurred in the Bira village of Kokonyange in 1935, 14 years before Schebesta witnessed an initiation among the same group. It is signifi-
881 cant that Putnam makes no mention of *karé*
608 brotherhood between Pygmy and village boys.

For male initiation among the particular Epulu net hunters we are dealing with, I have only my own field notes,[1] and here again there is no mention of *karé* brotherhood (Turnbull, 1957). The full details of the ceremony do not concern us, as they vary from one village to another. It is important, however, to compare
[184] the relationship between the net-hunting Mbuti and the Bira villagers with that between the archers and the Lese, with regard to initiation.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] [751]

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 881 177 P Z [535]

[NET HUNTERS]

Z 585 585 628 563 P 172 585 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). P [533] [535] Further, even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 571 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P. 221-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

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[535] [575] [171] FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-c]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
treat. They know that certain songs have more
796 significance than others, and, on hearing these, they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordinary meeting of the men to develop to this extent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
534 The women in any case have been aware of
whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting
796 and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet, they take their children and shut themselves in their huts. None will come out, even to cross the clearing. The men sit close together around one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trumpet echoes their song, sometimes coming close, sometimes going far away into the forest. The *molimo* may come right into the camp itself and install itself, unseen, close to where the men are sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly
• [535] start dancing through the fire, scattering the ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly afterwards the participants go to bed. The singing may last only two or three hours, or may con-

[p. 226-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at 575 533 that time. 765

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of 796 the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not 575 clear and which took place down near the vil- 534 lage. One villager took part. The trumpet and 533 the performer, covered with a cloth, were car- 796 ried in from the forest on a crude litter and dis- [114] appeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have 765 witnessed were of the more serious kind, follow- 533 ing the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, [534] even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally [535] a period, early in the night, during which the [831] men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

[NET HUNTERS]

The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, *in some form, is not lacking among the* villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumbi* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P 229-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.229-C]

lage for any length of time, as when the villager needs help in the cutting of new plantations, then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly awaited by the villagers. P Z 535 177 571

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, when there is a case of poaching by one band within the territory of another, instead of one lineage head or "elder" consulting the other (the process described by Schebesta for the archers), the bands probably just inform the villagers involved and leave it to them to settle. P 628 648 Z 648

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, there is no question of any one Mbuti representing his lineage or band; such of the more important hunters as are available, and usually a number of the younger men and even older boys, come in a body to argue their case together. The villager is always at a slight disadvantage. While the Mbuti can easily move and find another village patron, it is not so easy for a villager to find more Mbuti. P 648 Z 648 563

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 199

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-A]
535 net hunters. They have not only social but
[533] also religious meaning. Schebesta's (1941, 252–253) classification of dances as sportive, mimetic, or erotic would also apply to the net hunters, with the addition of religious dances about which we know little. Also, like the archers, the net hunters separate the sexes in dance. There are circular and erotic dances which correspond almost exactly to Schebesta's (1941, 253–256) description of those of the archers.

53 If the band is near a village, they may borrow or steal drums, but the drum, resonant sticks, and handclaps are the only accompaniment (apart from song). A style of dance which uses an orchestra of eight or nine single-pitch bamboo pipes, much in vogue among the villagers, is sometimes copied by other Pygmies in the district. The players stand in a circle. Each player blows his pipe after his opposite number, forming a melodic line. The melodic line and the rhythm are altered by changing both the order of playing and the time lapse. The performers dance as they play and are joined in the dance by others. It is essentially the same style of dance as the *makata* (musical stick) dance seen at the time of *nkumbi*.

[NET HUNTERS]

534 Normally, however, and when drums are not available, short resonant sticks are used. These are either smooth, giving a sharp hollow sound, or else they are split and shaved at one end to provide a totally different accompaniment. These sticks, handclaps, and leg stampings provide the rhythmic background to the dance.[1]

535 224 825 Mrs. Putnam has seen a dance in which a mask made from a leopard skin was used by the Mbuti. She also describes fully (1954, 296 ff.) a dance performed by them following the killing of a leopard. The body of the leopard is strung up to a branch or a tall stake. All the men, armed with liana whips and whips made from plaited antelope hide, gather around it. The men who are responsible for killing the leopard dance by themselves, approaching the stake. As they do so, they are attacked by the others, and have to fight their way to the leopard's body and cut it down, at which everyone gives a shout of triumph. In the

[1] It is most notable that for religious song and dance such is the only form of accompaniment, even if drums are available.

[P. 234-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-C]

dance observed by Mrs. Putnam the man who first speared the leopard was wounded but nonetheless took part in the dance. The other two men involved in the killing protected him as much as they could from their attackers and guarded him as he cut the leopard down. Onlookers said that he would not have been thought a coward if he had not taken part, because of his wounds, but he had chosen to do so. 535 224 825

Song, used in conjunction with dance, as described by Schebesta, also has a separate function and operates as an art form in its own right. This, at first, Schebesta (1933, 301) denied, but later (1936b, 27; 1948, 259) he conceded the greater importance of song over dance. Among the net hunters there is a very clear division of song into four main categories, each of which can be distinguished by style and technique alone, and a fifth subsidiary category of play songs. The main categories are, as briefly mentioned above (p. 213), religious songs and secular songs, each subdivided according to sex, i.e., songs of the men's 533

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-C]

the water animal is the cause of all death or whether it causes only unexplained deaths. It seems that it may not be connected with "normal" deaths—deaths that do not, in fact, cause any particular crisis as far as the community as a whole is concerned.

According to Mrs. Putnam's notes,[1] the water animal that is the rainbow is also the *molimo*. She asked a direct question as to whether this was so or not and was given an affirmative answer by one of her most reliable informants. She says that his manner seemed to indicate further that she had asked the right question. According to the same informant the *molimo* comes out the day following the death of some important person, regardless of whether the death was by natural or other means. The informant also referred to a dance in which the men "chased" the *molimo*, but this evidently was not one of the serious *molimo* dances as it was not fatal for women to see it. It seems certain that the water animal and the rainbow are

[535]

[p. 247-c]

296 ff.), following the killing of a leopard. The dead leopard is tied to a stake, which is surrounded by the men, armed with liana whips and plaited hide thongs. The hunters involved in the killing of the leopard perform a dance, in the course of which they have to fight their way through to the stake and cut down the carcass of the leopard they have already killed once. In the instance cited the most prominent of the three chief actors had been wounded by the leopard but insisted on taking part though his fellows said that none would call him a coward if he did not. The other two men protected him from the attackers and guarded him as he swung his spear and cut the leopard down. The cutting down is acclaimed by all with a shout of satisfaction. Unfortunately the information does not carry essential details such as which of the men or how many of the band held the leopard as their totem, or as to what relationship, kinship or otherwise, existed between participants in the dance. Possibly the ceremony is propitiatory, but from the information on totemism among these particular Mbuti it seems unlikely. It rather appears as a formal opposition between the human and the animal worlds.

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[535]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

Dance and Festivity

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

[P. 250-D]

P [P.251-A]
535 ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held
177 only during the *nkumbi*.
[881] Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band
P is visiting a village, it may come down to the
535 main meeting place in the evening and dance.
177 The villagers expect it and regard it as one of
[517] their forms of entertainment, though they say
Z they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The
177 Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and
[86] *is not in*frequently called on by the villagers to dance.

P When the two groups meet on both festive
361 and ordinary occasions they keep apart from
571 each other. There is no leisure activity in which
177 they participate together, only a few ritual ac-
Z tivities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti
361 camp beside the village, on the edge of the plan-
177 tation where the forest begins. This physical
571 disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

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PLATE 38 7

GIRLS' HOOP DANCE, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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271
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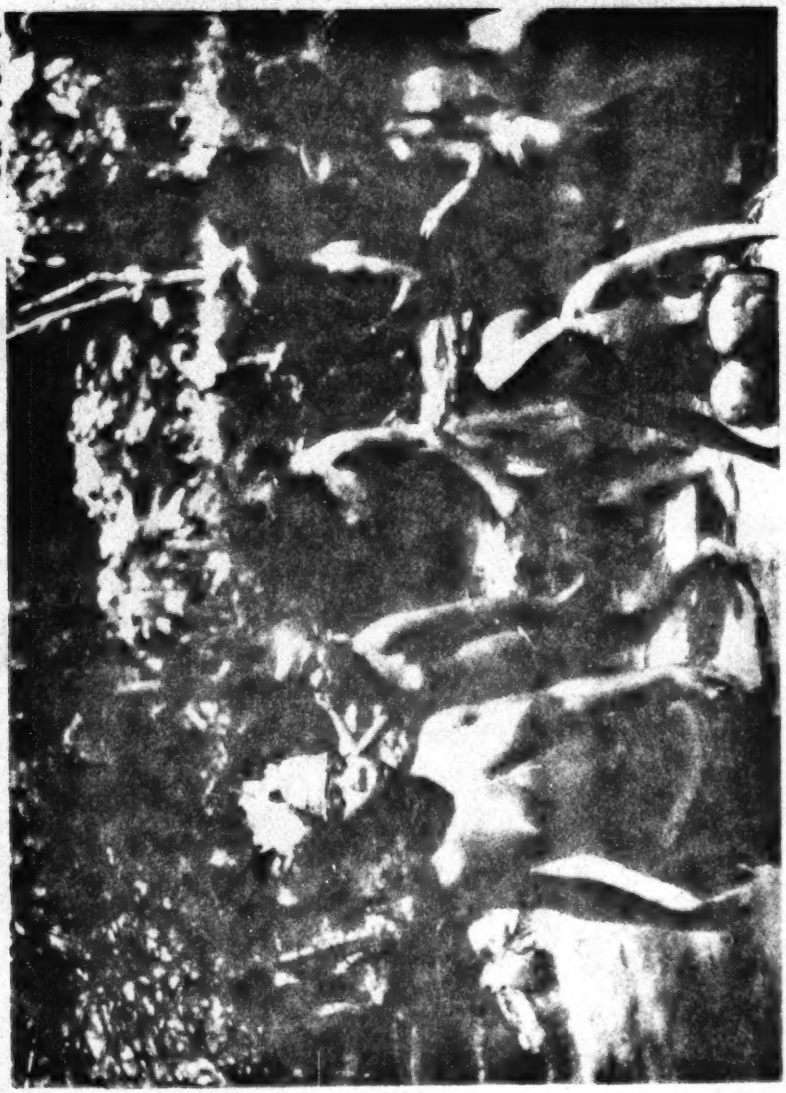

/Plate 38/
[P309] /Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

oughly as possible, it seems that among both Bira and Ndaka, and I believe also among the Lesé, death is believed to put fellow clansmen of the deceased in great danger from the *keti*, or evil spirits. The object of the *molimo* is twofold, then; it must help the deceased on his way, giving him what protection it can, and it must protect the living, who will be in a state of ritual danger throughout the period of mourning.

During that period the *molimo* meets regularly, at nighttime, in the house of the senior surviving member of the clan, in whose possession the *tete* is held. Only adult male clansmen are admitted, and the sound of the *tete* is the audible evidence of the invisible presence of their totemic guardian spirit. Specially prepared food is offered to the spirit, and the rest is eaten by the men. No women are allowed to participate in any way, even by cooking the food, according to all informants. However, I had been told the same thing about the Mbuti and found it to be different, and do not accept this information without some reservation. It would seem, though, that women generally are excluded from the *molimo* of the villagers, and indeed it really is no concern of theirs.

During the proceedings, which may last an hour or so, the men wail and call out the name and/or the kinship term of address of the deceased; his praises are recited and he is commended to the ancestral spirits. At the same time, the praises of the surviving clan members are similarly recited, and mention is made of the way in which they have upheld tribal lore and observed all the rules of clan exogamy, and have increased the number of attendant Mbuti. Continued protection for the living is requested, particularly for the period of mourning. Apparently no Mbuti take part in this part of the ceremony, though there seemed to be some disagreement over this and my impression was that the associated Mbuti are not prohibited from attending, but effectively seldom, if ever, do.

Upon the death of an Mbuti the *kpara* will not only oversee the burial and funerary ceremonies and divination, he will also want to hear announced the calling together of the men of the *molimo*. Sometimes he will leave it at that, but if the Mbuti continue to stay in the village and hold any *molimo* meetings in their village camp, the *kpara* may attend one or two meetings. It is very noticeable that when he does, the meeting runs a completely different course, centering around some erotic dancing by the younger men and a small amount of singing. The *molimo* trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of

P 765 *177 534 533 The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *fete*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

P 765 *177 648 571 However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight

C 765 563 648 571 the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

P *177 533 [765] It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortu-

P [881] nately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

C 765 881 563 535 765 881 535 *177 The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P. 81]

CHAPTER 7

Flux and Instability

Not yet having examined the forest context, we cannot completely dispose of the question of economic dependence or interdependence. At the moment, it appears that the Mbuti do not need the villagers except for luxuries which may in time become necessities, and it equally seems that the villagers do not need the Mbuti except as laborers on the plantations, in particular with the cotton harvest, and this is a very recent need introduced by Belgian administration. The most that one can say about the economic aspect of the relationship is that it appears to be one of mutual convenience. The villagers *could* hunt (and in areas where there are few or no Mbuti, they do) but they prefer not to go into the forest if it can be avoided. The Mbuti *could* live successfully off the forest at their indigenous level of technology, but trade with the villagers makes life that much easier.

If we look carefully at daily life in any village, the economic aspect of the relationship fades even further into the background. Mbuti can occasionally be seen bringing in from the forest meat or other forest products needed by the villagers, such as the *fito* saplings and phrynium leaves for their houses. More often they will be seen helping with odd domestic chores, such as fetching water or firewood, house-building, or guarding plantations. Mbuti women help the village women pound manioc and to thresh and winnow the locally grown dry rice. They also help the village women carry loads of plantains to and from the market.

But mostly, if any Mbuti are to be seen at all, they will be seen lazing on the *baraza* of their *kpara*, being fed and offered ends of cigarettes, or bribed with liquor to put on a dance that all the villagers will come to watch. Such dances are wild and erotic, accompanied by anything from one to three or four drums, never by song.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

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13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Makubasi. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her *kpara*'s sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

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Mbuti

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the *elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, decides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The *molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their comprehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is sometimes utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the nonlineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
496 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

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Mbuti

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification.

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative.

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern.

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will.

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also

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838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

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though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

It is significant that the honey season should be marked among the Mbuti by a special type of song, musically distinct from the other types, and by a ritual dance involving ritual use of fire. I have seen this dance throughout the forest, and heard the same distinctive honey song, the latter being made all the more distinct by the use of special wooden clappers called *ngbengbe* by the net-hunters of the Epulu region, *epopo* or *koko* by the archers further east. 221 222 533 535 [372] [534] [192]

Many different kinds of honey are recognized, and each has its own distinctive taste. All that I tasted were exceptionally sweet except for the *apuma* honey, which is very liquid and highly fermented by the time it is collected late in the season. Most honey is found high up in boles in the upper branches of the tallest trees. This is always collected by men and youths who can climb trees, unless the diameter is too great, simply by exerting lateral pressure on the trunk with their arms while they move their feet up, pulling themselves close to the trunk with a jerk as they move their arms up. If a tree is too wide to climb this way, they may loop a vine around it, holding the ends with their hands, or they may climb a smaller tree nearby and jump across where the branches meet higher up. Hollow trunks or branches are used by bees as hives. 222 [114] 221 481

Other honey is found a few feet above ground level, again in a hollow tree trunk, and this is the only kind of honey, except for the rare *sundu*, which is found in the ground, that a woman may collect. 222 [192]

The actual collecting procedure is the same. If the entrance to the hive is small, it has to be widened with an ax. Then a leaf tube in which there are smoldering embers is introduced into the hole, and by blowing through the other end, the Mbuti fills the hive with smoke and drives out the bees. Most of the bees do not sting at all, and those that do sting do not seem to cause any great pain. Even before they have all left the hive the collector puts his arm in and pulls out handfuls of honey, eating it on the spot, sharing it with friends who may be helping him. When they have had their fill they throw down what is left to those waiting below. If by themselves, they fill a special bark honey container or a basket lined with leaves, and bring the rest back to camp. There it is shared by all, either being eaten in the comb or warmed in leaf containers over the fire. If it is full of white maggots it is particularly prized, and will almost certainly be warmed to loosen the honey until the maggots wriggle, at which point it is consumed with relish. [415] 262

If the honey is very dirty, full of rotten bark or leaf mold, it is wrapped in a leaf container and immersed in water. When it is pulled 262 252

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the ground, and any who are timid or slow get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 222 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 535 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomes*." No satisfactory translation

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of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [427] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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25. Akidinimba celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage during an elima dance.

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26. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to fondle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

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222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
• [535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 [761] 776 828 [772] 776 828 159 534

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers. [535] [765]

but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- [114]
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon [776]
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry 752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many 757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the [224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If [75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or 778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire 796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest 533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the [782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not [533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*, [535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and [765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and b[illegible]casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of t[illegible] *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although [626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 761
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire
[535] or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
• 535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Opposite: Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with *kangey* juice for a wedding.

Akidinimba (in hat) celebrates her forthcoming wedding with the other girls of the *elima*.

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[P 72-G]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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512 224 [202] go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 [157] Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 439 177 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese*, the Great Ones— 765
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123]
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end.
They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night.
It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

this direction and that; even her fingers each seemed to have a dance of its own. But her head was still, and her eyes were fixed on those of Kondabate.

At this point Kondabate handed the banja to another of the women standing nearby and led the young girls right into the center of the men's group, dancing in a close circle around the molimo fire. As they moved around, the men stood up and made room for them, and now the singing came almost entirely from the women. The men just stood and stamped and clapped and growled a bass accompaniment. The girls danced more and more wildly, but their heads and eyes were always turned toward the molimo fire, no matter how violent the body movement. After nearly half an hour the old woman, still crouching, ran into the center after the girls, and turning to face them from the far side of the fire she drove them slowly backward, back until they were lost among the others at the edge of the group. The singing was quieter, and in a few minutes it faded away altogether. Not a word was spoken.

After a short rest the singing started again, and this time there was no mistaking it—the women were leading. Manyalibo's wife picked up the banja and beat them, sharply and decisively, and the girls began the song. The men followed in obedient chorus. Once again, as the song grew faster, the old woman began to twitch until her whole body was alive with movement. Then she sprang up and came into the center of the kumamolimo alone. For an instant she stood there, and her head moved sharply from side to side. It was like the movement of a bird, keeping a wary eye open for possible foes. As she began to dance she seemed to sink slowly into the ground, her knees folding up like a concertina, her body bending at the waist; but always her head stuck out in front, jerking from side to side, eyes staring and expressionless.

She circled the fire three times, looking out and upward into the night, but unseeing; then as if satisfied that she was alone and un-

765 observed she flung her head and her whole body around and faced
562 the fire directly. She was about seven or eight feet away from it. She
535 advanced slowly and cautiously, two steps forward, one step back,
533 her attention riveted on the flames. The singing was louder and faster,
372 but she refused to be hurried. At her own pace she approached closer and closer until it seemed impossible that she could stand the heat. She hesitated at the brink of the fire, her frail body gleaming with sweat, her face glowing and trembling. She made as if she was going to pounce on the fire, but whirled around at the last moment and danced quickly back to where the women were singing, watching her, eagerly and anxiously. She sat down on her haunches and accepted a steaming bowl of liko.

The singing did not stop this time but went on quietly at a slower tempo. The men made no attempt to move back closer to the fire. After about ten minutes the old lady, apparently refreshed and as full of vigor as ever, danced back into the men's circle, with Kondabate at her side. Their movements were perfectly co-ordinated, even to the twitching of their heads; as they sank down close to the
765 ground they might have been one person. But as they neared the
562 fire, again having circled it several times, the old woman sprang to
535 her feet and ran swiftly around to the far side and crouched there,
372 staring at Kondabate through the flames. They started circling once more, each keeping her eyes on the other, moving from side to side so that they were always opposite each other. But now they were closer to the fire than they had ever been and on their hands and knees they passed through the hot ashes, as though trying to reach each other through the flames.

Finally Kondabate retreated and squatted down at the edge of the circle, her body twitching just as the old woman's had done, her eyes staring and empty as she gazed at the molimo fire. The men heaped more wood on the flames, which were beginning to die down.
[533] Now they were singing as loudly as the women, stamping on the

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames.

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and

883 177 52 [273] would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 52 [152] Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo [765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 533 The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it [535] with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing. They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped. They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.

765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
• 535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.

[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] [821] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

221 And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season
621 they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

114 But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Masisi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to
221 the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the
524 dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from
526 the highest branches, and on these the youths practiced their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line
221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all
• 535 was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372]
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534]
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their ap- 621
pearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[276] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[273] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will say and dance; if not, they will come home
• [535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are
517 about on a level with white men. There
521 is little chance for extensive conversations during the daytime while out
571 hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some people are quiet, others are noisier.
[157] Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to 000
Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in 356
front are kept clean. 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes 52
in which children and adults may take part, the [535]
dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *paliengbe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well.

The dance takes place on every possible 53
occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes.

Legend telling and mime are other important 538
means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta 536
(1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that 513
the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo.

[ARCHERS]

[P 188-C]

obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 183

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

774 114

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion.

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 536 179 157 811

[P 232-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
177 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

1:/Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 235-C]

latter little is known in detail. Song is sometimes used when legends are told and is frequently mentioned in them. Dance and mime are even more closely connected. 53

The subject matter of Mbuti drama seems to correspond, as might be expected, with our classification of the subject matter of legends, but the former places greater emphasis on events of the day, particularly hunting. In default of detailed and accurate accounts of dramatic art and all attendant circumstances, the only generalization that seems permissible is the evident lack of interest in personal problems and a preoccupation with the maintenance of the relative status of the human (Mbuti), animal (villager), and supernatural worlds. 536 • [81]

With reference to specialists in song and dance, as with other art forms, some individuals who have greater skill than others achieve a measure of renown for their skill. A mediocre hunter who is a good singer or dancer or legend teller is a far more important person than a moderate hunter who is none of these things. 555 53

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152
537 The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
537 and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.
431

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
536 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
261 One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
789 tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
46 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long, I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
288 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
538 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
• 536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
578 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of 593
his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law 578
were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy 276
was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and 152
gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to 593
thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was posi- 578
tively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four 152
feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then [141]
pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by [536]
a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

593
578 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he
152 fell flat on his face.

[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the
578 camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to
152 support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his
621 brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same
626 relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both
689 camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged
626 rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restor-
576 ing peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our
836 hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an
[152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

The past and the future pale into insignificance when compared with the moment. To understand this isolated, self-sufficient Pygmy world of the moment is also to understand something about the Mbuti relationship with the villager living in a very different, expansive, and uncertain world of change. 182

It seems worth mentioning the environmental factor also because the Pygmy himself takes it into consideration. His myth and mime, both important mediums of expression of the Mbuti, accentuate the opposition between the forest and the outside world, and between their peoples. They show a constant effort on the part of the Mbuti to effect a satisfactory relationship with the forest world that dominates their lives with such certainty and inevitability. It is not necessary to consider the environment further, but we must go this far in order to begin to understand the people whose society we are studying. 182 778 [538] 182

[P. 166-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 177-C]

the frequent moving of camp. According to Schebesta (1952, 80), the hut and the space in front are kept clean. 000 356 351

In leisure hours there are games and pastimes in which children and adults may take part, the dance being the most important. Schebesta (1952, 189 ff.) also mentions rope skipping; tug-of-war (often between men and women); *palienghe*, an organized battle between men and women for a regime of plantains; and a form of gambling known as *mali*. The women and children have various string games as well. 52 [535]

The dance takes place on every possible occasion and is accompanied by drums made by the villagers. The emphasis in archer music (Schebesta, 1952, 190) is, as in the dance, on rhythm. Schebesta cites a number of musical instruments that are used by the archers for recreation, notably the drum, the musical bow, the sanza, the zither, and the *ruma* pipes. 53

Legend telling and mime are other important means of recreation mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 195). These, like most other recreational activities of adults, take place in the evening around the campfire. It is here, in any case, that the bachelors usually sleep (although Schebesta mentions the fact that there are bands in which bachelor huts are built), as do such of the married men as are under sexual taboo. 538 536 513

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p. 187- c]
nor do the archers seem to rely on the villagers for any medical help. 75 628

Rationalization

Speculation on problems of life and death are dealt with under Religious Life (p. 188). Here we can say only that Schebesta does not give a special account of legends or legend telling. However, from the legends that he quotes, and from those given by Joset (1948), it appears that among the archers this is an important means not only of reinforcing a system of values, or of commenting on individual behavior in the band, but also of rationalizing the strange and unknown. 538 82

Joset divides his collection of legends into four categories: (1) the Pygmy and his life; (2) animals; happy and unhappy relations between animals and Pygmies; (3) legends concerning the stars and sky; and (4) legends revealing individual psychological traits. Schebesta (1936b) says that legends tend to be spontaneous creations of individuals; there is no formal body of standard folklore.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those for the archers, with the addition of a form of spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss. 526 [184]

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an important medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a *lukembi* (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet. 538 534 533

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The third kind of dance described for the archers, 535 [83] [372] [184]

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[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
177 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
811 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

• 538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

538 114 with origin, but rather with dissociating the insignificant from the significant, regardless of origin. A collection of legends as told by four men of the Epulu net hunters, then, is something of great value but to be used with care. Mrs. Putnam made such a collection, totaling some 200 legends. Its very size, coming from a single hunting band, adds to its value. To a person knowing the band and the men who told the legends, the significant can often be easily distinguished from the insignificant. But source material of this kind needs much fuller documentation than is available for use to be made of it for purposes of sociological analysis (see Turnbull, 1959).

538 [626] [1] Similar caution is needed with legends, which, as with the archers, are an important means of expression for the net hunters. The legends are also effective means of social control and illustrate attempts to rationalize the unknown. If we talk about "Mbuti legends," we not only open ourselves to questions as to whether particular legends are of villager or Pygmy origin, but we also imply that the legends necessarily have traditional significance for the Mbuti. The Mbuti like a good story; they will retell it whatever its source. A legend may have had some particular significance for the people to whom it originally belonged, but for the Mbuti its only importance may lie in the scope it offers their histrionic talent.

[P 233-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-C]

The general observations that can be made from this collection of legends are: 538 •

1. The Mbuti of the Epulu are remarkably little concerned with matters relating to origin and tradition.

2. Their legends can be classified under three main sections: legends concerning their social life, legends relating to the animal and human kingdoms, and legends concerning the supernatural. In fact, the second section falls in part into social relations and in part into supernatural relations, but we mention it here to show the correspondence with Joset's (1948) classification for the archers.

While there are no professional storytellers among the Epulu net hunters, there are individuals who have a greater mastery of the art than others. They seem to hold an important position in the community, especially in relation to the activities of the *molimo* society. The storyteller and the clown seem to occupy a privileged position and to have a definite role to play in the men's society. Whether this also applies to the women of the *elima* is not known (p. 216). 538 564 [515] [522]

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 197

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

261 754 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

261 754 177 This belief seems associated with death and with people who are near to that particular crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 114 [84] The Putnam material does not support any theory of a celestial God such as that described by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 538 *Satani* are very popular with the Mbuti as
[116 subject matter for their legends, and they let their imaginations run riot. A *satani* can do almost anything except kill a really clever Pygmy. They are used frequently as excuses for failure in the hunt or in honey gathering. When a Pygmy has found a good honey tree and has managed to consume most of the honey himself, his excuse to the camp for not bringing back more will be that he was waylaid by a *satani* who was so tricky that he turned into the Pygmy's grandmother, so he had to hand over all his honey, or something to that effect. (This excuse I heard myself.) Rather than examine more *satani* legends, we now briefly review the collection as here presented and draw such conclusions as we can.

538 Any conclusions are necessarily general and
128 tentative and are of course based not only on a knowledge of the entire collection of legends, only a bare tenth of which is reproduced here, but of the Mbuti themselves. Also it must be emphasized that we are dealing with only one particular band of Pygmies, a net-hunting group in the Epulu District of the Ituri Forest.

My classification of the legends into three groups, which is quite arbitrary and satisfactory

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only for certain purposes, reveals at once a lack 538.
of interest in the past which is in accord with 128
the apparent shortness of memory among these Pygmies, particularly noticeable when an investigator tries to construct some sort of genealogy. For me it heightens my suspicion of such genealogies given by a people who at times are only too willing to please by inventing totally fictitious names. The legends prove singularly unrewarding to anyone seeking some evidence of a [181]
lineage system. If they represent anything, they represent a people who are wholly absorbed in the present. If we accept this evidence, we can look for its consequences in the magico-religious life of the Mbuti as well as in other spheres.

Also with reference to the Mbuti magico-religious system, there is possibly some significance in the tendency to emphasize the natural 538 183
order of events in the legends relating to social life. The ideal represented in the legend is the normal; consequently, these particular legends seem singularly unimaginative. They read like reports of actual occurrences. A certain amount of cleverness is normal, but an excess of it (when the term becomes best translated as "trickery") is abnormal and leads us, as we have seen, into

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the world of the supernatural. The Pygmy is 538 •
anxious to preserve the normal, the *status quo*; 183
Although one could hardly determine this with any certainty from the legends alone, they certainly confirm the notion, which is of particular significanec with reference to Mbuti religious thought. We return briefly to this point below.

The second section dealing with social rela- 538
tions also reveals a center of interest on food, 181
the importance of the food quest being implied repeatedly. Also emphasized is the importance [476]
of cooperation, not only between members of the same family, but between all members of the hunting band. These legends tell us that [577]
vice and virtue are scarcely understood as such, that the dominating quality is cleverness, with its converse, stupidity. But, as pointed out, this is a borderline world. Whereas cleverness may 538
be of use to a Pygmy in his normal everyday 181
life, it is really a quality associated with his 183
dealings with the animal and supernatural worlds. In fact, one legend, not mentioned, quite distinctly tells us that in everyday life it is not good to be too clever, but better to be normal. An elephant hunter who loses his normality (by failing to accept food offered to him, and failing to join in the conversation) is

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[P.270-A]

538 promptly deserted as being unsafe company. So
181 we might gather that in daily life normality is
183 the ideal, and, when the supernatural (including animals, regarded as possessed of supernatural powers), is dealt with, cleverness is dominant.

538 From the second section of legends we can
888 finally glean some information from the treatment of old age. Two things emerge: first, old age is associated with extra cleverness, approaching trickery; second, we find Pygmy realism emerging again when old age is accompanied by disability. Either way, old age is a dangerous condition. In this particular band it is perhaps significant that the leaders of the group are not old, but are the active—the "great hunters."

538 Animals, like food, enter into the majority of
825 legends, and in some cases they seem to be regarded merely as animals. But more often the trickery of the animal is emphasized and, consequently, its association with the supernatural. In the third kind of legends, those dealing with the supernatural, we find animals in almost every one.

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the
772 normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P. 270-B]

[P.270-C]

malevolence) in the forest world of the Pygmy. 538 •
In his daily life the Pygmy regards the forest as 181
a kind, good, protective home. At the risk of 771
being accused of begging the question, I would 772
like to say that other evidence (song, dance, and the practices of the Mbuti religious associations) also suggests that the Pygmy opposes these two worlds as we would oppose the sacred to the profane. Our understanding of his relationship with the villager tribes that surround him is, I think, considerably increased if we bear this fact in mind and realize its full implications.

I deliberately use the term "supernatural" 538
loosely in order to allow the fact to appear that 771
very few of these legends deal with the supernatural as we generally understand the term. Situations that would, to us, be supernatural—such as villagers turning into elephants or even *satani* changing form at will and luring innocent Pygmies to their doom—to the Pygmy are, in a sense, natural. Like the difference between the sphere of magic and that of religion, and in a way corresponding to them, the dividing line is

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers. 538 771 [828]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There 538 784 182 [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

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[P.271-A]

538 182 789 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a matter for individual, spontaneous invention or adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case. [761] [154] [154] There is no common explanation of death or illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The 538 776 nearest approach to standard mythological rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

538 776 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves indicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice. [789]

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 771 772 I mention one further factor, which in a way may be said to be magical, and that is the power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and

[P. 271-B]

1: Turnbull E 4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 271-C]

rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. [825] 533 538 789

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

plained. But there is a feeling, and I cannot say 533
that it is more than that, that song has power. 538
The song may have no words; it may be a mix- 789
ture of meaningless sounds; but plainly it is esthetically satisfying to the Mbuti. These wordless songs are among the most powerful. When the father killed the bird, he killed the song, and he dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever. In real life, also, song is powerful. Membership in the religious associations of the women and the men gives the Pygmy the right to take part in the singing of songs peculiar to those associations. In fact, it imposes a duty to do so. The songs are distinguished not by their content but by their musical style and the technique of performance. It is the *sound*, rather than the word content, that matters. These songs are sung, in their most powerful form, only on occasions of the greatest distress, such as sickness or death of one of the great hunters, or failure in the chase. These are departures from normality. It has been my contention from an analysis of the function of music among the Mbuti that song is believed to restore that normality.

As well as several more obvious differences 538
from villager values, such as emphasis by the 171
[p. 271-D] 181

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 272-A]

• 538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 272-B]

cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1], both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" (*"bachei ba bo"*), "for elephants are like villagers" (*"bambongu bua sopilabatu"*). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

Tumbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies. 156 621 551 [194]

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest. 156 571 621 [674] [538]

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's 115 602

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti.

000 *Opposite:* A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

Old Moke (in a sloth-skin hat) listens as Cephu tells a legend.

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[P 72-L]

512 224 go between the camp and the hunt, if they are not too far apart, [202] bringing news to and fro.

As soon as the hunters return they deposit the meat on the ground, and the camp gathers to make sure the division is fair. Nobody acknowledges that it is, but in the end everyone is satisfied. Cooking operations start at once and within an hour everyone is eating. If the [535] hunt has been a good one, and the day is still young, the most energetic men and women dance immediately afterward, followed by the children. In the course of such a dance they imitate, with suitable exaggeration, the events of the day. If the hunt has not been so good, or a man is tired and does not feel like dancing, he will sit down and gather his family around him and tell them something that has happened to him on the hunt, something wonderful and exciting, but which naturally happened while nobody else was looking.

538 Since Pygmies are blessed with a lively imagination, these stories [157] grow until it is difficult to tell the difference between what is meant to be a straight, factual account and a traditional legend. And there is always the element of the two-way process in which fact becomes legend, and legend becomes accepted, through constant repetition, as fact.

The dream world of the Pygmies is a very real one, full of hidden meaning and significance. There is one story that Cephu is still fond of telling, and he still tells it in almost exactly the same way as he did six years earlier when I first heard it.

538 He had been into the village for a short visit, and we all knew he 439 had gone empty-handed. Yet when he returned a few days later he 177 brought a sizable load of plantains and rice with him. Everyone asked him who he had stolen it from. Cephu, with a great smile spreading across his face, sat down and waited for his audience to settle down. With his wife and his children close behind him, and his friends all around, Cephu sat simply on the ground in his most charming and bewitching way, old rascal that he was, even then. He looked up

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands 538
upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the 439
seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked 177
in the depths of his shining brown eyes.

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and [224]
I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, [251]
and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw 538
a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up 439
with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. 177
I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this 176
meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They [186]
would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died [769]
many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down
439 the trail.
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776 "As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits.
[186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda,
177 Ekianga's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the
[776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside, and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

In the final section we consider some legends collected by Anne Putnam among these same Mbuti, and observe in them more of the Mbuti attitude to the villagers and how they equate themselves, as humans, with the forest and with "good" animals, as opposed to the villagers who are associated with destructive animals and *satani*. 128 186 539

MBUTI VALUES AS SEEN IN LEGEND

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In order to understand the Pygmy values more clearly, and to assess how far the Mbuti rejection of villager values is effectively valid and how far it is merely the psychological reaction of a subordinate people, it is worth considering a collection of nearly 200 legends noted down by Anne Putnam during the last years of her stay in the Ituri. These were all related by four of the more important hunters belonging to an Epulu net-hunting band. I myself have heard many of them told by these same hunters [181] [186] [177] 539 114

[P. 259 - D]

[P. 260-A]

539 114 and by others. Although only a limited though representative selection of the legends is presented, a word should be said about the way the legends are told and the way these particular examples were collected and translated (Turnbull, 1959).

539 114 126 The original manuscripts were prepared under extremely difficult conditions by Mrs. Putnam while living in one of the Mbuti hunting camps. No typewriter was available. Apart from the physical difficulty of making a longhand rendition of the legends, as they were told, was the problem of translation. Mrs. Putnam did the only thing anyone except a proficient linguist could do, she translated the legend as it was told and wrote it down in English. This [91] procedure was further necessitated by the habit of these Mbuti, who speak three languages, of changing in the telling of a single legend from one to another as the mood seizes them.

539 114 Certainly, the ideal would have been to record the original texts, but these we do not have and could hardly expect to have under the circumstances. But we can be sure of the content and the general form of expression. I myself worked on the original manuscripts shortly af-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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114 ter their completion and had the opportunity of hearing many of the tales retold, sometimes spontaneously but more often with a little prompting given with the aid of the manuscripts. The only legends that were retold in recognizable form were those concerning creation myth, origin, and tradition, and a few of the more popular ones concerning the *satani*, or forest spirits.

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128 In transcribing from the manuscripts I have not altered the content, but I have attempted to reproduce the legends in a way that will convey something of the manner in which they are told, and I have omitted the often endless repetition. For the present purpose I have divided the legends into three groups: (1) creation myths, legends of origin and tradition; (2) legends dealing with social relations; and (3) legends dealing with relationships to the supernatural.

The bulk of the collection is divided equally between the second and third categories. Only three of the total of 200 legends concern the creation of the world, the stars, and the sky. Fewer than a dozen may be said to deal with the origin and traditional history of the Mbuti. The creation legends are very curtailed versions

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of villager legends. The legends of tradition are 539
somewhat more original and are told in a 128
slightly less summary way but still without any great show of interest or enthusiasm.

Most of the tales concern the Mbuti and 539
their relationship with the three planes of exis- [82]
tence that they acknowledge: the human, ani- [772]
mal, and supernatural worlds. By various notable omissions and commissions they add to our understanding of their social and religious life. Whether the tales are villager in origin or not is for the present purpose not particularly significant. In practice they are never told the same way twice. They are often spontaneous creations arising from a certain set of circumstances, or they may be adaptations of dimly remembered tales, or of traditional villager tales, again made to fit certain sets of circumstances. One of the weaknesses of the present collection is the absence of such surrounding details.

A full analysis of legends and the circum- 539
stances under which they are told, together 121
with a similar analysis of other Mbuti arts, such as music and drama (all vitally important means of expression to the Pygmy), would give

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us a body of facts on which we could draw in a study of the Mbuti system of values, joining such an analysis to a more formal anthropological study. It is not intended to attempt such an analysis here; there is insufficient detail and further field work is needed. However, a study of the legends we have at our disposal, if it cannot provide the detailed systematization we would like, does at least give us a clearer picture of Mbuti values than could be had by merely observing their behavior. 539 121

1. Creation Myths: Legends of Origin and Tradition 539

As mentioned, for the Pygmy these subjects seem barely worth mention in legend. I give all three legends that deal with creation and with the sun and moon. None concerned the stars.

The Water and the Earth

Many, many moons ago the Water was down below, and the Earth was way up in the sky. When it rained it rained dirt, and the dirt ruined all the water vegetables and spoiled all the water food, so that it had to be thrown away. The Water said to the Earth: "You are spoiling my water gardens by raining dirt. You come down here and I'll go up there." 539 821

The Earth agreed, and so the Water moved up and the Earth came down. When they had changed

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• 539 821 places, the Water said: "Now I'm going to rain on *you*, but *I'm* going to rain water." And the Water rained on the Earth. The earth vegetables flourished and the earth gardens grew. The Water said: "See, when I rain I don't spoil your food like you spoiled mine. It is good like this."

And from then onward the Water stayed up in the sky and the Earth stayed down below.

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The Sun and the Moon

The Sun and the Moon, who were close friends, had a big discussion. The Sun said to the Moon: "Come on up, high, high up; you and I will be higher than anything else—but now we should part. I will be high up over there in the east, and you will be high up over there in the west."

The Moon said: "Yes, I would like that, and it is good that we should stay apart because you are bright and shine like I do."

And so they divided the Heavens between them. When the Sun disappeared in the hours of the night, then the Moon passed by, all by itself. The Sun said: "This is very good. Your path is there, and mine is over here, but we must never cross at the same time; that would be very, very bad."

So they parted forever. That is why the Sun always shines in the daytime, and the Moon at night.

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The Pygmy and the Sun

There was a Pygmy who saw the sun in the middle of one afternoon. He thought it was a pigskin, so of course he tried to chase it and catch it. The Pygmy kept following, but the sun would not stay still. Still, the Pygmy followed until the sun disappeared from sight and night arrived. The Pygmy couldn't understand what had happened to the pigskin. He went to sleep.

When dawn came, the sun was way off in another direction. The Pygmy woke up and said to himself: "How did the pigskin get way over there?" He went toward the east and the sun kept coming toward him. They got nearer and nearer . . . then suddenly the sun passed the Pygmy. The Pygmy said: "Now, how did I pass the pigskin?" He turned and chased after the sun. He walked to the west. He walked and walked and walked, until the sun disappeared from sight and night arrived. The Pygmy couldn't understand what had happened to the pigskin. He went to sleep.

Basi

539 The first beginnings of the Pygmies receive scant attention. The single legend in the collection referring to them runs as follows:

Way, way back, when the Great Forest was young, there were two Pygmy men and one Pygmy woman.

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They went off into the Forest together. The one man lived with his wife, but time went by and still they had no children. The other Pygmy saw this and decided that he would go to the main hunting camp. There he found another woman. He lived with her, and in due course a child was born. The Pygmy ran to his friend in the Forest in great joy, and told him the news. His friend immediately left the Forest and also lived with the woman in the hunting camp. They too had a child. And that is how Pygmies began, and how they became so plentiful. 539

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Another legend tells how two brothers fought over an ax.

One was killed, so the other said to his nephews and nieces: "See, I have killed your father. From now on, your family and mine are enemies. We will live apart; you will live over there and I will live here." And they parted forever.

That, a social anthropologist might say, was the beginning of fission and fusion.

But apart from this, and one legend telling how a great dreamer dreamed and was told how the Pygmies should make nets out of *nkusa* vine and hunt with nets, the remainder of legends dealing with the traditional past refer to relationship with the villagers, a subject of much more interest to the Mbuti. 539 177 787

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There is a particularly nice contrast in the way the villagers tell how the relationship began and the way the Pygmies tell the same story. Here is the villager version:

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In the old days the Pygmies lived in holes in the trees, and nobody ever saw them. But one day a real man and his wife were walking through the forest and heard a strange sound. It was very loud and noisy. "What is this strange noise?" said the man to his wife, who replied, "I have no idea." "Well," said the man, "we will have to find that noise and see what it is. I'll go home and think what we should do." So he went home and thought, and he prepared a trap. He baited it with a banana, so that when the animal or whatever was making the noise grabbed the banana, an arrow would come down and pierce it.

The next morning the man and his wife set out with the trap and fixed it at the entrance to the hole in the tree from where the noise was coming. Then they went off a little way and waited to see what would happen. In a little while one of the Pygmies came to the mouth of the hole and saw the banana. He said to himself, "What is this?" Finally, his curiosity got the better of him and he made a grab for the banana. But as he touched it, the trap came down, and his hand was pierced by the arrow. He let

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out an awful scream. The man and his wife came rushing to the trap and seized him. They released him. The wife said, "What is this?" They stared at him and examined him carefully, and the wife admired his barkcloth. They took him back to their home and gave him lots of good things to eat.

One day the Pygmy said, "I have many relations in that hole." So the man fixed his trap and went back to the hole and put down his trap with a banana as bait. In a little while a hand came out of the hole and reached for the banana. The trap fell and the arrow pierced the flesh and the Pygmy let out an awful scream. The man and his wife rushed to the trap and took the Pygmy home. The first Pygmy saw them coming and shouted for joy, because they had caught his wife.

The next day the man and his wife went back with the trap, but all the other Pygmies refused to be tempted out of their hole, so they waited and waited in vain. The Pygmies in the hole said: "See, the other two grabbed the banana and were taken away. They must have been eaten up."

In the meantime the two Pygmies who lived in the village were having a very good time, and the real people gave them lots and lots of food. In due course they had a child, and then another child. When those children grew up they had children, and their children had children, and that is why there are so many Pygmies in the forest today.

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The Mbuti, as might be imagined, tell it differently:

The Mbuti were out hunting termites because, as you know, termites are good to eat. They built their houses. When night arrived the wives cooked food for their husbands. Then they all went to sleep. But in the middle of the night they heard a cry, "Oh! Oh! Oh!" "What is that?" said one Pygmy. "It is coming from over there!" cried another, pointing into the Forest. "Yes, it is a great noise coming from the old *liboyo* tree!" shouted a third. "We should go and see what it is!" They took their spears and crept up to the old *liboyo* tree. There they found a large hole in the ground, and they thought they could see faces peering up at them. But it was very dark, and they were afraid to go too close, so they returned to their camp.

"Tomorrow we shall go and see what it is all about," they said. "We shall go and we shall smoke it out of the hole, whatever it is."

The next morning they went back to the *liboyo* tree, carrying bundles of sticks and some fire wrapped up in *mongongo* leaves. They put the fire to the wood and started filling the hole with smoke. Then they heard voices calling out from the hole: "I'm dying, I'm dying! Oh, let me out, Brother, I'm dying!"

The Pygmies stopped the smoke and hurried to

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[P. 262-C]

help whatever it was out of the hole, and out came people—Real People—much bigger than themselves, holding their heads and crying. They were villagers. "Where do you come from?" asked the Pygmies. "We don't know!" answered the Real People. "We fell into the hole by the old *liboyo* tree and then you started filling it with smoke. We should have died if you had not helped us out."

P 539 177 186 Z 539 177

The Pygmies took the Real People with them, back to their termite camp, saying: "Come back with us to our termite camp. Now we shall all live together; there will be no fighting between us. You will be the Real People, truly, truly; you will be the Real People, truly."

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But the Mbuti have their own notions as to the origin of the "Real People." This legend characterizes their attitude to the villager—an attitude they never express in the presence of the villager, finding it more profitable to let the villagers continue to think that even the Mbuti themselves recognize the great superiority of the "Real People."

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How the Real People Began[1]

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In the old days there was a Savage. This Savage had a big house. She was a strange-looking woman. Not only was she tall and skinny and bony, but she had a mouth like a hippopotamus, and her stomach was enormous and her body covered with arrows. In the even older days she had had two husbands, but now both were dead. She said: "Now I'm all alone; everyone has left my village. But I'll get even. Anyone that comes by, I'll eat them."

And that is how the trouble started. She had a medicine that she put out to attract people, and when they came by she would say: "This is my house." If they became frightened and went away, her medicine brought them back. And always, she ate them. She ate them whole. She ate them one after another. Her stomach got larger and larger.

Then all the people she had eaten whole had babies and she soon had a flourishing village. She did not eat these people. They built lots of houses.

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The remaining three legends in this section explain how the Pygmies got fire, how the "Real People" tricked them out of the plantains they discovered (which is why the Pygmies have none), and, finally, how war began between Pygmies and villagers. Again the villagers are at fault. A Pygmy is tapping away in a tree, chopping out some honey, and some villagers

[1] As told by a Pygmy.

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[P. 263-A]

539 passing by hear the noise and shoot at it with
186 an arrow. But even though wounded, the clever Pygmy remains very still, so the villagers think they must have been mistaken and go on. Then the Pygmy cuts them off and lies in wait and kills one of them as they come to him. And that began the war.

2. Legends Dealing with Social Relations

539 In this group we have a few legends telling
593 of the good mother (who protects her daughter
577 against nasty villagers) and the good father (who looks after his son when out hunting); the good sister (who protects her baby brother against a *satani*, a forest spirit); and the good brother (who does not quarrel with his brothers).

539 Social behavior is extolled in a similarly pos-
577 itive vein. Marriage and divorce, cooperative effort in the food quest, war and feud, hospitality to strangers—these are common topics, treated by telling how the reasonable Pygmy behaves in any of these situations. The remainder of the legends in this group deal with virtue and vice.

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539 Among the few legends commending the good
597 mother and father, the good brother and sister,
593 only one takes the opposite approach and tells
776 of the bad mother. I include it in this section because the emphasis seems to be on the thoughtlessness of the mother rather than the trickery of the *satani*.

A Pygmy, his wife, and his child, were all asleep. In the middle of the night the child woke up and began crying. He cried and he cried. He was crying from hunger, because his mother had not fed him. At last the mother got up and gave the child a plantain. Then she went back to lie down and they all fell asleep again. A little while later the child woke up again and started crying again because he was still hungry. He cried and he cried, but his father and his mother went on sleeping.

A *satani* arrived. "Why are you crying, my child?" he asked. "I am crying because I am hungry!" replied the child. "My mother hasn't given me enough to eat and she won't wake up."

So the *satani* fixed two pots of plantains, and lots of meat. He put them on the fire to cook. When it was all ready he put the food in front of the child and the child ate, and ate, and ate. "Oh! This is good!" said the child, and he ate still more. When he finished there was still a pot of plaintains and lots more meat, so the *satani* said, "Eat some more, my child, then

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you will not wake up hungry again." So the child ate some more. 539 577

At last the child had finished all but a few plantains and a little meat. "Oh! How full I am!" he said, holding his little stomach. "I have had enough, really." But the *satani* pointed to the plantains and the meat that still remained and said, "You must eat some more, or you will surely wake up hungry!" "But I have eaten all I can, really!" said the child. "Eat!" said the *satani*. 593 776

The child took a plantain and slowly began to eat it, then suddenly BAM! He burst. The *satani* vanished. The mother and father woke with a start and saw the dead body of their little child. "Oh, what can have happened?" cried the mother. And there was much grief.

But the father knew what had happened, the mother had let the child go to bed hungry. So the next night when they lay down to sleep, the father slept only with his eyes. In the middle of the night the *satani* arrived to see if there were any more children who had been allowed to go to bed hungry, so that he could feed them until they burst. The father leapt out of his bed and seized the *satani* and cried, "You devil! You killed our son because his mother allowed him to go to bed hungry!"

And the father killed the *satani* completely.

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Most of the legends extolling social behavior are told in a matter-of-fact way and are not infrequently related to incidents in the lives of members of the community. Again, only one legend in the collection deals directly with anti-social behavior. It concerns a man who constantly maltreated his hunting dog. In net-hunting groups, such as the one in which these legends were collected, anything that concerns hunting concerns the entire society. This particular individual fed his dog only on the genitals of other animals. The dog saw that other dogs were being fed on more dainty morsels, such as liver; so one night when his master was sleeping he got his knife and killed the Pygmy. The Pygmy's wife woke up so the dog killed her also. The dog then disappeared.

Even a brief glance at the legends reveals that the one quality to which these Mbuti attach the greatest importance is cleverness, a term that in certain circumstances also means trickery. Conversely, while selfishness, greed, laziness, and gossiping women are mildly condemned in a number of legends, the sin of sins is stupidity. These two qualities are so overriding that cleverness can make crime pay, whereas stupidity can bring death and disaster to the

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539 best-intentioned of Pygmies. It is worth noting
577 here that we find an almost exact parallel in the way these legends deal with the animal world,
539 in which cleverness is the supreme virtue. Leg-
577 ends extolling cleverness among Pygmies must
825 not, then, necessarily be taken as supplying a model for behavior in Pygmy society, but rather as showing how satisfactory relationships can best be established with the animal world. This has much wider implications, as we shall see below.

One of the tales of cleverness tells how a young Pygmy becomes a great hunter, not by killing game by himself, simply, but by killing it with trickery. In such legends the great ideal of the Mbuti seems to be to match the animal world in its own terms. But in other Mbuti legends they rely on aid from the animals to help them in their trickery.

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•539 577 825 Two men went to their camp. While they were walking through the forest they came across a tree called *pusia*, which bears delicious nuts. One of the men gathered nuts from this tree, but the second man gathered from another tree, bearing very bitter nuts. When they reached their camp they roasted their nuts over the fire. The man with the bitter nuts offered them to his friend, who tasted them and said, "Oh! These are terrible, I can't eat them." The two of them shared the sweet nuts.

Later on, the man with the bitter nuts went back to the tree and stole the rest of the sweet nuts and roasted them over the fire. When they were ready he offered them to his friend. His friend tasted them and said, "These are sweet; they must be my nuts. You have stolen my nuts." "I wouldn't steal your nuts!" "Well, tomorrow I'll go and see."

At first light, the man who had found the sweet nuts went to his tree and saw that all the nuts were gone. He returned to the camp and told his friend what he had found. "You see, you did steal all my nuts. You can stay here no longer."

So the man who stole the nuts left the camp and went through the forest until he came to a *konga* bird. When he saw the *konga* bird, he explained what had happened and said, "Please don't kill me." The *konga* bird said, "All right, you can stay here and look after us." In the meantime, the other Pygmy, his nuts all eaten, decided to follow his friend. When he finally arrived his friend said to the *konga* bird, "There is my brother whose sweet nuts I stole. You can kill him if you like." So together, they killed the Pygmy who had allowed himself to be tricked.

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000 As might be expected, cleverness is frequently
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Mbuti

[P.264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539 associated with smallness. In several legends 828 the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825 respect) of small animals over large. It is not difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal [186] as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539 connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828 are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577 of this quality, which automatically associates 888 them more closely with the animal and spiritual

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worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

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539 about cripples that just happened to disappear
577 or who suddenly just "died completely."

888 There was once a Pygmy named Butuwa. He was
732 in the forest, and was sleeping with his wife, children, and old mother. His mother had no legs. In the middle of the night Butuwa said to his wife: "Mother is sleeping soundly; get the children together and let's go away." So they quietly picked up their belongings, and, together with their children, they crept away. They walked and walked and walked.

Early in the morning the old woman woke up. She said: "Where is everybody? Oh! They are a bad family, they have gone off and left their legless old mother to die. I will follow them." So saying, she stood on her head and walked and walked and walked until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She was very angry with them for having deserted her, and told them how bad they were to have left her alone in the forest. That night they all went to sleep together.

In the middle of the night the Pygmy said to his wife: "Now mother is really asleep; get the children together and let's go away." So they collected the children, picked up their belongings, and stole away. They walked and walked and walked.

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539 Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and
577 she was very, very angry to find that her family had
888 deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she
732 walked and walked and walked, until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She told her son how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son went off into the forest and gathered some honey. And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

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3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

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seem to deal with relationships between animals as animals. But, even with these, we can suspect that there is some hidden meaning that is not clear to us, until we know more about these Mbuti or, indeed, that may not even be clear to the Mbuti themselves. Here is such a tale: 539 825

There was once a chimpanzee and an elephant. The chimpanzee took bugs out of the elephant's hair. When he had finished he said to the elephant, "Now, you take the bugs out of my hair." So the elephant took out bug after bug after bug. He pulled harder and harder, and finally he pulled so hard that he pulled the chimpanzee's head right off. When the elephant saw what had happened he ran away. He went to his cousins in their hole. He said: "I have done something awful; I have killed a chimpanzee." His cousins said: "Really? Tomorrow we shall go and see."

The next morning they all left the hole. They saw the dead chimpanzee and said, "What shall we do with the body?" They decided the best thing was to let it rot there. So they let it rot, and they went back to their hole.

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Mbuti

Most of the tales, however, deal with relationships between the animal and the human worlds. Some of these relate how Pygmies and animals become friends—almost. This corresponds to a mutual sympathy that the Pygmies seem to believe exists between them and the animals that share the forest with them, but, however much they may both try to meet, it can never quite be done. 539 825

An elephant and a Pygmy were friends. The Pygmy was called Mbali. He went to visit his friend, the elephant. When he arrived at the elephant's village, the elephant was delighted and said to his wife, "My friend, Mbali, has come; make us a nice dish of mashed plantains." So his wife pounded the plantains, added salt, and put the dish over the fire. When it was ready the elephant took some red-hot embers and held them to his feet, and the elephant fat ran into the food. When there was enough he turned to his friend, Mbali, and said, "Eat well." The two of them sat down and ate up all the food. The Pygmy said, "This is delicious." He went back to his camp.

The next day the elephant said to his wife, "Now I will go and visit my friend, Mbali." So he cleaned himself up and set off. When he arrived at Mbali's camp, Mbali saw him and called, "Welcome, friend! Come and sit down." He told his wife that his friend had come, and that she should prepare some mashed plantains for him. When it was cooked the Pygmy took some red-hot embers and started putting them

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to his foot. The elephant said, "Don't do that, it will kill you. My feet are big and heavy, let me do it." "Don't be silly," replied the Pygmy, and put the embers to his feet. He screamed with pain and almost died. The elephant took hold of him and brought him back to life, then said, "See, I told you it would kill you." The elephant then took the hot embers and put them to his feet so that the oil ran out into the plantains, and they all sat down and ate.

When the meal was finished the elephant returned to his home. His wife greeted him and asked if he had had a good time. He said: "It was terrible. My friend, Mbali, took red-hot embers and put them to his feet and almost killed himself. I shall never go back there again, never."

Basi

Relationships with chimpanzees are less happy. The Pygmy and the chimpanzee seem to be just about equally matched in cleverness, and they are continually killing each other. Typical is the tale of the Pygmy who sat down to watch a group of chimpanzees playing.

One of the chimpanzees noticed the Pygmy and came over to him. He said, "What are you doing here?" He called to his brother chimpanzees, "Come and see this Pygmy." They came over and said,

539 825 "We'll fight him." One of the chimpanzees grabbed at the Pygmy, but meanwhile the Pygmy had taken up his spear. The Pygmy killed the chimpanzee. The others said, "What did the Pygmy kill our brother with?" And one answered, "It seemed to be with the root of a tree." So another of the chimpanzees gathered up the roots of the trees and threw them at the Pygmy. The Pygmy killed him with his spear. The remaining chimpanzees sat down and tried to puzzle this out. One of them searched all round and found the spear. He took it and killed the Pygmy. The chimpanzees then gathered some leaves and put them over the Pygmy. They all left.

The Pygmy's brother went to look for him. He found him dead, covered with leaves. He said, "What could have happened? Who killed my brother?"

Basi

539 825 828 Leopards and turtles are tricky animals that teach the Pygmy much of his cleverness in legend. They appear frequently, and it is always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed. But here we consider another aspect of these animal tales. Not only is it always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed, thus automatically associating them with the supernatural, if only indirectly, but they are often identified with villagers. In talking of villagers, in legend, more often than not the Pygmy gives them animal form. The villager is very defi-

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 266-c]

nitely not included on the human side of the opposition between the animal and human worlds (the villager is often associated with an excess of cleverness). A frequently heard motif is for a Pygmy to wound an animal with a spear or an arrow. The animal escapes, carrying away the weapon. Later, the Pygmy discovers that weapon, covered with blood, hidden in the house of some Bira villager. The Pygmy then knows that he had, in fact, wounded a villager who had changed into an animal. 539• 825 186 [828]

The collection includes one very similar legend in which exactly the same motif is used, accounting for enmity between two Pygmy hunting groups. A Pygmy wounds an elephant with a spear, and the elephant escapes, carrying away the spear. The Pygmy's father sends his son off to look for the lost spear. On his way through a village, he meets a Bira who says he has seen the spear in the hut of the Pygmy's best friend, another Pygmy. The Bira helps to conceal the unfortunate hunter in his friend's hut; at night, when his friend is sleeping, he

searches and finds his spear. But, as he is escaping, he is seen by other Pygmies who say, "Oh! So it was you who tried to kill our brother; we will kill you." 539 825 186

In the ensuing fight the elephant hunter kills all the other Pygmies and returns to his father who is well satisfied.

The Bira villagers frequently turn into elephants and take advantage of their great size to make war on the Pygmies, destroying the forest as they do so. They are bad enough at the best of times, in Pygmy estimation, but apparently they become elephants when they are particularly bad.

A Bira and his wife had a terrible fight. The wife decided to leave and go to her mother's village, but her husband followed her. And as he followed, he turned into an elephant. He crashed through the forest and destroyed everything in sight. His wife heard the great noise and climbed a tree. The elephant tracked her down and started to knock the tree down. He charged at it and tore at it, but try as he might he could not pull it down. His wife held on tightly. Then she called to the Pygmies. The Pygmies heard her and came to her rescue. When she saw them she told them to kill the elephant. They attacked it with spears. They speared it again and again, but it would not die. It charged at the Pygmies and drove them back, right back to the Bira village. There the elephant spoke and said, "You have tried to kill me, your friend, a Bira." The Pygmies replied:

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[P.267-A]

539 825 186 "But you have turned into an elephant and tried to kill your wife. Because of that you must cross over to the other side of the river and die." The elephant said, "You want to kill me?" "Yes," said the Pygmies. "You have become a very bad elephant." So the elephant went across to the other side of the river. The Pygmies went back and took his wife to her mother.

Basi

539 825 We next examine some of the legends that very definitely attach supernatural attributes to certain animals and birds. There is a legend that warns against annoying porcupines. A Pygmy that tries to smoke some porcupines out of their hole is attacked, driven into another hole, and turned into an animal. Similarly a pangolin, if annoyed, has the power to drag its tormentor down into the world of the ancestors, through a great hole in the ground.

But some of the strangest tales concern birds. Above is an account of the *konga* bird that helped the Pygmy who stole the sweet nuts to kill his brother. Another, unidentified bird is popular in legend—the Bird with the Beautiful Song. It sings the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest has ever heard.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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One day, a Pygmy child heard this Beautiful Song and searched for the Bird that could sing so wonderfully. He found it and praised its Song. The Bird flew down and perched on the boy's head, and the boy brought it back to the Pygmy camp. His father saw the Bird and praised it. When it sang he told the boy to give it some food. The Bird then flew off. The next day the boy heard the Song and searched until he found the Bird again. Once again he brought it back to the camp. This happens three times, and the last time the father takes the Bird from the boy and says, "Now you go off and leave me. Leave this camp and go away to another; go! go!" The young Pygmy left his father and went to another camp. When he was alone, the father took the Bird, the Bird that sang the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest had ever heard, and he killed the Bird. And he killed the Song.

And no sooner had he killed the Bird than he himself dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever.

Basi

Another curious bird is *fifi*. Like the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, the legend

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1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 267-C]

of the *fifi* is told with great awe by the Mbuti; 539 •
it is reproduced here in full. 825

There was once a poor Pygmy girl. She was crippled, and her skin was full of disease. She was only about eight years old. The Pygmies were breaking camp. Nobody was willing to carry the little cripple for fear of catching the disease. So when all the Pygmies had left the camp, the little girl was all alone, by herself. She cried and she cried and she cried. And when night fell she crawled into her empty hut and she cried herself to sleep.

At daybreak she heard a sound like: "Pip! Pip! Pip!" It was the bird called the *fifi* bird. It had fastened a long rattan vine between two trees, and it was sitting on the vine swinging back and forth, back and forth. The little girl went to look more closely, and the bird flew away.

In the distance there was a Bira villager with his 539
hunting trap. Seeing the diseased cripple he came up 825
and said: "My poor child, you have been left here all 186
by yourself . . . I must kill you." And he took his knife and lifted it to kill the girl. But the knife caught his nose and cut it. It killed him and he fell down dead. The girl caught hold of the rattan vine, and she swung herself back and forth, back and forth.

As she was swinging on the vine, another Bira villager, seeing the movement, came slowly into the clearing. "What is this?" he said to himself. "Why, it is a crippled little Pygmy girl. Get off your vine swing, my child, and come over here to me." 539 825 186

The girl got down from her swing and made her way over to where the Bira was standing. Then she sat down on the ground and held her withered little legs. "Come nearer, my child," said the Bira, reaching forward. "No! No! I can't come any nearer," cried the girl. "My legs hurt so much, and I am all diseased." "Very well, I shall kill you," replied the Bira. "Oh, please don't do that, I'm only a poor deserted child." "But why did your father leave you all alone?" asked the Bira. "No, I must certainly kill you."

And he took a piece of wood and tried to strike the little crippled Pygmy girl. But the wood flew back in his face and hit him on the nose, and the blood streamed down. With the blood still streaming down he ran back to his village and told everyone: "There is a poor deserted Pygmy girl in the Pygmy camp. She is crippled and diseased, and she has the evil eye. She will surely kill us all." And with some friends and relations he hurried to the deserted camp.

There was the little girl, sitting on the swing, swinging herself back and forth, back and forth. The Bira called to her: "Come here, my poor child. You have killed one of our relatives, and you have wounded me. You are crippled and diseased, and you have been deserted. I am going to kill you."

The little girl got down from her swing and slowly

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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539 825 186 came over to where the Bira was standing. "Come nearer, little one!" said the Bira. "Oh, please don't kill me," said the Pygmy girl, "I am only a deserted cripple, and I haven't run away." But she came closer still. The Bira raised his knife. "Now!" he said," "Now, I am going to kill you!" But the knife caught in his stomach, and he fell down, he fell down dead.

The girl went back to her swing, dragging her withered little legs along the ground. And she climbed on the swing and swung herself back and forth, back and forth. The remaining Bira all hurried back to their village.

"Come! Come! Come, all of you!" they cried. "There is a crippled little Pygmy girl in the deserted camp, and she will surely kill us all unless we kill her. Get your spears, and come!" And all the Bira villagers seized their spears and came running to the deserted camp. They all came to take their revenge and kill the deserted little Pygmy girl.

But the girl had gone.

The only sign of life was the *fifi* bird, and the *fifi* bird was sitting on the rattan vine, swinging itself back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Basi

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Mbuti

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There is another link between the animal and the supernatural worlds in the alleged existence of "water animals." These water animals are not particularly dangerous spirits; they appear rather as vehicles to transport the Pygmy from the natural world to the supernatural. There is a legend told by the Epulu Pygmies of a man who was known, they say, to their fathers.

There was once a man called Ngoyi. He was tired of all his relatives and said: "I can't live with you any longer. I'm going to live on my own." And off he went to the river named Tato, where he disappeared into the water. He called out, "I'm going to stay here in the water, and you won't be able to see me any more."

His family had all followed him to the river and asked: "Are you really going to stay there in the water?" He replied, "Yes." He called his children and took them into the water with him. They all disappeared.

Now Ngoyi was a clever worker of wood, and, if you go to the river today and throw in a piece of wood, he will make it into whatever you want. His children are there also, and during the day time they come out to play. And even though they disappear when you come near, you can always hear them talking.

Basi

Another legend tells how two brothers were crossing a stream, and one fell in. The other

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Mbuti

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thought his brother had been drowned, and returned to camp with the news, but actually he had become a water animal. Some weeks later the land brother saw his water brother and tried to tempt him home, so glad was he to see him still alive. But the water brother caught hold of him and pulled him into the water, so the land brother also became a water animal. 539 • 776

And the two Water Brothers stayed in the stream; they stayed in the stream and never came out again.

A third legend connects the rainbow with these water animals.

Some girls were off cutting wood. They crossed a stream by a fallen tree. But really the tree was the "bad water animal, called *klima*, the Rainbow." When returning they all crossed, except the slowest of the girls, and a man who waited for her. As these two were halfway across, the dead tree, which was really the rainbow which was really a water animal, suddenly dived down into the water, carrying them with it. Later on, the couple was seen sitting on a rock in the middle of the stream, but never again after that.

Quite distinct from the water animals are the forest spirits which these Pygmies call *satani*. They are, unlike the water animals, capable of being dealt with. Their outstanding characteristic is an excess of cleverness amounting to the grossest trickery. They molest the Pygmies on every possible occasion, stealing their food, devouring them in anthropophagous orgies. The Pygmies resort to cleverness of the same order. It is perfectly possible, though difficult, for a Pygmy to outwit a *satani*, even to kill one. But one of the legends warns against imitating a *satani's* ways too closely. 539 776

One day a Pygmy and his child went for a walk. They collected some *eseli* nuts. On the way they met a *satani*. The *satani* put a nut on the child's head and split the nut with a machete. "Oh!" said the Pygmy, "that's like the *nkumbi* circumcision school. Tomorrow, I'll collect some more nuts and try that."

The next day he went with his child to the same place and collected some more *eseli* nuts. He put one of the nuts on his child's head and hit it with his machete. He killed his child dead. The *satani*, who had been watching, said, "See! You have killed your child."

The Pygmy left his child's body there and went down to the river. The *satani* went with him. The *satani* threw his spear into the water. The Pygmy said, "I'd like to do that!" But, when he tried, the

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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spear went all over the place, everywhere except into the water. He said: "When you do it, *satani*, it goes straight, yet when I do it it goes all over the place." They left each other.

Basi

Pygmies become *satani* far less frequently than they become water animals, but it can happen. The woman who gossiped became a *satani*. The following tale tells how a certain Pygmy was driven to the same fate by his relatives.

There was once a young Pygmy whose name was Mambalia. His relations kept whipping and whipping him until at last he could bear it no more and ran away into the forest. His family followed him, but he built a huge fire and said: "I am not going back—never!" And he ran even farther away. His relations returned to their camp.

After that, whenever Mambalia heard voices he ran farther away still, until finally, he said: "Now this is my part of the forest, and nobody must come here. I'm going to stay here all by myself."

He lived in a hole in a tree where no one could find him. He became very, very powerful. He became a *satani*. And now he is an old, old man.

Basi

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1]), both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" ("*bachei ba bo*"), "for elephants are like villagers" ("*bambongu bua sopilabatu*"). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 186 825 245 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They began to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 186 825 245 776 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He walked with two spears.[2] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 186 829 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [2] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 222 571 439 rest I put in a place where the tree had two arms [i.e., in a fork]. I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, but I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" My *kpara* looks at the basket.

"Ah! My master. I came to search for my honey, but there is only a little of it. It is a bad year. It is heavy work. You must go back with my honey; if I get any more I shall come with it."

The *kpara* took my honey with him and returned to the village to say that he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity! [*Ndamdama nda'e!* or *Mbafu yakéi!*] When he had gone I quickly climbed up above and I collected all the honey from the place I had put it, and I came down to return to the camp and share it with all my relatives. I walked, I walked, I walked. I arrived at the big river. Darkness began to come. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?" I climbed up a big tree and lay there.

539 222 776 Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke up. A little way off I saw two firebrands. "Ah! Who is walking in the middle of the night like that, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit." I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice. "Ah! My child, where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very, very old woman. I was surprised. "Ha! Grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost the trail."

I remained quiet, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree. It was truly an evil spirit, but he had changed into my grandmother. I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"Yes, Grandmother. I am here. I was searching for honey, but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Oh, child, you have done badly, for when you did not return I thought you were dead and I left camp to search for you, and I have found you well. You have done very badly toward me. Give me my honey."

"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, I, myself. We shall return together."

"Nonsense! You are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with my honey. Give it." I was afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit. I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more." I threw down more. "Give me more."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

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Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 821
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- [114]
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon [776]
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.303]

THE LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

539
222
439

me ke nandura ka ba boki.
I went to the forest to collect honey.

me ke a'i, me ke a'i, me ke a'i.
I went, I went, I went.

me ke akurahwa, ku pia libo mangbo.
I went very far, beyond the big river.

moki li suanjoki. me oni neko kuma boki.
I heard the sound of bees. I saw up high the place of honey.

me lufudo, "toka bo nangoli; nde mendamo; nde boki ndamo."
I said. "Nobody has enclosed the tree with vine, it is mine; it is my honey."

me poki loka phelea, phelea bekbekbe'i.
I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed.

me teningoli. ke kongi isa, me pisi isa subaso.
I cut a vine. I fanned my fire, and put the fire in my basket.

me pedi oda phangoli; me daphi, me daphi.
I began to climb; I climbed, I climbed.

boki neko kurahwa. nde boki, boki sandenengo, kanga piso.
The honey was very far. It was honey, real honey, not *apuma.*

me kidi. me boingoli, me liki. me pisi isa suba eboso.
I reached it. I fastened the vine, I sat. I put fire into the hole.

me lophi. me ki abi bekbekbe'i, me che'i banzoki.
I blew. I got much smoke, I drove out many bees.

me ko iti, me ko iti, me ko iti.
I chopped, I chopped, I chopped.

me ko iti, me mua kito, a mua pika na dodo.
While I was chopping I heard someone walking below.

"nu andea a mua pika peeha me?" nde mukpara ndamo.
"Who is walking below me?" It is my master.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539
222
439

"a oki kueta mboki ndamo, a me beli." me wanzi nimbo.
"He heard me cutting my honey, he followed me." I began to sing.

me nimbi bekbekbei, akini melufu. kanga me oki.
I sang loudly, but he called me. I did not hear.

me nimbi, akini me kweti.
I sang, but I chopped.

me nimbi, "Ha! me kweti boki. me ko oka kapa'i akpara mamo."
I sang, "Ha! I am chopping honey to give to my *kpara*."

me kweti bisa, me kweti boka. boki a bi lenga'i.
I chopped slowly, I chopped honey. There was much honey.

akini me pisa depha subaso.
But I only put part of it in my basket.

me pisi ndetina a su soro kokomea.
The rest I put where the tree had two arms.

me nimbi, "Ah! boki a bi depha, me ka bokbu akpara mamo." me ki a dodo.
I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! mambuti mamo, me siye ema?" mubira a si pi so.
"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" The MuBira looks at the basket.

"Ah! akpara mamo, me piki ka ba boki ndamo, akini me pati na che.
"Ah! My Master, I came to search for my honey, but I got only a little.

"me mua ka pa'i bokbu. me sia bo'u."
"I am going to give it all. I will stay empty."

"ue nde mambuti manza. me ka pa eboko mboye siki nanji."
"You are a good Mbuti. I shall give you bananas when you come to the village."

"Ah! akpara mamo, me lika nandura a ka ba boki, akini nde depha."
"Ah! My Master, I shall stay in the forest to search for honey, but there is little."

"nde mwaka sinana. nde kazi ndangbo."
"It is a bad year. It is hard work."

"ue sikia nanji na boki ndamo. me pati ndetina, me piki na'u."
"You go to the village with my honey. If I get more, I shall come with it."

akpara a bu boki ndamo, a siki nanji nda'e.
The *kpara* took my honey, he went to the village with it.

asibande a bi boki ndamo bokbu. ndandama nda'e!
He would say he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity!

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ake me daphi umand'o, me bu boki ngbokbu, kumande me pisibi. 539
I quickly climbed up again, I took all the honey from the place where I had put it. 222 439

me simi ya dodo a sia n'apa a kapa banama bame.
I came down to return to the camp and shared it with everyone.

me tambi, me tambi, me tambi. me kidi apua libo mangbo.
I walked, I walked, I walked, I arrived at the big river.

tokwaba a wanzi pika. me lufu. "ha! tudu a me pedi a me mandula? me sao mabo?"
Darkness began to settle. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?"

me daphi kua me mangbo, me langi neko.
I climbed up into a big tree, I lay there.

ame mangondo moki liso. me oni kurahwa isa ebaré. 539
Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke. I saw far away two firebrands. 776

"mondea na tamba kifa, na isa ebara bende? nde ketiba!"
"Who is walking in the middle of the night, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit!"

me kobi nengo. m'oki liso kali.
I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice.

"a miki mamo, miki mamo; miki mamo mu ma?" liso a tata, mozee nengo.
"Ah! My child, my child; where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very old person.

me moboki nengo. "Ah! tatamua kaba me amemangondo? nde tata mamo nengo?"
I was very afraid. "Ah! My grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"ah miki mamo mu ma? au moli a pedi, au a bungi?"
"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost his way?"

me kobi nengo, akini isa ebaré akidi tina me.
I kept quiet completely, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree.

nde keti nengo, akini akeoki tatamamo.
It was truly an evil spirit, but it had turned into my grandmother.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 539 776 *me teni kisio. "Ah! miki mamo amu neko?"*
I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"e'i tata, me mu be'i. me ka bi boki tudaha a me pedi a phe."
"Yes, Grandmother, I am here. I was searching for honey but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Ah! miki, ue mesi sinana. ue a bia sisia abende neku, me toli akaba'o; me tondi mota'o. ue si sinana nengo. pisa boki ndamo."
"Ah! Child, you have done badly. When you did not return, I thought you were dead and I left to search for you; I found you strong. You have done very badly towards me. Give me my honey."

"ah! tata, nde tida'i; me kumbandi susia kumekadi."
"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, we shall return together."

"mbe, ueche todahwa; ue lika ma. me sia na boki ndamo. pikisa."
"Nonsense, you are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with the honey. Give it."

me che'i nengo gunde me upi a bi keti.
I was very afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit.

me maké boki na dodo. "pikasa ndetina, pikasa ndetina."
I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more."

me maké ndetina. "pikasa ndetina."
I threw down more. "Give me more."

"ndetina a munda, tata." "mbe, pikisa, miki masinana."
"There is no more, Grandmother." "Nonsense, give, my bad child."

me che'i nengo, me maké bokbui me lufu:
I was very afraid, I threw it all down; I said:

"e ngbokbu, tata, bo'a, ue ke, ndetina amunda. peda ue sia nda'o. me lika oma."
"That is all, Grandmother, take it, you go, there is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall remain here."

"ebo. nde bonga'i, miki mamo. me siki a'o. ue likato."
"Good. It is good, my child. I shall return. You stay on."

"ue kato'e, tata."
"Go then, Grandmother."

me liki na siu, me bonji mané. mané a piki, me simia a dodo.
I sat with eyes, I waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down to the ground.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

me ka bi anga batu; anga munda.
I looked for footprints of humans. There were no footprints.

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776

"*Ah!*" *me lufu, "nde keti mabobo. me si ndanza me ka boki bokbu. a bia mua me nengo.*"
"Ah!" I said, "It was an evil spirit, truly. I did well to throw down all my honey. It would have killed me completely."

akini, gunde me sibo.
But, empty-handed I return.

[P.308]

THE LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

539
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mosa besu bambuti subua'ini eboko. mosa ma batu banji.
In olden times we Mbuti had bananas, before the people of the village.

batu banji baku biai eboko ndasu. su kangia'i.
The people of the village stole the bananas from us. We shared them.

besu bambuti sukonia ekasa, bakpara bua'i poko. Seyuma mayeli bendo.
We Mbuti took the leaves, the *kpara* took the roots. That was their trickery.

samba ndaso nde mosa bindanza. akini bambongu pikiai dongasu.
539 Our plantations of old were good. But the elephants came and troubled us.
825
186 *basudongia'isu. ba bumia'i tiko su.*
They troubled us. They killed our plantations.

bambuti balufa'i, "su samabo? bambongu basu dongibé, babuniasu tiko ndasu."
The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants trouble us so and are killing our plantations."

mangesé, mangesé mangbo, alufa'i, "bambongu bapiké su lufua nabé."
An elder, a very old man indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them."

bachahwa balufa'i, "ue semabo?" mangesé a lufa'i, "ue sipa, bamiki."
The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man said, "You wait, children."

bambongu bakidi. bawanji a lea'eboko bokbu. ba wanjia'i buna tiko.
The elephants came. They began to eat the bananas. They began to destroy the plantation.

bachahwa bache'i aka mangesé, balufua'i, "ombo, epa, bambongu bkidi; ba bunia tiko ndasu."
The youths were afraid and ran to the old man, saying, "Oh! Father, the elephants have come; they are destroying our plantation."

"ndanza. me mua ka totiambino. beningbokbu mu likana; nekobi anenengo." mangesé a ke a'i na tiko.
"Good. I shall go to chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet." The old man went to the plantation.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

a kamia'e nengo. engbue na dodo nengo. bambongu ba li sipi.
He cried greatly. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him.

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825
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balufu, "nde'i'i? bachahwa kabapiki dongasu, paka mangesé a piki ngamo nde ndanza sulea kobia nasu."
They said, "What is this? The youths have not come to trouble us. Only an old man has come. Good, we shall eat quietly."

balea ebokosu, bachahwa bakobia nengo apa.
They ate many bananas, the youths stayed very quiet in the camp.

mangesé a kami, "Ah! bamiki bamo bau. Ah! bamiki bamo buma?"
The old man cried, "Ah! my children, all are dead. Ah! my children, where are they?"

bambongu ba'oki, balufu'aka mangesé, "angbé ue ka mi? bachahwa buma? su lea tiko bokbu."
The elephants heard, they said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? The youths are where? We shall eat the whole plantation."

mangesé a lufu, "lea, lea ngbokbu. bamiki bamo baku." a kami.
The old man said, "Eat, eat everything. My children are all dead." He continued crying.

bambongu balufu, "akini ue mua bamiki si angbe e'ebaku?"
The elephants said, "But you have many children, how did they die?"

mangesé a lufu, "nde keti, keti ma phele'a. a tambi na kongé ebaré nde bia nengo, sawa na ue.
The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. It walked with two spears. It was very fat, like you.

"siku bokbu, me mengia na'u kapié eboko, keti a mua'e, a nia'e.
"Every day I sent someone to cut bananas, the evil spirit killed him, it ate him.

"makati i'o'elea', bamiki bamo bokbu. a siainbende nde tiko nda'e, batu bakidié, e muangbokbu.
"Now it has eaten all my children. It said it was its plantation and whoever came it would kill them all.

"ah! bamiki bamo baku bo'u. angbe'e keti kadongimbe tiko ndetina?
"Ah! My children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not trouble some other plantation?

"angbe a loki tiko ndamo?" mangesé a kami, a ke.
"Why did it curse mine?" The old man cried, he went away.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 825 186 *bambongu balufu, "Ah! akini keti nde sinana, a loki tiko ndamané, su bua ka komanda; suke umana, kabe su mua."*
The elephants said, "Ah! But if the spirit is that bad, and has cursed the plantation, we had better go elsewhere; let us go quickly, before it kills us."

gunde bambongu bua sopilabatu bananji, bache'i baketi bobo.
Because elephants are like people of the village, they are very afraid of spirits.

ba ke, ba ke, kurahwa. mangesé e oki bamiki bokbu.
They went, they went very far. The old man called all his children.

a lufu, "bambongu ka ba piké noma. ba bia sisia kuma keti masinana.
He said, "The elephants will not come back again. They think this is a place full of bad spirits.

"su likia kobia nasu tiko ndasu.
"We shall remain quietly in our plantation.

"batu betina bunda basudonga."
"Nobody else will bother us."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
534 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was singing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the

[P.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more fre-
• 551 quently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with the same meaning. The occasional use of a [613] grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor [614] names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used fre- [103] quently to differentiate one hunting band from [101] another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication [832] would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246- B]

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance. P 601

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment. P 768 602 [768] [602] P [597] [567] P [591]

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only P 582 835 61 [60] [55]

in one way. They are submissive, almost servile, and appear to have 181
no culture of their own. But at night in the initiation camp when 177
the last Negro had left, or off in the forest, those same Pygmies were different people. They cast off one way of life and took on another, and from the little I saw of their forest life it was as full and satisfactory as village life seemed empty and meaningless.

The Pygmies are no more perfect than any other people, and life, 123
though kind to them, is not without hardships. But there was some- 181
thing about the relationship between these simple, unaffected people and their forest home that was captivating. And when the time [533]
came that I had to leave, even though we were camped back near the village, the Pygmies gathered around their fire on the eve of my departure and sang their forest songs for me; and for the first time I heard the voice of the molimo. Then I was sure that I could never rest until I had come out again, free of any obligations to stay in the village, free of any limitations of time, free simply to live and roam the forest with the BaMbuti, its people; and free to let them teach me in their own time what it was that made their life so different from that of other people.

The evening before I left, before the singing started, three of 123
the great hunters took me off into the forest. They said they wanted 304
to be sure that I would come back again, so they thought they would make me "of the forest." There was Njobo, the killer of elephants; [551]
his close friend and distant relative, Kolongo; and Moke, an elderly Pygmy who never raised his voice, and to whom everyone listened with respect. Kolongo held my head and Njobo casually took a rusty arrow blade and cut tiny but deep vertical slits in the center of my forehead and above each eye. He then gauged out a little flesh from each slit and asked Kolongo for the medicine to put in. But Kolongo had forgotten to bring it, so while I sat on a log, not feeling very bright, Kolongo ambled off to get the medicine, and Moke wandered around cheerfully humming to himself, looking for something to eat.

One of them, a youth called Kenge, had
115 even become bugler at the Animal Station, where almost every hour
177 the air was shattered with attempts at military bugle calls.
464 Kenge's father had died a number of years ago, when he was just
• [55] a boy. His mother had returned to her village, but Kenge had stayed around Camp Putnam. Pat Putnam encouraged him to become a jack-of-all-trades, and Kenge had come to spend more time at the camp than in the forest. He even learned the work of hotel boy, such as pressing clothes for Putnam's guests. He wore shorts and shirt, meticulously scrubbed and pressed with the Camp Putnam flatiron, but usually without buttons. He was very sophisticated and a little conceited, but a good friend to me at all times, and eventually he made himself indispensable.

115 During my last trip Kenge had been with me practically the whole
123 time; since no women were allowed in the initiation camp, he helped with the cooking, and he had told me how to behave. He tried to interpret my questions to the others, for he had a better idea than most Pygmies of the peculiar sorts of things that Europeans want to know. Such things to an African are often forbidden topics of conversation and even to mention them would be grossly indiscreet or even insulting. Kenge became so familiar with the kind of questions I liked to ask that he would even conduct inquiries in my absence, then tell me what he had discovered about so-and-so's mother's brother's daughter. But for all his sophistication, what he liked best was to take me through the forest, as though he owned it personally, showing it to me with infinite pride.

He had insisted on working for me, and I had fired him regularly every two or three weeks, because, sophisticated or not, he was as unpredictable as any Pygmy, and just as disinclined to do anything he did not want to do. Several times he announced that he was going to get food for my supper, and I would give him the money to buy something special in the village. Of course he would go straight to the beer house and leave me to scrounge what I could. I soon learned

115 Pygmy and said he didn't mind. He suggested 40 francs per week,
123 a wage considerably below what he had been earning as a bugler. He said that if I could afford a present when I left, that would be fine. Pygmies have a way of letting you know when they really mean what they say, and this was one of those times. In all the many months that followed, Kenge never once asked me for money, beyond his meager salary. And once when I was short of cash and we were down in the village he spent his own savings to buy food for the two of us.

123 In the course of my two previous trips I had come to know most of the Pygmies in this area quite well, and the initiation had cemented our friendship, though at the best I suspect they regarded me merely as a rather harmless outsider. I was soon brought up to date on all
177 that happened during the past three years. Kenge said that the hunt-
[464] ing group was still hunting and gathering, but that they sometimes
[434] came down to the village and spent time there, earning money at the Station de Chasse or at the motel, money which they promptly spent on food, tobacco, and palm wine at the new stores. They still brought in meat for their *BaKpara*, or "masters," and took plantation
177 foods in return. But, encouraged by the administration, they had
241 begun to make their own plantation in the forest. This was the worst possible news; once the Pygmies have plantations their hunting-and-gathering existence is made impossible. They become tied to one place and do not have time to follow the game.

241 The two busiest workers on the plantation and those who had the
156 finest clearings were Njobo and Masisi. They were two of the most
[551] influential hunters of the group. Njobo had killed two elephants
[224] single-handed, and two more in company with other Pygmies. He had three wives, but had only one child, a son by his second wife. The son, Nyange, had been a healthy lad when I had last seen him, but now he was crippled with tuberculosis of the leg bone.

156 Masisi was a relative of Njobo's, and though not such a renowned

hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Agerronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest.

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765 534 123
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed."

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765 534 123 when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better for old men to talk about these things. 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888 115 outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and [322] talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411] Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115 him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157] shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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BaLese The major village tribe to the east and northeast of the Epulu district.

BaMbuti General term for all Pygmies of the Ituri Forest.

BaNgwana An Islamic tribe scattered throughout the area. Their unsavory reputation, acquired in the days when they aided and abetted the slave-traders, has continued right up to the present day. KiNgwana has become the lingua franca of the entire area.

Banja A pair of short sticks, split into many strands at one end and clapped together on a log as rhythmic accompaniment to certain songs of the Pygmies, particularly the *molimo* songs.

Bantu General term for all tribes speaking a certain type of language, characterized by the use of prefixes, as indicated under BaBira, above, etc. The Bantu peoples extend throughout eastern, southern, and central Africa.

Baraza The meeting place of a family or village. Sometimes a large veranda built onto a house; more often a separate building consisting of a roof supported by poles, but with no walls.

Dawa "Medicine"; may refer to effective herbs or equally to magical incantations or spells.

[551] [123] **Ebamunyama** Literally, "His Father Killed an Animal"; the name which the Pygmies gave to me, being their condensation of the story that I told to explain my name, "Turnbull." (A borderland Scot saved the king's life by leaping on the back of a bull and turning it away from the king by twisting its

GLOSSARY

104
[551]

neck. The family was rewarded with the title "Turner of the Bull," and with a crest of a bull with a broken neck.)

Elima The festival celebrating the puberty of girls.

Fito A young straight sapling, up to twelve feet in length, used in the construction of house frames, also as whips during certain ceremonies.

Itaba A sweet root found only in the forest, considered a delicacy by the Pygmies.

Kangay The gardenia fruit, used by Pygmies to extract a black juice used for staining the body or for drawing patterns on bark cloth.

Kenge An antelope, sometimes an okapi; such names are occasionally, but not often, given to children, as in the case of my helper and friend.

Kumamolimo "The heart of the *molimo*"—the central meeting place of the men's religious organization.

Lendu A forest antelope, the size of a large dog, with sharp-pointed horns.

Liko A brew made by the Pygmies of forest berries, herbs, and cola nut.

Machetti A large-bladed knife used for cutting fito, etc.

Mangese The Pygmy term, also used by some BaBira, for the elders. As used by Pygmies it can also refer to a youngster, if he has shown himself to be a "Great One" by some spectacular hunting achievement, say killing a buffalo or an elephant single-handed.

[ARCHERS]

• 553 Schebesta reports that the child is not named for some weeks after birth. To name a boy is the father's prerogative or that of the oldest male members of his lineage; to name a girl is the right of the mother or her oldest relatives. There is no uniform custom, except that naming is primarily the privilege of the parents. 844 It is a Pygmy custom to fasten the umbilical 846 cord to the child's elbow and later to bury it in some swamp. Schebesta found no evidence of [114] the truth of Johnston's statement (1902, 1904, 539) that Pygmy women sever the umbilical 847 cord with their teeth. Abortion is known to the Pygmies, but plays no part in marital life.

Twins

845 The birth of twins, among the archers, seems 847 to be considered abnormal and inauspicious. Schebesta frequently heard that following the birth of twins one had died. He was told by an elder that, when twins are born, the elders are immediately informed, and they advise that if both infants are strong and healthy they be allowed to live, otherwise the weaker of the two should be killed. The mother herself smothers the infant by covering its nose and mouth with her hand. The body is immediately buried in the house, which is promptly abandoned. [P. 178-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
• 553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[177] [1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 172-B]

shoot if the animal passes their way. Sometimes 224
the animal is killed by the dog; sometimes it escapes or is only wounded and must be pursued. It may happen that the dog itself is wounded, a major catastrophe for the hunters.

The rewards of this type of hunt are varied. A group of five or six hunters may be able to bring back an antelope each day, or may fail completely for days on end. The hunt seldom strays far from the camp and, with or without game, returns by late afternoon. According to Schebesta, the game caught is usually gutted on the spot and divided among the hunters, who bring back their shares wrapped in leaves, nothing being left unused. This division of game is according to traditional usage. If the game is [554] •
brought back whole, only the elder with the aid of an assistant can divide it. It is laid on leaves, then skinned with sharp metal arrowpoints and gutted. The sharing is theoretically only between members of the band, but in fact is between any who took part in the hunt directly or indirectly. Thus the owner of the dog, or of the bow and arrow (if borrowed) that killed the game, may claim a share. An animal killed in [628]
the territory of another band belongs to that band, but Schebesta says that normally neighboring bands overlook this unless it happens frequently, when hostilities may ensue.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 621 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554.

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

claim compensation from him. The women guardians also could make it easy or difficult for the candidates, according to their inclinations. Any man, having fought his way through, had to secure the girl's permission before he slept with her. But reliable Mbuti informants reported that a large number merely fought for the prestige acquired and sought no intercourse with the girls. Outwardly, there is no change, except that instead of firing arrows from their bows the men fire fruit peel, and the fighting is less severe than that described in the tales of olden times. Exactly what happens inside the hut is not known, but the festival is evidently an opportunity for young men to prove their valor, and for young maidens to prove their womanliness, each one attesting to his or her readiness for marriage. There is unfortunately no evidence as to how far the opening of the *elima* constitutes a betrothal, nor how frequently it is followed by marriage.

881 836 [554]

During the course of the *elima* the girls are under certain food restrictions, which include a prohibition on all meat. *Elima* singing goes on all night. Presumably, as with the *nkumbi* initiation of boys, this is a period of discipline as well as of education. Apart from the special *elima* songs, apparently special dances are

881 [533] [535]

[P 216-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do not participate fully in the proceedings of the [575] *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and [304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkumbi* 177 serves merely to give status in villager society. 17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation into the religious associations of their own men [554] and women; the *molimo* and *elima*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219 - B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill

575 561 88

[554] [224]

[P. 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 to status in the band and the fact that young
561 men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed
88 particular prowess as hunters may take a prom-
[554] inent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence
[224] of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 With regard to the proceedings of the associ-
796 ation, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 The word *molimo* is used to denote the asso-
[192] ciation, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." According to Putnam, the Mbuti re- [157] spect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"

[P. 228-B]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 228-C]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [57]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-C]

The general observations that can be made from this collection of legends are: 538

1. The Mbuti of the Epulu are remarkably little concerned with matters relating to origin and tradition.

2. Their legends can be classified under three main sections: legends concerning their social life, legends relating to the animal and human kingdoms, and legends concerning the supernatural. In fact, the second section falls in part into social relations and in part into supernatural relations, but we mention it here to show the correspondence with Joset's (1948) classification for the archers.

While there are no professional storytellers among the Epulu net hunters, there are individuals who have a greater mastery of the art than others. They seem to hold an important position in the community, especially in relation to the activities of the *molimo* society. The storyteller and the clown seem to occupy a privileged position and to have a definite role to play in the men's society. Whether this also applies to the women of the *elima* is not known (p. 216). 538 564 [515] [522]

[P. 244-C]

mutually dependent and equally important role 224
in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Arch- 476
ery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a 621
familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, 562
with the cooperation of two or three men. It is 184
not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close coopera- 184
tion and lack of specialization, is associated 554
with a more egalitarian political system than 561
that of the archers. While Schebesta described 224
an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful line- 621
age heads, Putnam vigorously denies the exis- [114]
tence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 578 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p.247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads. Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

554 881 The fact that men go through the not inconsiderable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

555 224 Male status depends primarily on skill in the hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by individual exploits such as elephant hunting. [439] Among certain bands elephant hunting is a specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do so. [825] This compulsion may have arisen in part by virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

224 825 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954, [P. 247-B]

[p. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association. 114 186 881 [554] • [177]

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

of conversation. Both by their conversation and their behavior they showed that they were well aware of the benefit of this training for the children. The older men talked of ordeals that their "fathers" had experienced (apparently without reference to any villager *nkumbi*) in order to make them into men and hunters (both terms were used). They were always critical of any sign of excessive harshness on the part of the villager instructors and protected their children from it. But, on the other hand, the fathers showed no sympathy for a boy who could not endure the normal rigors of camp life and accept the routine ordeals without complaint, and it will be remembered that the boy who became ill himself insisted on returning to his place among the other boys before he had completely recovered (Turnbull, 1957). 177 86 88

It is, at the moment, an open question whether the Mbuti respect the physical discipline of the *nkumbi* because of its effect on the boys, or because of the status it gives their children in the eyes of the villagers, under normal circumstances equating the Mbuti (at least in terms of manliness) with their fellow villager initiates. The fact that no ordeals were practiced in the forest camp is perhaps an indication that the Mbuti do not lay very much stress on the physical and mental training aspect of the *nkumbi*. These are, in any case, benefits that [554]

[P. 253 - D]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[p.44]

CHAPTER 4

The Notion of Hereditary Ownership

P C 121 648 C [186] A superficial glimpse of the Mbuti/Villager relationship in any village might well tend to confirm the belief that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for the very principles of their social organization. This is the claim of the villagers, the more sophisticated of which use a popular description of the Mbuti as "*les gens sans culture.*" The Mbuti themselves will readily admit it, and investigation will, up to a point, confirm it. But we have already witnessed one contradiction; namely, that if the situation is one of superordination, and one of total cultural dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, then the villagers would have and be able to exercise some form of political control, and they do not. Indeed there are only the most tenuous political mechanisms for relating the two groups, such as the supposition that each hunting band has a headman or chief (entitled *capita* or *sultani*) who is answerable to the village headman. C 648 The villagers accord the Mbuti headman due respect, not far different from the respect they would accord a junior headman of another village, and hold him responsible for the behavior of his P 648 band. But even supposing that the Mbuti headman had any actual 622 authority over his band, we have seen that the villagers are incapable of enforcing their will by taking either retributive or restitutive action against the band or the *capita* for fear of reprisal, and because of their very real need for the continued, if minimal, service of the Mbuti and their fear of losing even that.

P The Mbuti *capita*, in any case, is merely a village creation and car- * 177 ries no authority whatsoever and little influence among members of 622 the hunting band. The other Mbuti accord him his title when in the • 554 village, or even when in the forest, if discussing a village problem. They use him as a convenient link who can also serve as a scapegoat. Through their "chief" the other Mbuti are freed of many of the cares and considerations involved in their relationship with the village, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders. 88 561

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men. 88 561 627 554 [562]

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the 888 [157] 888 627 578 [885]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely.

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off.

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey.

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters.

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again.

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [654] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 496 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 496 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo - Kinshasa F01

sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571 121
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 621
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 554
others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438]
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

554 121 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 561 [562] Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 [648] There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 156 522 626 627 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analyst]

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

156 157 [595] particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). 554 156 593 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 554 555 157 [224] Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and [648] frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, 156 152 554 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 604 596 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

When Njobo was away from the band for a 156
number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Nor- 604
mally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but 592
also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would [554]
have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, [571]
but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not [561]
belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not 156
leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, tell- 152
ing everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he 578
told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's 554
camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's 156
net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt 554
and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when 422
his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want 578
to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This tem- 156
porarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the 554
senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his 558
arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave 627
indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and 201
talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

554 558 627 201 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, 156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al- 627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby 621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis- 648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, 554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked 156 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" 627 Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to [202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon 156 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he 554 578 152

began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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554 627 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[118] and morally, beyond the forest.
[156] In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
572 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

someone's hut.[5] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[5] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant. 621 593 578 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours. 593 593 516

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal." 593 [564]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its compostion is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 754 *177 • 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 P *177 754 554 761 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten P [683] to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

P *177 754 [182] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized *by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities."* Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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TABLE 8

621 561 554 562

FIELDS OF AUTHORITY	Nuclear Family	Youths	Hunters	Elders
1. *Economic*				
Hunting (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			△	
Gathering (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			○	
Honey collecting			△	
Exchange with village	△○			
Industry (manufacture of material possessions)	△○			
Camp supervision (in absence of the hunt)		△○		△○
2. *Ritual*				
Birth	△○			
Puberty, betrothal and marriage: the *elima*		○		○
Death: the *molimo*		△		△
3. *Legal*				
Conjugal harmony	△○			
Individual disputes (personal insults, abuse, failure to share food or property, etc.)			△○	
Group disputes (any of the former that become enlarged beyond the realm of those directly concerned)				△○

Thus distribution of authority according to age and sex is almost equal as follows:

Family:	4	Male:	12
Youths:	3	Female:	11
Hunters:	4		
Elders:	4		

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 534 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534
for old men to talk about these things. 123 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 88
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322]
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411]
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi* [551]
ka'i to." ("Come here.")

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157]
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them- [522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Massalito.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive. 593 578

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin. 593 578 554 157 [64]

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke. 578 607 276 576

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

36 this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the
[103] BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here
[101] there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the govern-
621 ment-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the
622 right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian
648 government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The
439 Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

622 Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically
554 ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the
[648] eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on
622 other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a
554 Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers
291 came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by
[648] ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to 593
have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what 584
did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Badorinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Badorinji ended 593
with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth 584
her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry 626
Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless [583]
a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and [554]
no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was 584
not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Babama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 235-C]

latter little is known in detail. Song is sometimes used when legends are told and is frequently mentioned in them. Dance and mime are even more closely connected. 53

The subject matter of Mbuti drama seems to correspond, as might be expected, with our classification of the subject matter of legends, but the former places greater emphasis on events of the day, particularly hunting. In default of detailed and accurate accounts of dramatic art and all attendant circumstances, the only generalization that seems permissible is the evident lack of interest in personal problems and a preoccupation with the maintenance of the relative status of the human (Mbuti), animal (villager), and supernatural worlds. 536 [81]

With reference to specialists in song and dance, as with other art forms, some individuals who have greater skill than others achieve a measure of renown for their skill. A mediocre hunter who is a good singer or dancer or legend teller is a far more important person than a moderate hunter who is none of these things. 555 53

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *torí* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

[p.247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

554 The fact that men go through the not inconsid-
881 erable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

• 555 Male status depends primarily on skill in the
224 hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by individual exploits such as elephant hunting.
[439] Among certain bands elephant hunting is a specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do so. This compulsion may have arisen in part by
[325] virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

224 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the
825 ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954, [p. 247-8]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

156
157 particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no in-
[595] terest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*).
554 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his
156 penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and
593 was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He
554 had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember
• 555 him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was
157 among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed,
[224] four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the
[648] hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However,
156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or
152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him
554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of
604 children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the
596 same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

763 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be
761 a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest."
[765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred
[555] the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up
[829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said.
[126] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we
[768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they
[152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he
[828] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

[p. 247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

When Njobo was away from the band for a
number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

554 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent
558 cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké
627 said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit
201 [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months,
156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al-
627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby
621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis-
648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp,
554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked
156 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?"
627 Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to
[202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon
554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he
578
152

began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill

575 561 88

[554] [224]

[P. 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

575 to status in the band and the fact that young
561 men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed
88 particular prowess as hunters may take a prom-
[554] inent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence
[224] of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 With regard to the proceedings of the associ-
796 ation, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 The word *molimo* is used to denote the asso-
[192] ciation, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-B]

[p. 244-c]

mutually dependent and equally important role in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Archery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, with the cooperation of two or three men. It is not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes. 224 472 621 562 184

3. The net hunt, demanding close cooperation and lack of specialization, is associated with a more egalitarian political system than that of the archers. While Schebesta described an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful lineage heads, Putnam vigorously denies the existence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers. 184 554 561 284 621 [114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *bavaza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpera* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *bavaza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

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181 the economic and political life, and even in the religious life of the
611 Mbuti, who are supremely concerned with the present.

The effective kinship terminology at once reflects the situation,
601 which only becomes confused when any attempt is made to relate the terms to their usage in village society. It distinguishes generations rather than kin, and cuts indiscriminately across actual kinship boundaries. Through its effective organization of the band into age groups, it emphasizes the economic basis of band unity rather than any kinship bonds. The only terms in general usage in the Epulu region, and among the Mbuti bands to the east-west extremes of the Bira-speaking net-hunting territory, are as follows:

Grandparent:	*tata*	for address and reference
Father:	*epa*	for address and reference
Mother:	*ema*	for address and reference
Sibling:	*apua'i* or *moko*	for address and reference

(*apua'i* is used rather than *moko*, though its connotation is one of close friendship)

Child:	*miki*	for address or reference

Except at the parental level, there is generally no sex differentiation. At times it seems that *taté* is used for grandmother, *tata* for grandfather. Similarly, *amua'i* is a possible variant to denote a female sibling. But as frequently, if not more so, and more consistently, I found *tata* and *apua'i* used for either sex. Differentiation is also made, if necessary, by adding the terms used for boy or girl—*moko* or *kali*, respectively. Thus *miki a moko* is a boy child; *miki a kali* is a girl child. There is also a way of distinguishing the younger from the older: *vomia* is older, *motoa* is younger, but the Mbuti generally only couple these designations to kinship terms in direct imitation of the village usage and only in village contexts.

Bira terminology, with minor dialectal variations, is similar to the
601 above, but with the addition of terms such as *noko* for mother's brother; *kola* for father's sister; *om-epa* and *mot-epa* for the older and younger brother of the father; and *om-ema* and *mot-ema* for the older and younger sister of the mother. The Bira call an older brother *homioné*, an older sister *alwané*, and a younger brother or sister simply *moto*. The Mbuti normally refer to their father's sister simply
601 as *ema* ("mother"), but if trying to refer to her for the benefit of

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villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance. P 601

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment. P 768 602 [768] [602] P [597] [567] P [591]

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only P 582 835 61 [60] [55]

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] penousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little
[578] between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

601 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

AGE GROUPS

•561 601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system[A] and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The respon-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

• 561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[765] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

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Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561 concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627 such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561 are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582] stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765] *elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621 a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628 cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561 part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621 age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561 be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765 pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535] will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533] *molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621 prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611 would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561 which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621 times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611 hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594] lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

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621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[429] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

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same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost exclusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or [829]
a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the
future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

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Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pretending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the ensnarement of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the villagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry.

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision.

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out at

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

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nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

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effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely.

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off.

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey.

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters.

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again.

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much

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bull, 1960[1]), I shall keep the description here to those essentials 881
concerned with the structural implications of the *elima*.

The fact that it is not an individual family affair, to be concealed with shame as best possible, is doubly emphasized when two girls in a band, of quite different lineages, "see the blood" within a few days of each other. There will then be a joint *elima*. And there is also the selection by the girl or girls of the *bamelima*, the friends she likes and wants to accompany her for the duration of the festival, living with her in the *elima* hut. They will be drawn from her female age mates, [561] and may or may not already have had their own *elima*. If they have not yet seen the blood, participation in their friend's *elima* will excuse them from having one of their own when the time comes. If a girl sees the blood, and a close friend thinks she is about to see it as well, the *elima* will be delayed, perhaps for several weeks.

As with birth, this life-cycle crisis does not evoke any sense of need 881
for urgent ritual action, protective or otherwise. Its significance is of 182
a different order. It is regarded as essentially natural and therefore good. Also as with birth, the personal importance of the occasion [778]
leads to an establishment of personal contact with the forest, a reification of the direct bond between the individual and the forest world; but the social importance of puberty for the band is recognized, so the band as such takes certain measures, both social and ritual, to mark the occasion.

The girl or girls with blood are expected to keep to their homes and 881
an extension may be built onto one of their huts, or onto that of any friend or relative who is willing to house the *bamelima*. Every *elima* girl with blood has to choose a personal assistant, and the choice is left entirely to her, and again may fall on a relative, though more often it is a very close friend, of the same age group. They then invite other friends to join them in the *elima* hut, when it is ready. The assistants share such restrictions as are placed upon the *elima* girls, except that they are more free to leave the hut unaccompanied. There are few restrictions anyway, it seems, and they are mainly concerned with maintaining adherence to the schedule of instruction and activities. There are some minor food prohibitions, based on the 881
personal taboos of the *elima* girls and their assistants, which in turn 262
are based on their individual reactions to these foods as young children. If a certain food makes a child sick it may be forbidden to him until puberty, when he may try it again and abandon the taboo if it no longer affects him adversely. Sometimes, but not always, there is 881

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way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

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quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

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ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

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became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

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Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

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Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

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no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange; the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561 433

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561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting 732 and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

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224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bachelor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

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Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epulu	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Biasiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

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ARCHERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

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Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

224 56 [562] It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

224 602 The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

224 621 626 594 The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

554 121 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 56 [562] Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 [648] There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 156 522 626 627 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analysis]

When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 621 *Marriage*

As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 584 574 571 561 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass. The third, probably the most important structurally, is the interfamily visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns, each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 584 574 [591] If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands, it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial exchange, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 584 561 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-

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tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary 584
complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level 561
of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band 628
where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of 591
whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict.

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the 628
balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, 591
this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only 583
called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation.

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily 628
adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic 582
strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue 583
that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue [561]
is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem-

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222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the inter-
[821] mediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

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Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

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533 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or
765 female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more impor-
462 tance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the
881 concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the
765 contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of con-
182 cern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death,
181 but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are
[561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 761
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

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765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

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CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 602 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 601 593 [561] We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[114] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

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of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

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602 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think
• 561 in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionaliza-
121 tion of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and
561 only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and
562 *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the inter-
462 dependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines.
[224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during
[222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to
[193] indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *taté* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali*.

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group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter 602 621 561 121 term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apua'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

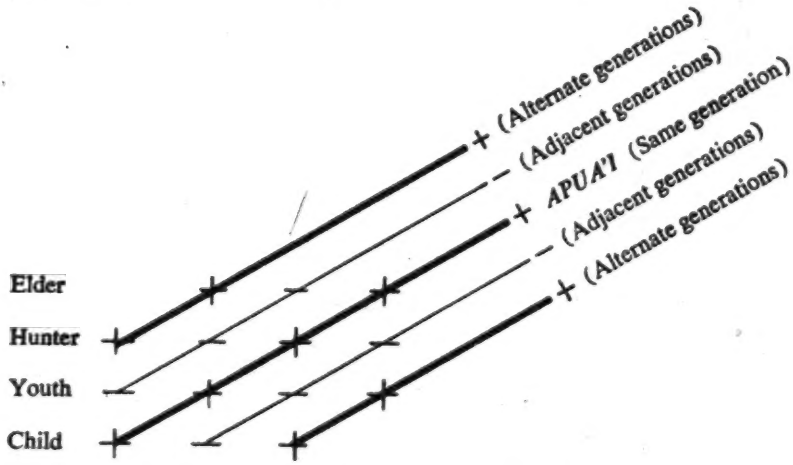
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between
121 *f/s* and *mb/zs*.
561 *b/z* and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative
571 briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential
593 of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

602 Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick
121 lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points
561 at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the cor-
593 respondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by 131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, [192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep- 778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any measure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the diverse Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

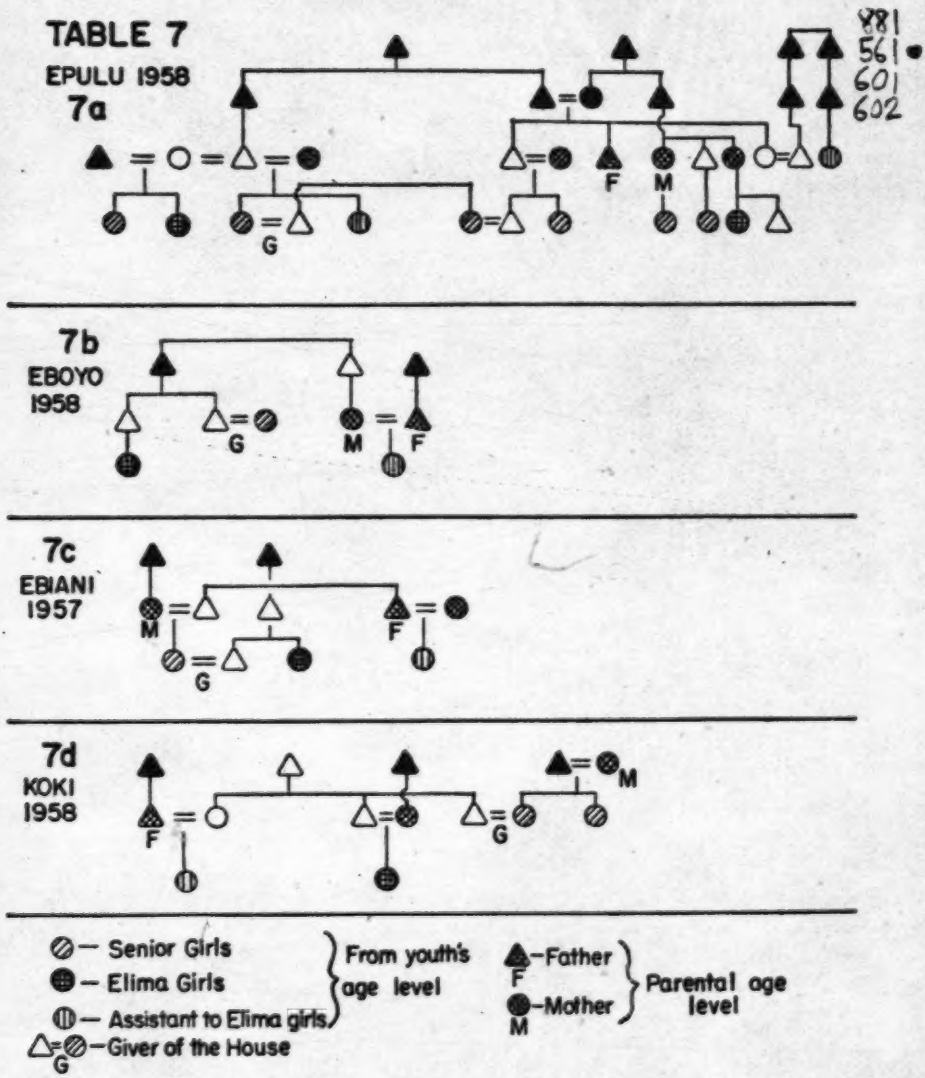


TABLE 7a–d *elima* participation

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 8

621 561 554 562

FIELDS OF AUTHORITY	Nuclear Family	Youths	Hunters	Elders
1. *Economic*				
Hunting (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			△	
Gathering (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			○	
Honey collecting			△	
Exchange with village	△○			
Industry (manufacture of material possessions)	△○			
Camp supervision (in absence of the hunt)		△○		△○
2. *Ritual*				
Birth	△○			
Puberty, betrothal and marriage: the *elima*		○		○
Death: the *molimo*		△		△
3. *Legal*				
Conjugal harmony	△○			
Individual disputes (personal insults, abuse, failure to share food or property, etc.)			△○	
Group disputes (any of the former that become enlarged beyond the realm of those directly concerned)				△○

Thus distribution of authority according to age and sex is almost equal as follows:

Family:	4	Male:	12
Youths:	3	Female:	11
Hunters:	4		
Elders:	4		

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

7

The Play World of the BaMbuti

181 IN THE FOREST life appears to be free and easy, happy-go-lucky, with a certain amount of perpetual disorder as a result. But in fact, beneath all that there *is* order and reason; reaching everywhere is the firm, controlling hand of the forest itself.

861 If individual responsibility and authority are shunned and dis-
• 561 persed in other aspects of Pygmy life, as in the maintenance of law
601 and order, a similar pattern appears in the upbringing of children. It is no accident that a child calls everyone in the same age group as his parents "father" or "mother"; those still older are called "grandparent." Those of the same age as himself he refers to by a

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese,* the Great Ones— 765
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123]
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 P 583 462 [581] P [601] [561]

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583

Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593

He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

Z 186 563 581 P 581 P Z 186 266 291 173

ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

. . . .

Z 563 881 P 177 881

In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

Z P 561

The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

which occurred during its period of isolation. This not only forms a strong bond between the pygmies and their hosts but it gives them a formal sequence of age grades in their own society. There are no special scarifications or other insignia for each class; it is a common experience to hear one person asking another, when strangers meet, "What class were you in? I am a Hurricane," and so forth, just like Harvard alumni asking each other what class they were in, and whom they knew, over a drink.

Pygmy Locomotion

The pygmies are very expert at getting about through the forest, and especially at moving swiftly through the thick undergrowth that a white man would have to chop down with a machete before he could enter. To a Negro, a white man trying to get through seems clumsy. To a pygmy a Negro seems clumsy. Schebesta observes that the small size of the pygmies makes them better adapted to locomotion in the forest than the larger Negroes and whites.[1]

The pygmies jump over fallen logs, and make their way using hands and feet—hands to toss dead branches and trunks aside. They can actually run through this tangle, and while so doing they sometimes pick up fallen logs and throw them so they will crash at a distance, to mislead pursuers, or game which they are stalking.

They are also very expert at climbing; the children practice this from babyhood. Their technique is far from simian, but a widely distributed method, similar in principle to that of a lumberjack. The climber cuts two

[1] Schebesta, P., *Revisiting My Pygmy Hosts*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1936, pp. 78-79.

62 571 561 [888]

Government.—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 888 [626]

A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888]

Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] [562]

In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594

Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological

[P. 334-B]

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 994 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[P. 335-A]

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P.176-D]

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, 512
with the exception of termite hunting which is 222
conducted at whatever time of the day or night
termites are found to be swarming.

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninter- 844
rupted throughout the year, except when camp [512]
is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant
on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these
occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account
that birth arouses the least public interest. The 844
band welcomes each birth gladly but at the 621
same time accepts it as no more than its due.
The wives of its menfolk are expected to pro- [562]
duce children; it is their primary function in the
eyes of both the band and their husbands, and
even in their own eyes.

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual 842
blood is an important factor in conception 833
(Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the [841]
connection between coition and conception
(1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hear-
ing the opinion expressed that repeated coition
would hasten the hour of birth.

[P. 177-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

P Z 575

P Z [MX]

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

P Z 575 114 [562] •

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

P Z 575 346 534

[P. 183-D]

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z [178]

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

P 575

[P. 184-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-C]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange.

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

P 575
Z 575 596 534 [535]
P 2 [533]
P 2 [562] [858]

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[p. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [p.212-A]
62 In a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [765]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 825
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.

562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
578 monial squabble may well become enlarged
627 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
• 562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P 231-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, 578
listening and making loud comments, is not 622
insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute 562
among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions.

Apart from the driving of the incestuous 627
youth from the camp, there is no record of even 684
temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere.

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

[NET HUNTERS]

614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 562 [262] The second kind of taboo mentioned by Putnam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this [825] [823] difference is probably connected with the association between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patriclan or gens.

[P. 239-B]

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
486 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P 244-B]

[p. 244-c]

mutually dependent and equally important role in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Archery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, with the cooperation of two or three men. It is not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes. 224 476 621 562 184

3. The net hunt, demanding close cooperation and lack of specialization, is associated with a more egalitarian political system than that of the archers. While Schebesta described an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful lineage heads, Putnam vigorously denies the existence of even a council of elders. Further, according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers. 184 554 561 224 621 114

[p.245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562.
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

[P.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
• 562 band, then, consists of men and women. There is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more fre-
551 quently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the
[602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them-
[614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246-B]

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 508 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p. 247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[P. 256 - D]

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
(858) seem to be the non-participation of women and
children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
[885] bers of the band, the use of special songs and
(533) the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

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Mbuti

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of 88
the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we 561
are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, 88
but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be 561
able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters 627
that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, 554
and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the [562] •
equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in 888
part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elder- [157]
hood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to inter- 888
vene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and 627
often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, 578
though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter [885]
would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

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no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561
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Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epulu	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Biasiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

ARCHERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

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Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

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[562]

It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

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The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

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The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

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the ground, and any who are timid or slow get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 222 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 535 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomes*." No satisfactory translation

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of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
56 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[648] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
522 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analysis]

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

152 A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [551] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

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602 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think
561 in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionaliza-
121 tion of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and
561 only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and
• 562 *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the inter-
462 dependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines.
[224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during
[222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to
[193] indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *tatê* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali*.

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is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[8]

[8] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: *"Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'afa, bapapa, odu . . . père, grand-*

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TABLE 8

621 561 554 562

FIELDS OF AUTHORITY	Nuclear Family	Youths	Hunters	Elders
1. *Economic*				
Hunting] (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			△	
Gathering]			○	
Honey collecting			△	
Exchange with village	△○			
Industry (manufacture of material possessions)	△○			
Camp supervision (in absence of the hunt)		△○		△○
2. *Ritual*				
Birth	△○			
Puberty, betrothal and marriage: the *elima*		○		○
Death: the *molimo*		△		△
3. *Legal*				
Conjugal harmony	△○			
Individual disputes (personal insults, abuse, failure to share food or property, etc.)			△○	
Group disputes (any of the former that become enlarged beyond the realm of those directly concerned)				△○

Thus distribution of authority according to age and sex is almost equal as follows:

Family:	4	Male:	12
Youths:	3	Female:	11
Hunters:	4		
Elders:	4		

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

156 dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts.
826 Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate
[302] decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known,
156 and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed
832 her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black
302 juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cica-
304 trized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked
[361] just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

765 During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the
[283] entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a
[262] noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut
765 the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket
392 was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

765 I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this
882

was. He told me it was the *kumamolimo*, "the place of the molimo, and now that everyone was here we were going to start the festival. The food that had been collected from hut to hut was to feed the molimo, because the molimo was a hungry animal that ate a great deal. He added pointedly that it smoked a great deal too, and when I gave him several packets of cigarettes he solemnly put them with the food in the molimo basket.

About an hour later, when I was in my hut, I noticed that Makubasi and Ausu were standing outside, obviously wanting to say something. Usually they were not backward about interrupting, and I was puzzled when Ausu beckoned with his head that I should come outside. He whispered in my ear that a few of them were going off to get the molimos, as we were to start the festival that night. Masimongo, Kenge's brother-in-law, had said that he, as well as Manyalibo, wanted to bring out his molimo, and make it a doubly great festival. Half a dozen youths were waiting to see if I would go with them, but they told me that the place where the molimo lived was a long way off and we would have to run all the way and return when it was dark.

Of course I said I would go, and we started off immediately. But halfway across the camp Masimongo leaped into my way and shouted that I was not to go. For a moment there was a loud and sharp argument, most of which I could not follow. Finally Njobo, to whom everyone always listened, said that he had seen me in the forest and knew I could travel as well and as fast as the others, so that I would be safe. Masisi then objected with a shrill torrent of words, saying that the molimo was none of my business. For a moment I felt like saying I would not go, as I certainly did not want to cause any bad feeling. The others were already moving off at a run, down the path through the glade, not waiting for me.

Njobo pushed me on the shoulder and said to follow quickly, if I was sure I could keep up and would not be afraid of traveling in the

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
791 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside. 765 562

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard. 123 186 481

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo. [522]

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire. 115 123 122

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the 765

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
• 562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
539 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up, pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest"; every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which
771 every single member of the group must participate.

765 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole con-
• 562 cern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

881 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was
765 married to Ausu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Ausu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima*, and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her hus-
574 band. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives,
888 but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He
888

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese*, the Great Ones— 765
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123]
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Kondabate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end. They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night. It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

this direction and that; even her fingers each seemed to have a dance of its own. But her head was still, and her eyes were fixed on those of Kondabate. 765 562 535

At this point Kondabate handed the banja to another of the women standing nearby and led the young girls right into the center of the men's group, dancing in a close circle around the molimo fire. As they moved around, the men stood up and made room for them, and now the singing came almost entirely from the women. The men just stood and stamped and clapped and growled a bass accompaniment. The girls danced more and more wildly, but their heads and eyes were always turned toward the molimo fire, no matter how violent the body movement. After nearly half an hour the old woman, still crouching, ran into the center after the girls, and turning to face them from the far side of the fire she drove them slowly backward, back until they were lost among the others at the edge of the group. The singing was quieter, and in a few minutes it faded away altogether. Not a word was spoken. 765 562 535 533

After a short rest the singing started again, and this time there was no mistaking it—the women were leading. Manyalibo's wife picked up the banja and beat them, sharply and decisively, and the girls began the song. The men followed in obedient chorus. Once again, as the song grew faster, the old woman began to twitch until her whole body was alive with movement. Then she sprang up and came into the center of the kumamolimo alone. For an instant she stood there, and her head moved sharply from side to side. It was like the movement of a bird, keeping a wary eye open for possible foes. As she began to dance she seemed to sink slowly into the ground, her knees folding up like a concertina, her body bending at the waist; but always her head stuck out in front, jerking from side to side, eyes staring and expressionless.

She circled the fire three times, looking out and upward into the night, but unseeing; then as if satisfied that she was alone and un- [372]

765 observed she flung her head and her whole body around and faced
562 the fire directly. She was about seven or eight feet away from it. She
535 advanced slowly and cautiously, two steps forward, one step back,
533 her attention riveted on the flames. The singing was louder and faster,
372 but she refused to be hurried. At her own pace she approached closer and closer until it seemed impossible that she could stand the heat. She hesitated at the brink of the fire, her frail body gleaming with sweat, her face glowing and trembling. She made as if she was going to pounce on the fire, but whirled around at the last moment and danced quickly back to where the women were singing, watching her, eagerly and anxiously. She sat down on her haunches and accepted a steaming bowl of liko.

The singing did not stop this time but went on quietly at a slower tempo. The men made no attempt to move back closer to the fire. After about ten minutes the old lady, apparently refreshed and as full of vigor as ever, danced back into the men's circle, with Kondabate at her side. Their movements were perfectly co-ordinated, even to the twitching of their heads; as they sank down close to the
765 ground they might have been one person. But as they neared the
562 fire, again having circled it several times, the old woman sprang to
535 her feet and ran swiftly around to the far side and crouched there,
372 staring at Kondabate through the flames. They started circling once more, each keeping her eyes on the other, moving from side to side so that they were always opposite each other. But now they were closer to the fire than they had ever been and on their hands and knees they passed through the hot ashes, as though trying to reach each other through the flames.

Finally Kondabate retreated and squatted down at the edge of the circle, her body twitching just as the old woman's had done, her eyes staring and empty as she gazed at the molimo fire. The men heaped more wood on the flames which were beginning to die down.
[533] Now they were singing as loudly as the women, stamping on the

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames.

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and

765 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making
562 any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned"
562 the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the
773 women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to
[462] play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had
372 asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy
182 it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again,
533 and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

62 **Government.**—There are no chiefs,
571 councils, or any other formal govern-
561 ing bodies in a pygmy camp. In mak-
ing any decisions concerning the whole
camp, two factors are involved. The
[888] first of these is respect for older people.

561 A pygmy will always, in addressing
571 a man of an older age group in any
576 formal situation, call him "senior"; he
888 will listen respectfully to an older man
and will always obey any reasonable
orders he may give. If a younger man
[626] shows disrespect, the other members
of the camp will gang up on him and
berate him. This respect for age, and
for the opinions of wise old men, is the
basis of pygmy government.

623 Secondly, while the opinions of most
571 of the old men are respected, every
561 man in the camp is entitled to state his
[888] own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 In general it is the older and more
571 experienced men who make the deci-
561 sion, but as some of the old men are
888 considered eccentrics and freaks, little
[828] attention is paid to them. Rather, it is
an oligarchy of the more respected
among the old men, a body with no
formal membership or specific compo-
[562] sition. In their decisions the pungent
remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 PYGMY SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological
[P. 334-B]

563 582 [166] There is no reliable detailed information as to population movement, though the general opinion is that the population has remained static for some time; nor are there data on the frequency of intermarriage between Mbuti and villagers. Jadin (1936) and Costermans (1937) confirm Schebesta's (1952, 47) opinion that miscegenation is a one-way movement. A village male may take a Pygmy wife, in which case the children will be brought up in the village, but a Pygmy male will never take a villager wife. This holds equally among archers and net hunters (Putnam, 1948, 325). Information for the Aka is, as usual, conflicting and unreliable. Schweinfurth (1874) asserts that there is intermarriage between the Aka and the Mangbetu; Burrows (1898) claims that there is no such intermarriage.

Information as to the attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward miscegenation is also lacking. Schebesta says that certain northern tribes of villagers aver horror at the idea of intermarriage, but that in spite of this it takes place and is nowhere unknown. Both the Lese and the [144] Bira tribes, with which the archers and net hunters are most in contact, are considerably modified physically owing to the frequency of miscegenation (Schebesta, 1952; Geluwe, 1956), [P.161-B]

[P. 161-C]
but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the 563 •
proportion of Negro blood passed to the 582
Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), how- [144]
ever, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare.

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the 197
question of Pygmy language. Some take the 114
view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the
[602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them-
[614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P. 246-B]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

177
648
439
563

[For additional information on Villager/Mbuti relationships in which interpersonal and/or kpara/kare (artificial kin) aspects predominate, see also 608, 571, 578.]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

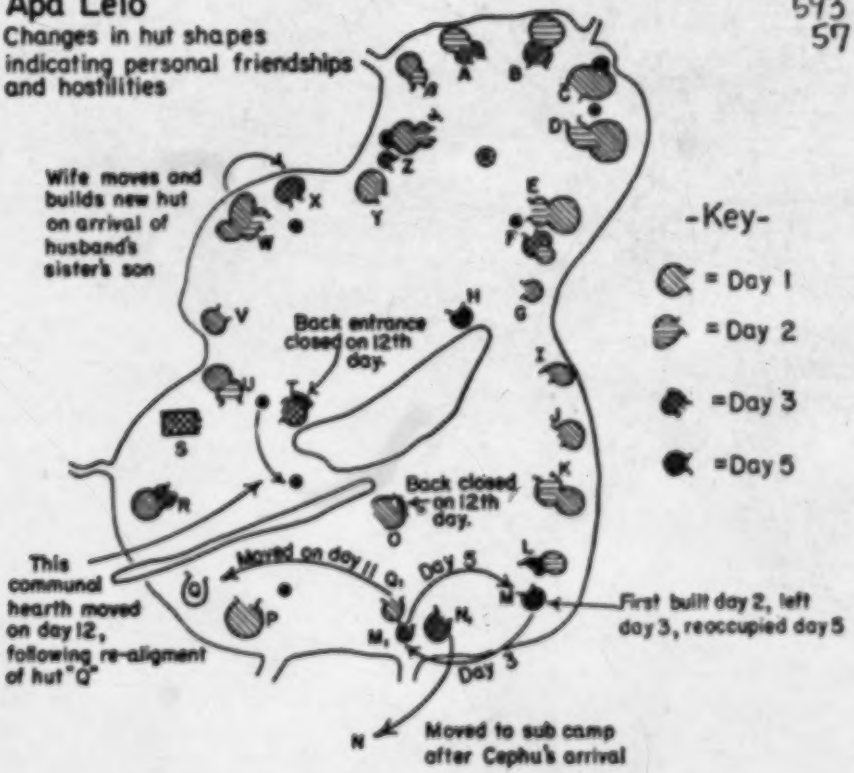
The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
593
57

Plan 7
Apa Lelo

Changes in hut shapes indicating personal friendships and hostilities



bodyguard for the new king. Such isolated 174
references indicate a long-established associa- 177
tion between the two peoples, and that the 571
original nature of the association was a military
one. Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Ward (1910), Schweinfurth (1874), and others, write of the employment of the Pygmies by the villagers as spies, scouts, mercenary soldiers, and guides. Putnam in his earlier notes mentions frequently coming across references among the older Pygmies to this relationship, which of course came to an end when the Belgian authorities stopped intertribal warfare.

Legends from the Epulu area (Turnbull, 174
1959) show scant interest in the questions of origin and history, but that here also both Pygmy and villager agree that the Pygmy is the original inhabitant of the forest and is, to a certain extent, feared and respected as such by the villager. No legends from this area of the Ituri or from any other so far reported (Schebesta, 1936b, 340; Joset, 1948, 25–56, 137–157) show that the Pygmies or villagers have any concept of the Pygmies' originating elsewhere than in this northeast corner of the Congo, nor do they reveal any doubt in the minds of these people that the Pygmies were the original inhabitants of that forest.

Socio-cultural change has been taking place 178
ever since the first villager invasions, several hundred years ago, but most rapidly in the past half century. The progress of this change can be

[P.162-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.175-D]

B
P
412

FIG. 14. Household utensils of metal, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Ax blade. A common gift made by villagers to Mbuti, nominally under their control, on the occasion of an Mbuti marriage. b. Ax, used by Mbuti mainly for the cutting of light saplings with which they make their house frames; Bira hafting.

B
P
[17]
[17]
[571]
[431]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system."

P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *kare* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

P Z 439 177 571 [114]

P Z [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. 352 [184] [516]

UTENSILS

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 412 439 [177]

[P.195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

en. The making of barkcloth and netting, and 462
the painting of designs on cloth and body, are
individual skills which are utilized for the
craftsman himself or for his immediate family.
Women living in adjoining huts sometimes ex- [476]
change their skills in body painting, exercising [571].
their art on one another.

ECONOMIC LIFE

Hunting

Like Schebesta, Putnam stresses hunting and 224
gathering as the basis of Mbuti economy. Put- 433
nam (1948, 327) also states that hunting is the 439
principal means by which the Pygmy-villager 177
relationship is maintained. Although there is [222]
little division of labor among the Mbuti them- [463]
selves, he (1948, 328) says in a sense that they
are all specialists in hunting, so there is a divi-
sion of labor between Pygmy and village groups,
the two together forming a larger economic en-
tity. The villager may do some hunting, but [171]
largely by means of traps, deadfalls, and pits.
It occupies little of his time and is not very pro-
ductive. For the Pygmy, hunting is a full-time
occupation.

[P. 201-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal [825] of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

Trade

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by 177 Putnam on the present dependency of the net [184] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent values other than mutual satisfaction. But the vil- [571] lager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.
[P. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]

alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of intervillage warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] 648 184 177 571

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

648 184 177 571 • [439)

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

621 562

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[582] [184] 621 476 184 562

[P. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1968 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were made to move about continually by the villager instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present at all times, frequently comforted their sons, apparently to the annoyance of the villagers. There was, however, no question of the savagery implied by Schebesta. During the following two months the boys were strictly disciplined. There was a process of physical training that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only one of the major purposes of the *nkumbi*, namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti fathers, however, obviously had different ideas as to how far this discipline should be carried and criticized the villagers when they carried it too far. Further, when there were no villagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite openly and showed by their speech and their behavior that they had no respect for the taboos associated with the festival. It seemed quite evident that they consciously underwent the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious significance, but because it gave them status in villager society, in which any uncircumcised youth is a laughing stock. The important thing, then, was the circumcision, for this specific purpose.

P Z 881 177

P Z 881 829 881 177

P Z [571]. •

P 881 829 177

Z 881 177

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[P 220-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Z 585 628 563 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and P 177 585 Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). P [533] [535] Further, even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 571 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P. 221-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-C]

married life free from the normal household chores. 669 57 585

Unlike Schebesta's description of passionate lovers who, as married couples, in no way exhibit their affection in public, both premarital and postmarital sexual relations among the net hunters seem equally open, if not quite equally free. Flirtations among unmarried boys and girls of the same band, providing again they do not openly flout exogamic convention and do not result in childbirth, arouse no interest among the adults other than casual gossip. Married women, while as incorrigibly flirtatious as ever, are not expected to have sexual intercourse with any but their husbands. On the other hand, no social convention prevents the husband from having sexual intercourse with unmarried girls, though he does so with care to avoid unpleasantness with his wife. 836 837

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives. P 593

DIVORCE

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost certainly involves the village patrons, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride. P 586 P Z [177] [571] • Z [563]

[P 221-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the others, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 476 361 578 621 [P 229-A]

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

P Z [428]

Z [628]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, in some form, is not lacking among the villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumbi* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P 229-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.229-C]

lage for any length of time, as when the villager needs help in the cutting of new plantations, then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly awaited by the villagers.

P Z 535 177 571

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, when there is a case of poaching by one band within the territory of another, instead of one lineage head or "elder" consulting the other (the process described by Schebesta for the archers), the bands probably just inform the villagers involved and leave it to them to settle.

P 628 648 Z 648

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, there is no question of any one Mbuti representing his lineage or band; such of the more important hunters as are available, and usually a number of the younger men and even older boys, come in a body to argue their case together. The villager is always at a slight disadvantage. While the Mbuti can easily move and find another village patron, it is not so easy for a villager to find more Mbuti.

P 648 Z 648 563

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 177 571 574 563 571

Legal System

There are no data available on property law, and there is no clear distinction between collective and private property, as far as can be learned from the material that is available. Most items of personal possession, except used barkcloth, change hands at some time or another, temporarily or permanently, with or without any immediate exchange. There is certainly no scale of values by which any item of property may be assessed in relation to another. The question of whether personal goods, such as cooking utensils for the women or weapons and hunting nets for the men, are P 421 P 422

[P 229-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

• 571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
578 monial squabble may well become enlarged
627 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
(593) disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
626 putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P 231-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.251-A]

ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held only during the *nkumbi*.

Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band is visiting a village, it may come down to the main meeting place in the evening and dance. The villagers expect it and regard it as one of their forms of entertainment, though they say they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

When the two groups meet on both festive and ordinary occasions they keep apart from each other. There is no leisure activity in which they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti camp beside the village, on the edge of the plantation where the forest begins. This physical disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4.6 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 29 $\frac{1}{a}$

A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

361 184 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer
• 571 camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of
602 people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The
887 elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

$\frac{1}{a}$, /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 30 $\frac{1}{A}$

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.
824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women,
but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
571
352 $\frac{1}{A}$ ./Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 *
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 571 177 still Ngoma's Mbuti. Ngoma himself said he had no objections to the Puemi, or any other of his Mbuti, hunting for other villagers while he was away, so long as they still acknowledged him as their *kpara*, or owner. He was wealthy enough to have no economic need of the Mbuti, but he was greatly concerned with his status, which was, he said, determined largely by the number of Mbuti who called him *kpara*. Certainly status was an important consideration for the villagers, and ownership, effective or otherwise, of a large number of Mbuti would add to it, but there were few who could afford to ignore the economic aspect of the relationship as could Ngoma.

C 571 177 608 C [554]

C 608 571 177 428 P 571 177 The situation then becomes seriously complicated for the field worker who is trying to disentangle the system of ownership. Any villager will claim hereditary rights over even the most recent newcomer. But he will also claim rights over the Mbuti who have left him, and in some instances over those that he would have inherited from his father had they not left his father. As hereditary ownership can be transferred by adoption with compensation (a sum in cash or goats, and a promise of a share of any meat that falls into the net of the Mbuti transferred, or of that of his senior male descendants) and as the "clan" names also sometimes become adopted in this way, any attempt to discover a system of hereditary ownership becomes doubly hazardous, if indeed such a system exists except in theory.

P 571 177 C 571 177 608 P [614] [621] The Epulu situation is perhaps more complicated than others because most of the Mbuti in that band are claimed by Bira villagers, whereas the band itself is in Ndaka territory and has formed effective links with both Ndaka and Bira villagers, offering forest foodstuffs to the local villagers, who are mostly Ndaka, and performing some service for their more remote Bira owners. In this way, of course, they maintain two sources of supply of village goods. But the actual distribution of the clans that contributed to the composition of the Epulu band, as shown in Table 2,[1] indicates how ineffective the principle of hereditary ownership is, in fact. The same kind of picture can be drawn for most net-hunting bands, and when we come to consider the forest world, among both net-hunters and archers we shall find a situation that militates against any effective stable and durable exchange relationships between Mbuti and villagers, particularly if based on the principle of unilineal descent.

The myth of hereditary ownership, then, does not seem to provide a much more effective means of control for the villagers than does the creation of mythical but comparable political systems. But it is not totally ineffective.

[1] [see page 223 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 571 602 563 608 P 571 602

use the appropriate kinship terminology and follow the appropriate behavior patterns. It is difficult to see what attracts the Mbuti girl to such a union except the politically advantageous position in which it places her. Unfortunately, little is known of the extent to which she stays in the village, or to which she takes advantage of her ability to slip into the forest unpursued and rejoin her band from time to time.

C 563 177 571 608

However, this is considered a selfish and antisocial way of attracting Mbuti adherents, and it is only countenanced by other villagers if it is done because the villager concerned is unable, for one reason or another, to acquire a villager wife. More generally the villagers try to introduce the Mbuti into their own kinship framework by insisting not only on the myth of hereditary ownership, but by positing a parallel relationship, a *kpara* referring to his Mbuti as his "children," but not allowing them sibling status with his real children.

C 563 608 582 571 P 177 571 582

As their "father" he then claims the right to concern himself with all their domestic problems, and most particularly with marriage. For an Mbuti boy to marry an utterly unrelated Mbuti girl owned by his *kpara's* brother, for instance, would be considered by the villagers as incestuous, and prohibited. It could only take place if either the boy or girl changed allegiance. Marriage between the Mbuti, then, becomes a matter of major concern to the villagers, who will not only provide all the necessary ritual for the Mbuti but who will also have to negotiate between themselves, just as if it were a village marriage, the *kpara* of the groom paying appropriate wealth to the *kpara* of the bride. In every respect the *kpara* act as parents, except that it is as if they were considering a less important line of children by some very inferior wife. In 1957–58 the wealth paid by one villager to another for an Mbuti wife for his own Mbuti "child" was about a tenth of what he would have to pay for a villager wife for his real child.

C [583]

C 608 582 583 571 P 177 582 571 581

The matter is one of some concern, because a wealthy villager might "own" or claim to own a hundred or more Mbuti, and his only assurance against bankruptcy is an insistence upon his hereditary rights over the offspring of his male Mbuti, and his right to demand wealth from other villagers whose Mbuti married his own Mbuti girls. Considerable conflict arose between villagers as a result, because while the Mbuti accepted the feasting and their share of the wealth, they did not accept any of the obligations, and according to their own custom of betrothal and marriage they did not consider the marriage final until a child had been born. At any time before then, without asking leave of anyone, Mbuti or villager, they were free to sepa-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective *kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

control of the specifically village supernatural. Indeed the villagers are obliged to do this, in consonance with the rest of their system, for to admit someone to the kinship system without admitting them to the ancestral cult would be a contradiction in terms. But not so for the Mbuti. The most sacred of the village institutions is completely divorced, in the Mbuti system, from any other adopted village institution. It is, like the other institutions, adopted for what it offers in itself, and if it is related to anything, it is related only to the economic aspect of the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.53]

CHAPTER 5

The Notion of Supernatural Control

THE VILLAGE SUPERNATURAL

We have already seen something of villager participation in Mbuti marriage arrangements, but only from the aspect of kinship. From this point of view the villagers hope to be able to control, to some extent, the movement and residence patterns of the Mbuti, and to support the myth of hereditary ownership. From another point of view, however, villager participation in the marriage of their Mbuti necessarily introduces the Mbuti to the village magico-religious system, through the ritual that consecrates the marriage as well as through the absorption of the Mbuti, in this way, into the village kinship structure. It might also be pointed out in passing that as far as the villagers are concerned, marriages between their Mbuti are of as much political importance as their own marriages, in regulating relationships between one village and another, one segment of the tribe and another. Insofar as our primary concern is with the Mbuti, however, this political aspect does not directly concern us here.

C 648 563 571 582 626 121 [608] P 177* 571 648 121 C [628]

Marriage is only one village ritual adopted by the Mbuti, and in considering any such adoption we have to keep in mind the structural aspects of ritual in the village social system and, in particular, the relationship between ritual and kinship. It is in light of structure that the villager side of the Mbuti/Villager relationship is comprehensible, the attempt to include the Mbuti within the village framework being an attempt to secure some measure of control over them. That is not to say that the motive of control is necessarily responsible for the inclusion, but it is certainly openly acknowledged by villagers and has some bearing on their attitudes.

C 563 571 648 121 602 P 121 571 648* 177*

At the same time we must be aware that on the Mbuti side there is the knowledge that the villagers are seeking to gain control. There is a considered element of risk involved in accepting certain institu-

P 648 177* 121 571

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tions, even in the strictest village context, but it is outweighed by what at first seems little more than a lively desire to have all the advantages of village life with none of the disadvantages. Again, it is only through an examination of the interrelationship of the institutions adopted by the Mbuti, and their relationship with the indigenous Mbuti social system, that we can arrive at any true understanding of the apparent process of acculturation.

The attempt by the villagers to assert supernatural control is structurally the most significant, for it involves elements with which the Mbuti have no institutionalized means of dealing. Political pressure the Mbuti can counter by changing allegiance; economic pressure can also be countered, by reverting to the always available pure hunting and gathering economy; as we shall see in the next section, pressure through absorption into the village kinship system is repelled quite simply by the maintenance of an opposed kinship system. However, the Mbuti have no magic with which to counter magic, no witchcraft or sorcery with which to counter witchcraft and sorcery. They do have belief with which to counter belief, but it is part of the belief of both Mbuti and villagers that in a war between the gods, no man can safely predict the outcome. It is in this situation that the villagers do manage to effect some extent of control, but it is also in this context that they come up against the ultimate bedrock of opposition.

Let us look at the various ways in which the magico-religious life of the villagers impinges upon that of the Mbuti, and the extent to which it exerts some measure of control over the hunters and gatherers. Fully recognizing that a clear division of the subject matter is difficult, if not impossible, to make, we nonetheless have to attempt such a division for the purposes of discussion. There is a great deal of overlapping, but nonetheless at the extremes, in this case, the division used here between magic and religion is legitimate.

By *magic* I refer to activities involving, on the part of the African, villager or Mbuti, a conviction in the pragmatic relationship between a cause and an effect which, in terms of Western science, is not demonstrable. The term in its usual sense has meaning only as far as we are concerned, for as far as the Africans here are concerned, magical activities are as scientifically valid as any other. They may not always be able to explain the exact way in which the effect is related to the cause, any more than everyone who drives a motorcar can explain the mechanism. Indeed, the corresponding term "medicine"

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Tumbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to village boys. In some cases the Mbuti's *kpara* may choose him as *karé* to his own son, and in other cases he may see some advantage in having his Mbuti form a *karé* pact with another villager, as this forms an economic and political link, then, between the two villagers. It seems that, generally, *karé* brotherhood is formed between Mbuti and their *kpara's* patrikin, however. It is believed that this places the two in an indissoluble politico-economic relationship for the rest of their lives, a relationship of subordination as far as the Mbuti is concerned, and one that will persist into the afterlife of the same individuals.

The villager concepts of afterlife are not clearly defined, but it is accepted without question that individuals continue to exist after death and may, if qualified by initiation and by adherence throughout life to the tribal code of behavior, join the ancestors, who live together much as they did in the present world, and continue to concern themselves with the present world. It is also accepted without question that there must be Mbuti in the afterworld, just as there are in the present. If one asks why must there be Mbuti, the invariable answer is in terms of the economic dependence of the villagers upon the Mbuti in the present world, the assumption being that the same needs will exist in the afterworld. But the economic relationship is the most easily expressed and recognized, however mistakenly, and is not necessarily therefore the most important. The political relationship is also recognized, though not quite so easily expressed because of the greater incompatibility of the systems of the two peoples. But there is also a ritual relationship which is certainly as powerful as the others, if not more so, and it is just as much a part of the *karé* pact as are the economic and political aspects.

Karé partners are expected to trade with each other, though not necessarily exclusively. This allows for the formation of *karé* brotherhood between individuals who are not in a *kpara*/Mbuti relationship, and is an attempt on the part of the villager to regularize the situation should his Mbuti join a band trading with a neighboring village. To have a *kpara* in one village and a *karé* in another, strategically chosen, is considered equally advantageous by Mbuti and villager. As far as the Mbuti is concerned it provides him with two groups of people who feel under some kind of an obligation toward him, and who need him. As far as the *kpara* is concerned it gives him someone he can effectively claim against should his Mbuti decide to trade in that direction. As far as the villager *karé* is concerned it is another Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to his credit, increasing his prestige and also somewhat increasing his trading opportunities. The trade is mainly thought of in terms of meat and labor on the side of the Mbuti, village foods, clothes and tobacco on the side of the villager. A fairly friendly relationship does sometimes develop between two *karé*, who, regardless of the status differentiation, undergo the whole *nkumbi* together, suffering the same ordeals side by side, and are perhaps more united by age than they are separated by the status differentiation.

The political aspects of *karé* brotherhood reinforce the economics, not only serving as a basis for compensation against a migrant Mbuti, but also for extending the *karé* relationship to link the Mbuti's *kpara* with the village boy's father. The relationship is primarily between individuals, but it nonetheless creates felt obligations between the families involved, and one family of villagers may invoke the help of another family in a dispute, through an Mbuti *karé* link. The kinship ramifications of *karé* brotherhood are still far from clear from the village point of view, and it seems that the introduction of the Mbuti to the system may have somewhat disorganized the traditional system. For the Mbuti there is no connection between *karé* and kinship, and effectively there can be none among the villagers. If there were, then the formation of a *karé* tie between *kpara* and their own Mbuti would be incestuous, and the formation of such ties with unrelated families, conceived of as a sibling relationship, would effectively prohibit marriage in that direction and create an impossibly confused dual kinship system. Yet *karé* do refer to each other sometimes as "brother," and take advantage of their thus extended kinship relations.

The religious aspects of *karé* brotherhood are far less easy to define, and far less easy for the investigator to determine because they are seldom, if ever, discussed. I have never heard such a discussion, unless I instigated it, except on the occasion of the death of a villager. On the death of an Mbuti it is generally only the other aspects of the *karé* relationship that are discussed, involving liability for funerary expenses, compensation for outstanding obligations, divination of the cause of death. But when a villager dies the Mbuti *karé* is introduced into the heart of the funerary ritual, having to perform divers functions such as beating the villager's wives, leading an attack upon all close kin of the deceased, conveniently clustered together for the purpose, "to drive away evil," as the villagers explained it among themselves and to me. The Mbuti *karé* is also made responsible for providing certain foods for the deceased and, I believe, certain herbs

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with which the body of the villager is treated before burial. Owing to my somewhat peripheral relationship with the villagers I was not allowed to witness the more intimate rituals when the *karé* Mbuti was closeted with the deceased on one occasion for about three hours, on another occasion for one hour. Nor was I able to elicit much from the Mbuti, who said that they knew nothing about it, and only did what they were told to do by the villagers. When asked what that was, they repeated the above information, which was as much as I had gathered from the villagers, and no more except a few colorful and imaginative details about the appearance and odor of the corpse. This being clearly something better investigated from the villager side, I did not press the matter. It seems sufficiently well established, however, that the ritual connection between *karé* is considerable as seen by the villagers, and this was borne out on one occasion when an important Bira noble died and the entire funeral ceremony, including the burial, was held up for a day and a half because of the non-appearance of the dead man's Mbuti *karé*. On this occasion the Mbuti eventually arrived on the run carrying a spear, loudly shouting his complaints at being brought from the forest for such stupidity (again the term *mbafu*). There were several hundred villagers assembled, and the Mbuti ran through them to the compound of the deceased. He evidently knew in advance what was expected, and broke his way in to the closed hut where the widows were wailing. There was great concern among the villagers because he took his spear with him, and they said he might kill the women, but they did nothing to prevent him. Happily there was a full complement of widows at the subsequent burial.

The villagers recognize that they cannot force the Mbuti *karé* to fulfill their obligations by political or economic pressure, but they now have another weapon. By the act of ritual circumcision, according to tribal lore, the Mbuti are placed in a direct relationship with the tribal village ancestors, and by the *karé* bond each Mbuti is placed in a direct relationship with the protective spirits that look after the welfare of their respective individual villager partners. Every step of the *nkumbi* reinforces the authority of the tribal ancestors, through the supernatural powers at their disposal, over the Mbuti as well as over the villager initiates. Failure to fulfill "kinship" or *karé* obligations on the part of the Mbuti cannot be dealt with by the legal mechanisms available to the villagers, but it can now be countered by supernatural sanctions. Villager lore defines the Mbuti responsibili-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1988) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatu.al sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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oughly as possible, it seems that among both Bira and Ndaka, and I believe also among the Lesé, death is believed to put fellow clansmen of the deceased in great danger from the *keti*, or evil spirits. The object of the *molimo* is twofold, then; it must help the deceased on his way, giving him what protection it can, and it must protect the living, who will be in a state of ritual danger throughout the period of mourning.

During that period the *molimo* meets regularly, at nighttime, in the house of the senior surviving member of the clan, in whose possession the *tete* is held. Only adult male clansmen are admitted, and the sound of the *tete* is the audible evidence of the invisible presence of their totemic guardian spirit. Specially prepared food is offered to the spirit, and the rest is eaten by the men. No women are allowed to participate in any way, even by cooking the food, according to all informants. However, I had been told the same thing about the Mbuti and found it to be different, and do not accept this information without some reservation. It would seem, though, that women generally are excluded from the *molimo* of the villagers, and indeed it really is no concern of theirs.

During the proceedings, which may last an hour or so, the men wail and call out the name and/or the kinship term of address of the deceased; his praises are recited and he is commended to the ancestral spirits. At the same time, the praises of the surviving clan members are similarly recited, and mention is made of the way in which they have upheld tribal lore and observed all the rules of clan exogamy, and have increased the number of attendant Mbuti. Continued protection for the living is requested, particularly for the period of mourning. Apparently no Mbuti take part in this part of the ceremony, though there seemed to be some disagreement over this and my impression was that the associated Mbuti are not prohibited from attending, but effectively seldom, if ever, do.

Upon the death of an Mbuti the *kpara* will not only oversee the burial and funerary ceremonies and divination, he will also want to hear announced the calling together of the men of the *molimo*. Sometimes he will leave it at that, but if the Mbuti continue to stay in the village and hold any *molimo* meetings in their village camp, the *kpara* may attend one or two meetings. It is very noticeable that when he does, the meeting runs a completely different course, centering around some erotic dancing by the younger men and a small amount of singing. The *molimo* trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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The molime trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *tete*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

P It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers
685 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing
648 what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara*
571 and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti
121 are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But what-
C ever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be
648 seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that
571 particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp
P of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a
[361 society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a vil-
621] lage camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

P The situation becomes more understandable in light of the ex-
829 pressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They
648 refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating.
571 Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and
P fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part
[224] of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse,
P but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one
[825] merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

C Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdepen-
439 dence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of eco-
648 nomic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest,
121 powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 *
Mbuti
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behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *bawa* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *bawa*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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[P108-D]

4. Mbuti girl helps village woman pound manioc in shade of plantain tree.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti,
Congo-Kinshasa F01

[P.108-F]

PC 342 462 291 571 142

6. Mbuti men help villager build a new house, having cut and fetched the saplings for him.

7. Mbuti youths, in clothes provided by their Ipara, are fed as part of their "payment."

PC 571 462 462 291 142

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[427] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pretending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the ensnarement of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the villagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry. 857 224 868 [231]

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision. 857 868

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out at 857 571 561 857 868

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [170]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger
Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and
so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even
when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken sap-
lings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the vil-
lage camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the
forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with
the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few
yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby
and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have
left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off
in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find them-
selves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and
stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around
looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women
then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to
go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is re-
ferred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality
were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense
personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its char-
acter as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But
it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is sim-
ply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-
operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly
formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 561 571 866 182 quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

881 881 594 836 182

881 602 Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

881 561 571 602 [578] Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

881 86 [561] Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 439 C 439 608 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *karé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P 439 *177 This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *karé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

P 439 621 • 571 C [439] Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[2]

P 439 433 184 224 In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

C [648] [2] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti; the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[5] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[5] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions concerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is consid- [192]
ered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly ("*apa ndaso aké sinana*"). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: "*kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi*") and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly [156] the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 621 *Marriage*

As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 584 574 571 561 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass. The third, probably the most important structurally, is the interfamily visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns, each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 584 574 [591] If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands, it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial exchange, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 584 561 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial, and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going elsewhere to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage relationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

Karé/Karé

Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individuals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initiations which take place periodically (every three years for the past twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initiation camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, although any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed. They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

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throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

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for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

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Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

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to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

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539 rest I put in a place where the tree had two arms [i.e., in a fork]. I
222 sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, but I shall give it all to my
571 *kpara*." I came down.
439

"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" My *kpara* looks at the basket.

"Ah! My master. I came to search for my honey, but there is only a little of it. It is a bad year. It is heavy work. You must go back with my honey; if I get any more I shall come with it."

The *kpara* took my honey with him and returned to the village to say that he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity! [*Ndamdama nda'e!* or *Mbafu yaké!*] When he had gone I quickly climbed up above and I collected all the honey from the place I had put it, and I came down to return to the camp and share it with all my relatives. I walked, I walked, I walked. I arrived at the big river. Darkness began to come. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?" I climbed up a big tree and lay there.

539 Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke up. A little
222 way off I saw two firebrands. "Ah! Who is walking in the middle of
776 the night like that, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit." I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice. "Ah! My child, where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very, very old woman. I was surprised. "Ha! Grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost the trail."

I remained quiet, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree. It was truly an evil spirit, but he had changed into my grandmother. I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"Yes, Grandmother. I am here. I was searching for honey, but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Oh, child, you have done badly, for when you did not return I thought you were dead and I left camp to search for you, and I have found you well. You have done very badly toward me. Give me my honey."

"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, I, myself. We shall return together."

"Nonsense! You are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with my honey. Give it." I was afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit. I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more." I threw down more. "Give me more."

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

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of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

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601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology, [621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band. [648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance [182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest. [778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother [829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevè.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

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elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

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would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between *f/s* and *mb/zs*.

b/z and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

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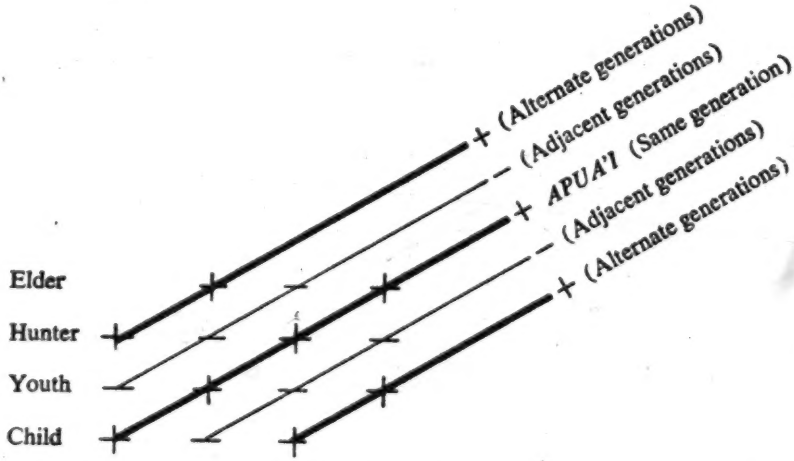
Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the correspondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

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with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

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P 121 *177 • 571 C 121 177 571 in the Mbuti/Villager situation. The basis of the proximity and distance elements does not rest on kinship, and the relationship is as much between the two groups as it is between individuals, otherwise the situation conforms to Radcliffe-Brown's model quite clearly—*viz.* (1952, p. 95): "The show of hostility, the perpetual disrespect, is a continual expression of that social disjunction which is an essential part of the whole structural situation, but over which, without destroying or even weakening it, there is provided the social conjunction of friendliness and mutual aid."

In the Mbuti/Villager situation the relationship appears to be symmetrical and permissive, though both sides do occasionally take offense, the village side even sometimes taking counteraction. The ineffectiveness of taking offense or action, however, only serves to heighten the characteristic "social disjunction," and there is no doubt that beneath the display of hostility and disrespect there is cooperation, and even considerable amity. Considering the completely opposed value systems of the two worlds, this is, indeed, the only way in which the two peoples could meet and still retain a separate identity. The reasons for the meeting taking place at all, as we have already seen, are circumstantial—the historical invasion of the forest by the villagers, and their use of the Mbuti as guides; the continued parasitism of the Mbuti upon the villagers long after the original need for cooperation had gone; the contemporary mutual convenience of economic exchange; sheer territorial propinquity. These reasons do not lead automatically or easily to a structured relationship, particularly when the values of the two peoples are so divergent, so while a form of joking relationship helps to stabilize the alliance, maintaining the combination of Radcliffe-Brown's "conjunctive and disjunctive components," it is not by itself enough.

C 563 177 608 881 439 P *177 439 621 We have seen the methods by which the villagers have sought to further stabilize the situation, through a formal economic-exchange system, a fictive parallel-kinship system, and through introduction to village supernatural sanctions by establishment of magico-religious bonds through *karé* blood brotherhood and *nkumbi* initiation. Any one of these, had it worked, would have reduced the Mbuti to subordination, yet this plainly has not been done. The defense of the Mbuti has lain in their own indigenous forest system, which works not only to maintain internal cohesion but also to maintain the utmost possible structural distance from the village world while allowing a minimal amount of "mutually convenient" economic exchange.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 621 561 613 sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it P 621 613 means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary *177 ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti • 57 group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes 563 over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided 613 hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The 177 only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

P 3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, 621 is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any mea- *177 sure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be 563 dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to 177 look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves P [186] to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

P 186 4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with 577 death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

P 621 561 613 are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

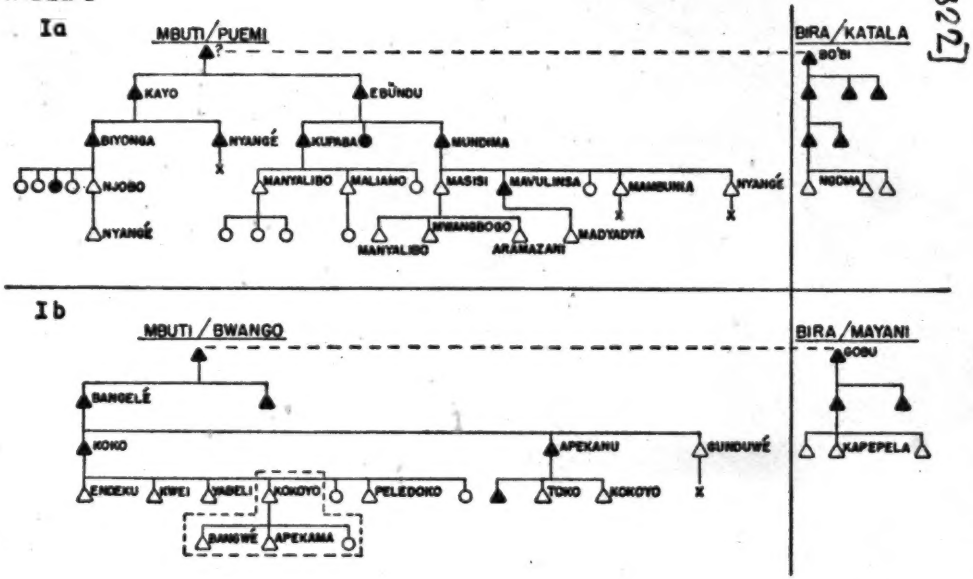
[P. 322]

P 177* 608 511 173 2 177 608 511 563 173

Table 1a
Mbuti/Puemi: *All living members make regular prestations to Ngoma, their hereditary* kpara, *though he is permanently absent from the area. Njobo and Ngoma independently declared that Kayo's father allied with Ngoma's great-grandfather, Bo'bi. His offspring have been inherited by the senior member of Bo'bi's lineage since, and still recognize reciprocal obligations.*

Table 1b
Mbuti/Bwango: *All but Kokoyo and family, who hunt with the Epulu band, still hunt in the territory around Kapapela's village, moving, when he does, as a unit. They all claim to have been inherited from Gobu.*

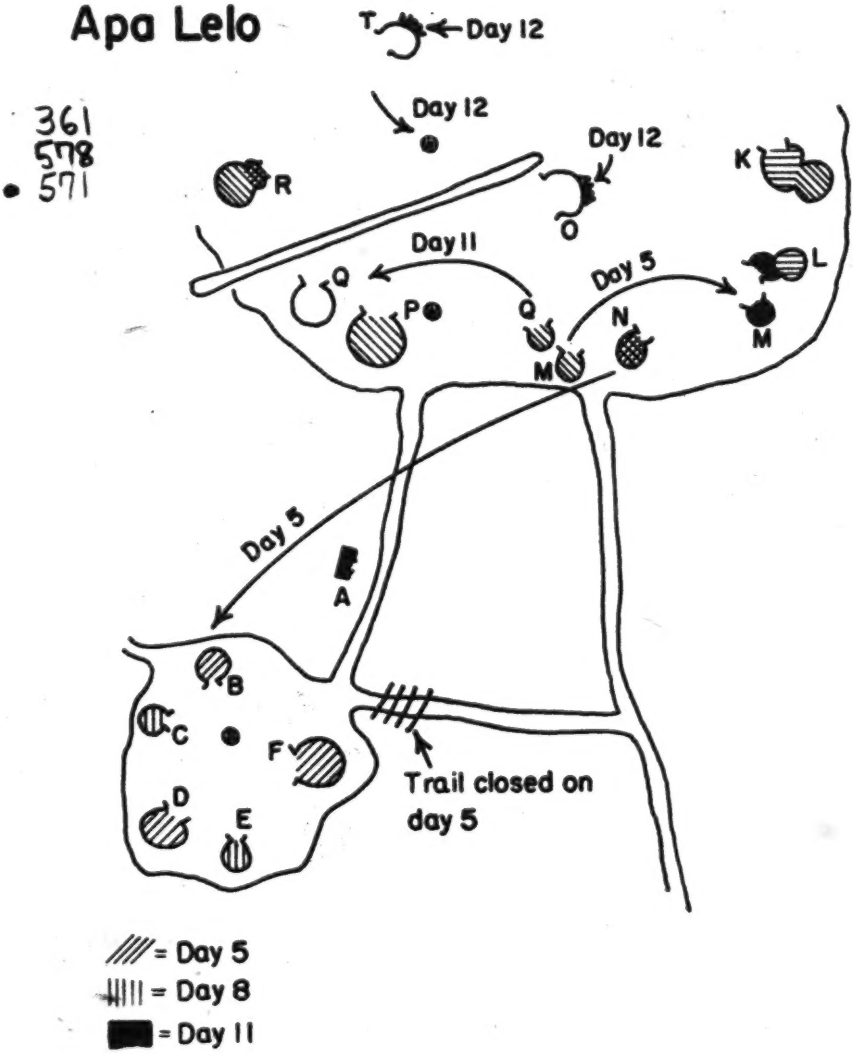
TABLE I



Both Ngoma and Kapapela are renowned for their affection for "their" Mbuti.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 8
Apa Lelo



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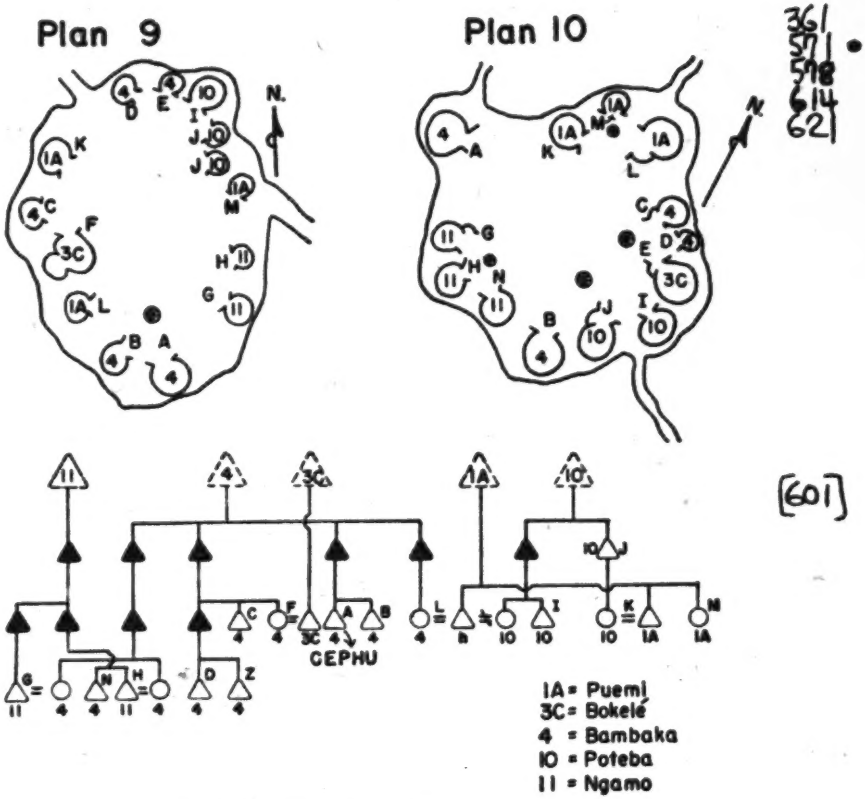
Apa Lelo: changes at southern end of camp due to Cephu's arrival.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

[P.360 is blank]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies. 156 621 551 [194]

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest. 156 571 621 [574] [538]

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's 115 602

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locallyy grown rice.

[P. 72-K]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 439
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza*, [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing. They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was suspected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped. They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground, they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Surrounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around, faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

tain their control over the Pygmies, so they created and maintained the myth that there was a hereditary relationship between individual Pygmies and families and individual Negroes and families.

It was not a matter of slavery, rather of mutual convenience. The cost to the Negro was often high, but it was worth while. The Pygmy was able to do for him all the necessary chores that necessitated going into the forest and could bring him game that supplemented an otherwise largely vegetarian diet. And in latter days, with the compulsory maintenance of larger plantations, the Negro found the Pygmy a useful source of additional labor. But for all of this he had to pay, and he was always uncertain how long any one Pygmy or group of Pygmies would stay with him. They were frequently miles away in the heart of the forest, and if the hunting was good no amount of coaxing would bring them back.

For the first week back at Camp Putnam, I found the villagers going out of their way to be generous to "their" Pygmies. The Pygmies wandered about idly, hanging around wherever they found food cooking, occasionally responding to a request to help with some kind of work. The village blacksmith, a man of many parts, adopted Masisi's family, though Masisi himself would have nothing to do with him. He said that Baziani was a trouble-maker, whch he was, and that he was after Masisi's daughter, which was also true. But Baziani was wealthy, and Masisi's children spent most of their time in his baraza. They were well fed and looked after, and treated more as friends than anything else. Baziani, in return, made use of them to run errands, usually connected with his virtual monopoly of the local hemp market.

Baziani was genuinely fond of the Pygmies. In the evenings he used to bring out his drums and the Pygmies would gather around and dance. After a while Baziani would relinquish his part as a drummer, acknowledging the superiority of his friends. Then he sat back in his cane chair and watched with a contented smile. He was one of

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 177 571 the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the C 177 571 roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored, 622 well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his baraza, waiting to do him 556 some small favor.

C 177 563 Masisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time been attached to a noble of the BaBira tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had P 177 many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them, E or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were [574] near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work P C on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of [464] willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

P 177 571 439 Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best C 177 571 plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village. Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by 439 Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent 622 one of his daughters, or his adopted son Madyadya, to help the chief and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself. P [574] Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

basket with two legs of antelope as a gift for Kapamba's wife. The camp watched the chief leave with few regrets. They had only allowed him to stay because he had brought a quantity of food with him.

Manyalibo's wife returned two days later with her basket full to overflowing with delicacies from the village. She had told Kapamba that she did not want to stay longer without her husband, so he had no option but to allow her to return.

Manyalibo's son-in-law, Ausu, was even more of a renegade. His "hereditary master" was André, the chief of a powerful Islamic village just beyond Eboyo. André's father, old Effundi Somali, had been a child when Stanley brought his relief expedition through the forest to rescue Emin Pasha. He used to tell stories of the dreadful wars that were fought in those days, and of the trail of destruction that Stanley had left behind him. While the old man was alive André had worked as head cook at Camp Putnam, but now he was chief in his father's place.

Part Bira and part Ngwana, André inherited all the traits of the latter. In his dealings with Europeans he could be charming and helpful; he could also be cunning and crooked. With other villagers he was proud and avaricious, and he had a supreme contempt—which he could disguise whenever it suited him—for the Pygmies.

A few years earlier, when Ausu had been hunting forest pig, a boar had charged him and wounded him badly, ripping his stomach and one leg. André had taken Ausu into his own house and cared for him, nursing him for months until he was well again. This was done under the guise of friendship, and I have heard André tell the story many times to illustrate how enlightened he is. But I have also heard Ausu's comment that André had done no more for him than he would have done for a valuable hunting dog. A Pygmy is not unresponsive to genuine kindness, and Ausu would not have left André soon after recovering if there had been any such kindness in the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

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123 it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the
484 majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki
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[515] by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

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It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing
171 was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house,
36 built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with
342 walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut,
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calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into
[353] two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying
[251] rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double
[417] duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the
[354] screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl
P knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister.
C
• 571 Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Fa-
177 ther," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak,
758 but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 571 574 P [832] P C 571 574 177 758

beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

C [226]

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

P [533]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children, even if he was a villager.

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593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

584 177 [836] [571] [439] [186] 584 [583]

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles
[312] apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.

Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P. 323-A]

177 may come in every evening. They will
574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[206] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[203] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home
[535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
• 571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

[P. 324-A]

P 177 439 571 [426]

wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

Z 186

Negro attitude toward their pygmies.—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581

The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy woman it is a great rise in the scale of living to marry a Negro as his second or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

Z [595] [522]

[P.324-B]

224 get one cut of one animal, another cut of another, depending on what part they played in the capture of each. In any case, even if there is only one animal, everyone will get something to eat. This does not mean that all families eat equally well, however; some have more than others, some better cuts. There is both a reward for special luck and prowess, and a charitable mechanism for those who have shown neither. Sometimes the net hunters catch an okapi; in this case there is enough meat to feed the camp for a week, and everyone eats and eats well.

The meat is cut up by the man who killed the animal, or anyone who knows the rules. In any case there are always arguments. The man who makes a [626] mistake is cried down; they all know the rules, or think that they know [591] them. Government, as far as distribution of spoils is concerned, is by argument and common consent without specific leadership in any individual—the typical pygmy way of making decisions and ordering events.

In the case of the hunter who catches his animal all alone, without help of any kind, the carcass belongs to him alone. Theoretically, he and his family could [626] eat it all up if he wished, but there is little chance that this would happen; he would not dare face public opinion. He would be labeled a mean man and [439] would suffer for it in the end. It may happen however that he is behind in his gifts to his Negro host. In this case he will take the carcass uncut into the village, to avoid trouble from that quarter, and the other pygmies will not hold this against him, provided that there is other food to eat.

[171] The division of spoils after an elephant hunt follows the same principle as it does among the Indians of Tierra del Fuego or Lower California when a whale washes ashore—regardless of who may be responsible there is a

[P 333-A]

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

521
157 **Evening talking time.**—The pyg-
571 mies seem to be a little less talkative
[P.333-B]

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are
517 about on a level with white men. There
521 is little chance for extensive conversations during the daytime while out
571 hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some people are quiet, others are noisier.
[157] Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]

62 571 561 [888] **Government.**—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 888 [626] A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888] Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] [562] In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 PYGMY SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological

[P. 334-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[672] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 177 571 572 After some persuasion he agreed to allow me to come out to his fishing camp. He was known to dislike and actively discourage visitors, so I was not surprised when he was vague as to the camp's whereabouts, merely saying that his friends would bring me there the following week. His "friends" turned out to be Kelemoke and Hari, a young Pygmy who was a cousin of Kenge, from a village the far side of Ngoma's. The four of us set off before dawn one morning.

P 123 481 484 Even when a whole camp is on the move, men, women and children, the pace of the Pygmy is swift. But when there are just two or three active young hunters they maintain a steady trot for however far they have to go. I found myself running to keep up, and we only stopped twice during the entire journey. The first time was when we were not far from the Lelo River. We rested among the ruins of an old deserted camp, and we each ate a banana and smoked a cigarette. The second time was shortly after midday, when we met Moke and another on their way back from Kaweki's camp. They were surprised that we had come so far; they themselves intended to stop over in one of the old camps for the night. Each of them carried P [372] a smoldering ember wrapped in a leaf, in one hand, and a bow and bunch of arrows in the other.

C 754 578 P 177 They warned us that Kaweki was not well, and said that it was the *dawa nde BaNgwana*—the magic of the BaNgwana. This made Kenge, Hari and Kelemoke all cluck their tongues, because the *dawa* of the BaNgwana is the most powerful of all. Hari said that he had heard that Musafili was jealous because Kaweki was making so much money with his fish. Kenge, however, said that he thought it was Kaweki's own people, the BaBira of Babama village. They were offended, he said, that Kaweki should live in the forest with the C [776] BaMbuti instead of in his own village. They suspected him of being in league with the evil spirits of the forest. Kelemoke nodded and said yes, it was true that Kaweki fell ill every time he returned to the village, and that it must be the strongest kind of witchcraft to reach

361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
621 There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts
361 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is
621 dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

[P. 336-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*.

P 628 [574]

P [582] [224]

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

P Z 648 186 Z [563]

[NET HUNTERS] The relation of the huts to one another in the circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. 352 [184] [516]

UTENSILS

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 412 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
62 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam 575
material. Once a meeting is begun, it may con- 796
tinue nightly for as long as a month. It is ob- [533]
ligatory for all members to attend, and those [534]
who are away visiting return to take part. Visi- [574]
tors in the camp also take part if they qualify
as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, [292]
sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and
feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs 575
that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplica- 796
tory but are mainly repetitions of one or other 533
of the names of the God of the Forest, or affir- 776
mations of his goodness and omnipotence. The
songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is un- [182]
doubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628 between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through 574 • interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families. [584] [613] [184]

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628 form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining 476 camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this 361 association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [578] [621]

[P. 228-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Anne Putnam reports that Pygmy groups pay social visits to villagers when they feel like having a rest from forest life. They stay for as long as their patron is prepared to feed them, or until they decide to return to the forest. She states that while a Pygmy certainly can break his relationship at any time, such is not often done. She also reports groups of archers and of net hunters that are very much under the control of their villager patrons and can defy them only with the greatest difficulty. The effective mechanism by which any individual villager maintains his authority over the Mbuti is not clear, as the benefits the Mbuti receives he can receive from any villager. P 107 571 574 • Z 563 571

Legal System

There are no data available on property law, and there is no clear distinction between collective and private property, as far as can be learned from the material that is available. Most items of personal possession, except used barkcloth, change hands at some time or another, temporarily or permanently, with or without any immediate exchange. There is certainly no scale of values by which any item of property may be assessed in relation to another. The question of whether personal goods, such as cooking utensils for the women or weapons and hunting nets for the men, are P 421 P 422

[P 229-D]

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 628

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred 166
territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry 574
far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assump- 131
tion that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus 628
territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to ex- 166
press and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also 574
used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it 131
is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights 582
as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity 621
in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even 614
when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over 613
the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[3]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[3] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net. [592]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[574] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[2]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [2] The drama not only appears like a reenactment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.218]

CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 *Marriage*

621 As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which
584 might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass.
574 The third, probably the most important structurally, is the inter-
571 family visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns,
561 each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands,
584 it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial ex-
574 change, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of
[591] visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each
584 band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-
561

band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but 628 224 such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange. [602]

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in 628 another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as 224 one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this 221 is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band 621 rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than in- 628 stances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relation- 628 ship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least 602 some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though 574 the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and [621] into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have [591] [594]

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

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THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies. 156 621 551 [194]

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest. 156 571 621 [674] • [538]

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's 115 602

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512 or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group
821 as a whole.
181

224 Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp
361 will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead
527 animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting.
177 The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On
527 such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the
43 forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies
594 will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

177 I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping
177 place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree
525 on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers
[151] Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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765 771 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which every single member of the group must participate.

765 562 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole concern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

881 765 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was married to Ausu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Ausu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima,* and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 574 888 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her husband. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives, but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 888 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by 765
a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it 534
back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village.

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered 765
the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty 761
to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good 765
life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged 372
the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and 778
power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god.

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end 765
the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 594 •
177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 765 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate
• 514 without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they
177 were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off
765 the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then
563 asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally
P 765 politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said,
177 and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it
765 was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the
512 men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three
513 months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women
P took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that
881 was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful
P young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been
[832] carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the first to help in time of need; as a result he was one of the few villagers who was never short of meat, with plenty of leaves for the roof of his house, and invariably with a crowd of good-humored, well-fed Pygmies sitting around in his baraza, waiting to do him some small favor.

Masisi, like Njobo and many of the others, had for a long time been attached to a noble of the BaBira tribe, Ngoma, uncle of my erstwhile would-be wife, Amina. But Ngoma was wealthy and had many other Pygmies so he did not resent the defection of a number of them to Camp Putnam. In fact he frequently came to visit them, or sent messages to find out how they were; and when they were near his home, some distance away, they were presented with stalks of plantains and baskets of groundnuts and manioc. Whenever work on Ngoma's plantation was behind schedule he could be sure of willing help that would avert the penalty of a heavy fine or confiscation.

Manyalibo, however, was attached to Kapamba, the government chief at Eboyo. For all his clowning, Manyalibo was crafty, and he played Kapamba for what he could get. Eboyo had some of the best plantains in the region, and it was much closer than Ngoma's village. Manyalibo seldom went there himself, and he refused all calls by Kapamba to come and help in the plantation. Sometimes he sent one of his daughters, or his adopted son Madyadya, to help the chief and to maintain some semblance of a bargain, but they never stayed for long. Once, when we were at Apa Lelo, Kapamba was in such dire need of help that he came out to the hunting camp himself. Manyalibo received him courteously enough, and housed him for a few days, but firmly refused to return to the village with him or to allow any of his family to return. Kapamba alternately flew into tantrums and attempted to bribe Manyalibo with stories of the abundance of rice and plantains waiting for him at the village. Finally Manyalibo agreed to let his wife go, and he sent her off carrying a

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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

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beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

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In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

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molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—
a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children, •
even if he was a villager.

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881 In the one case Mambunia would come out of his hut in a temper
832 and send all the girls back to their house, and in the other case Asofalinda would run amok among the girls, boxing their ears until they, in turn, cried like the children they had beaten.

881 But the elima beauties did not confine themselves to their own
574 village. After all, most of the men there were relatives and so could not decently be invited into the elima house. Many strangers came to visit from other groups, but sometimes the attendance was disappointing. Then the girls would set out to visit one of their hunting
[123] camps. I followed them on one such escapade, having secured a promise first that I would be given complete immunity. It was a strange procession, the girls all oiled and painted to look their best, wearing grass skirts in imitation of the boys' initiation (an innovation that infuriated the villagers, who felt that their customs were being desecrated, and that caused open hostilities in the end), and carrying stout whips, twice as tall as they were. There were about eight of them in all, led of course by the irrepressible Akidinimba, bouncing her breasts up and down in a determined manner as she marched along the road, past the Station de Chasse, and over the bridge to the far side of the Epulu River. The villagers came out to look as we passed, but from a respectful distance. On other occasions I have seen a party such as this dive into the midst of a group of village men and women, lashing out with all their might—not entirely in the friendly way in which they would whip, say, old Tungana, as a compliment to his virility.

On the far side of the Epulu we climbed up the hill toward Eboyo, the sun beating down on us so that the chatter and laughter of the girls was almost stilled. But just before reaching Eboyo we turned off, following a trail through an old plantation and into the
881 forest. As the trees closed in around and above us, the girls began to
574 sing. They sang loudly and proudly, marching with even more de-
533 termination than before, their heads back, looking at the familiar

leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest. 881 574 533

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her. 881 574 [487]

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba 881 832

881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
• 574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown. 881 832 574

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted. [152]

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry. [411]

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere. 881 832 372 574

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881 everywhere. The men retreated to the outskirts of the clearing and
832 stood uncertainly, peering around trees or over the tops of huts, their
574 bows and banana skins at the ready.

But the girls felt they had achieved their end. Each one had marked her victim, who was bound by the strongest bonds of self-respect to respond to the challenge and brave the elima house itself. Pumba, who had followed at a safe distance, sat disconsolately on a log that Akidinimba had thrown at him in a friendly way, and he did not even look up as we left.

881 The girls sang all the way home; even when they left the forest and made their way back across the Epulu, gleaming orange and gold in the late afternoon light, they sang. They sang so that everyone should know that they were the *Bamelima*, the people of the elima, girls who had been blessed with the blood and were now women.

881 There were occasions when the mood was different. One evening
224 in particular, after a relatively quiet day, nearly all the women of the group gathered together outside the elima house. It was toward the end of the time that had been set, in an arbitrary fashion, for the duration of the festival. The Pygmies felt they had been in the village long enough, and the elima was interfering with their hunting. As much as the young men enjoyed hunting, the attraction of the elima house offered strong competition. If the boys were away too long, due to pressure from their parents, the girls complained that they were not being treated properly. Everyone agreed that this was an insoluble conflict, unless the elima was either brought to an end or moved out to the forest. It was not only the boys that were away from the hunt, but also the women and girls, who would otherwise have been gainfully employed gathering and helping to drive more animals into the men's nets. And the women said they were having far too good a time in the village. So it was decided to bring the elima to an end.

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

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the first light of dawn flecked the sky with gold. They went down to the banks of a forest stream, where it widened out into a silent pool, and bathed themselves in half-hearted imitation of an elaborate village ritual. Then they oiled their bodies and donned oily new bark cloths and returned to dance in the village. They danced in a tight little circle while the women cooked the food. The villagers came to watch approvingly and to see that the food was properly distributed, for only certain people may eat it. They also made sure that all the leaves which had been used as a sleeping mattress in the elima house were thrown away and the house cleaned thoroughly. In this way they satisfied themselves that no harm would come to "their" Pygmies. The ancestors would be appeased by the feast, and the evil spirit that hovered around the unclean girls would be driven away.

The girls found it all rather tedious and boring, and as soon as they were able they broke off from their dancing and went wandering around the village. Akidinimba was in search of Pumba, who had failed her badly in the final ceremony. The others visited from house to house, in the hopes of gifts and compliments. The older women sat around and enjoyed the food for as long as it lasted; then they broke up and went about their business as though nothing had happened.

The men, for some time, had been talking about where they would build the next hunting camp.

585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed
• 574 house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to
[593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have
[583] no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage,
[586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home,
585 the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the
602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi-
593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day
to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama
villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however,
sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made
no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend
the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a
respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would
look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in
ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had
already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be
on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They
told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost
they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi,
who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which
his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it
arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said
the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the
death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu
wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed
in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

585 He did not seem particularly interested, because after listening to the
179 argument for half a minute he yawned and went back into his hut without saying a word to anyone.

We all trekked back to the village, and there, under the watchful eye of the villagers, the wedding began. Masisi had refused to come, saying the Babama villagers were the worst savages of all, so Mambunia came in his place. He supervised as all the wedding gifts were placed on the ground, and he watched as various villagers, each in the hopes of improving his chances of getting some meat from the young couple, came forward and added either money, ax-blades, or small pieces of cloth. There were already several pots, quite a number of arrows, and a few trinkets given to the party at Katala village. The villagers who claimed Maliamo felt that this treasure belonged to them, but Mambunia denied this strongly. He pointed out that in any case, according to their own village custom, the gifts should sleep with the couple that night. Reluctantly the villagers agreed, and Mambunia promptly scooped the gifts up and brought them into the wedding house.

Taphu was supposed to put in an appearance at this point, but he could not be found. It was two hours before he was discovered, asleep, and dragged to the spot where we were all sitting around, eating
585 and drinking and singing. He arrived in his tattered village clothes
292 but was promptly taken inside and made to change into a new cloth, put on a woven straw hat decorated with feathers, and arm himself with a new bow and a sheaf of arrows. Arrayed like this he appeared at the doorway in the late afternoon. Yambabo looked up and actually smiled. Taphu looked very handsome and imposing, if somewhat uninterested, and having made his duty appearance he went back inside and fell asleep again.

585 That night the wedding party stayed at Babama, all sleeping in
179 the wedding house, feasted royally by the villagers. The next day the
[574] rites were completed in a ceremony which consisted largely of the

621 joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as every-
578 one would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet
224 later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?
[602]

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and [574] industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters
628 to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 594 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

177 may come in every evening. They will
• 574 leave a couple of old men to stay be-
[276] hind in the camp as guards, smoking hashish, and the rest will go into the village, usually around four o'clock in the afternoon, after the day's hunting is over. From then until dark a few pygmies are usually to be seen hanging about the women's quarters. If a white man arrives, however, they quickly disappear, through fear that he will confiscate their antelope, or any other game that they may have brought with them.

[273] These mass visits are made particularly if it is going to be a moonlit night, and if wine drinking is going on. If there is a moon they will stay and dance; if not, they will come home
[535] at dark. The Negroes give them wine in a condescending way, and the pygmies put on what the Negroes consider to be wild, barbaric dances.

439 Sometimes the pygmy camp is as
[361] much as two days' journey from the village. In this case, the pygmies go in seldom, and browbeat their wives to make them go in to get plantains.

A visitor to a Negro village can nearly always see bunches of plantains lying around on the ground; they have been placed there for the pygmies, who pick them up and carry them home. There is no need for any special bargaining or designation; the pygmies know which bunches are for them.

177 **Pygmy attitudes toward their Ne-**
439 **groes.**—The pygmies consider them-
571 selves inseparably attached to their hosts and think it their duty to provide them with meat. Although they feel that they are supposed to turn over all honey and elephant meat, in each case they eat all they can before taking it
[251] into the village. They never preserve or store any food. Their duty of feeding the Negroes meat is therefore regarded as somewhat of a nuisance. On the other hand, when the pygmy

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361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
621 There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts
361 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is
621 dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

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628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

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P [P, 180-A]
Z society. Schebesta also mentions other instru-
881 ments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and
177 the secret society) among the south Lese,
608 namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or
534 *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot
(*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asa-*
Z *ragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part
[563] in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the
villagers seek to maintain and extend their
control over the Pygmies.

Z Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish
P two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager ele-
881 ment of initiation associated with circumcision
177 and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element
P of initiation into the men's secret society (*toré*).
• [576]

Marriage

P Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult
581 to determine which is the stronger, the interests
584 of the hunting band or the interests and mutual
621 affection of the two individuals concerned.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

P Z 575 •

P Z [176]

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

P Z 575 114 [562]

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

P Z 575 346 534

[P. 183-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.184-A]

P Z times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All
• 575 these instruments, he claims, however, produce
346 sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers
534 do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those
P worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of
[304] a leopard's claw.

A further inquiry made among the archers in
P Z 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta,
575 1952, 279) and added some supplementary
[346] facts. The *toré* hut is to be found near or in the camp itself. Women and children may attend the *toré* ceremonies organized by the men. The "presidents" are an old man and an old woman.
P Z The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God
[176] of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, implored for help in the hunt. The society, Schebesta concludes, has a religious aspect. This
P Z same study revealed the use of three wooden
[534] trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodzo*), in fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through which the performer sings into it (*luma*); and three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z [178]

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

P 575

[P. 184-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[p.184-c]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

Z P 575 596 534 [535] P Z [533] P Z [562] [858]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

Z P 881 534 [114] [575] Z P 881 Z P [532] [292] P 881

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do not participate fully in the proceedings of the [575] *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and dancing. It may also be accompanied by the [304] cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the ***nkumbi*** 179 serves merely to give status in villager society. 17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation into the religious associations of their own men [554] and women; the ***molimo*** and ***elima***, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

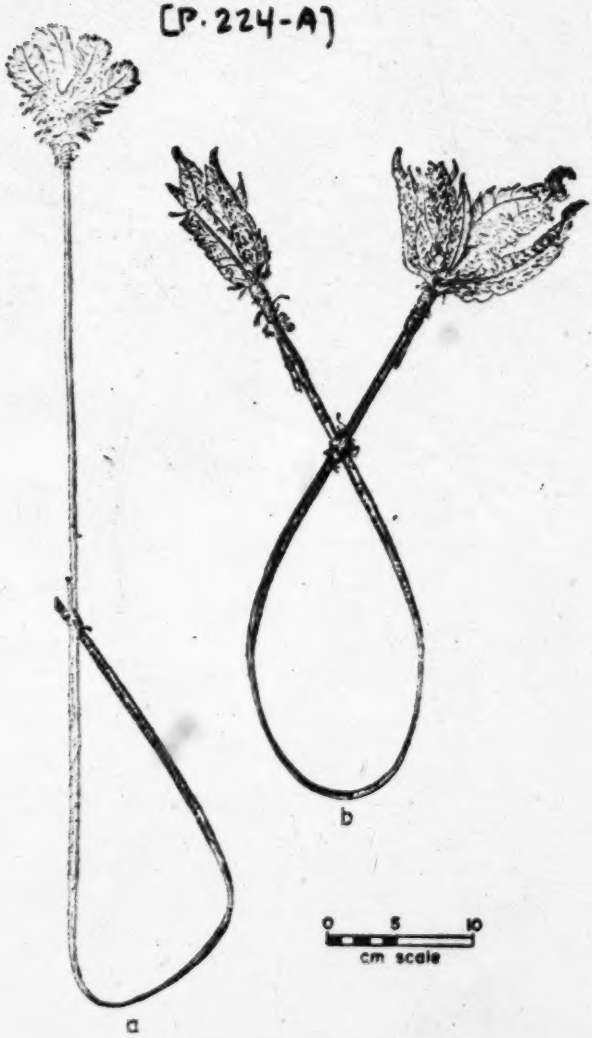
[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

292
237
824



[535] [575] [171] FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

[NET HUNTERS]

575 special *elima* songs by initiated girls and women, to mark any event of special importance to the womenfolk of the camp. The *elima* is an association that serves to bind women of otherwise different backgrounds together. It not only emphasizes their unity as a group opposed to the group of men, but also emphasizes their identification with the hunting band as a whole. It serves as a means of religious expression for the women just as the *molimo* does for the men. It operates separately, but simultaneously, on occasions of common religious significance. Unfortunately, details are lacking in the Putnam material as to the exact occasions on which each of these associations functions.

[581]

[P. 224-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill

575 561 88

[554] [224]

[P. 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 561 88 [554] [224] to status in the band and the fact that young men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed particular prowess as hunters may take a prominent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence of any detailed information on formal initiation into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some certainty, from the available material, that among the net hunters membership is associated primarily with hunting skill.

575 796 With regard to the proceedings of the association, all reports from this district indicate that the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the greatest importance to the community: various crises, and particularly death. A fuller account is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340); a summary is given here.

534 [192] The word *molimo* is used to denote the association, its proceedings, and a musical instrument. Only one instrument is reported by the Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet. But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions having heard the trumpet one night and thinking that it sounded very different from the one she had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

ble then that there may be different types of 534
instrument, but evidently not used in conjunction. Anne Putnam further mentions having heard sounds that she took to be animal sounds but that may in fact have been singing pots as described by Schebesta (1952, 279). The only instrument that she or her husband mentions, however, is the trumpet, and no description of it is given.

This instrument is an essential part of the 534
proceedings; its use marks the difference be- 575
tween two grades of *molimo* meeting. A meeting 796
in which the trumpet is not used does not carry the significance that one with the trumpet does. There is no information as to exactly when it is used and when not, but it is recorded that the trumpet is heard during meetings following death, during serious illness, or during some crisis affecting the welfare of the band as a whole. It is frequently associated with song, ac- [533]
companied by split-stick clappers, *banja* (Fig. 52) that are apparently peculiar to the *molimo*.

A third grade of meeting is that from which 533
women and children are not excluded, during 575
796

[P. 225-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

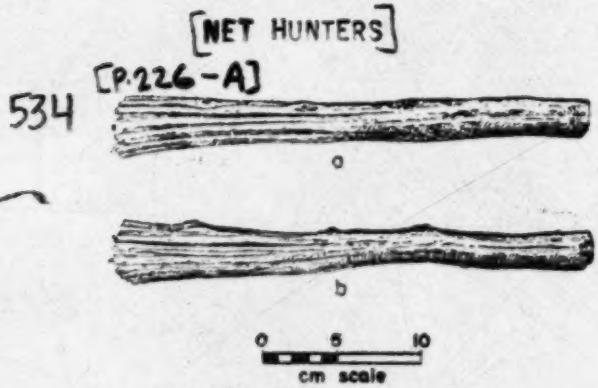


FIG. 52. Split clappers, *banja*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung.
575 Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in
797 that it is known by all that the songs effect
[776] some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

[NET HUNTERS]

533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
796 treat. They know that certain songs have more significance than others, and, on hearing these, they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordinary meeting of the men to develop to this extent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
534 The women in any case have been aware of whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting
796 and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet, they take their children and shut themselves in their huts. None will come out, even to cross the clearing. The men sit close together around one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trumpet echoes their song, sometimes coming close, sometimes going far away into the forest. The *molimo* may come right into the camp itself and install itself, unseen, close to where the men are
[535] sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly start dancing through the fire, scattering the ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly afterwards the participants go to bed. The singing may last only two or three hours, or may con-

[P. 226-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

575 534 533 782 796

That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

[P. 226-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 227-A]

575 533 534 782 796 reached a climax (drums were being used, unusual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*), the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a present tonight." Another said that there was nothing to give. Then one of the more important but younger hunters said, "We'll give it water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out and saw water being thrown over a figure that seemed to be white and that was playing the trumpet. The figure did not flinch and continued playing, while the hunter who suggested throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward the trumpet left, and the men sang without the drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

[NET HUNTERS]

575 533 534 782 796 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the men tried to find it, but, as they went after it, it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was heard on the other side of the camp.

Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and [823] the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 533 765 796 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which lasted about a month, was poor hunting. However, an old woman died during the month. Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at that time. 575 533 765

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not clear and which took place down near the village. One villager took part. The trumpet and the performer, covered with a cloth, were carried in from the forest on a crude litter and disappeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed. 796 575 534 533 796 [114]

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have witnessed were of the more serious kind, following the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally a period, early in the night, during which the men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh- 765 533 [534] [535] [831]

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [765]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 825
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 233-C]

The general observations that can be made from this collection of legends are: 538

1. The Mbuti of the Epulu are remarkably little concerned with matters relating to origin and tradition.

2. Their legends can be classified under three main sections: legends concerning their social life, legends relating to the animal and human kingdoms, and legends concerning the supernatural. In fact, the second section falls in part into social relations and in part into supernatural relations, but we mention it here to show the correspondence with Joset's (1948) classification for the archers.

While there are no professional storytellers among the Epulu net hunters, there are individuals who have a greater mastery of the art than others. They seem to hold an important position in the community, especially in relation to the activities of the *molimo* society. The storyteller and the clown seem to occupy a privileged position and to have a definite role to play in the men's society. Whether this also applies to the women of the *elima* is not known (p. 216). 538 564 [575] [522]

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *toré* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with
[613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the
[602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them-
[614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little
[103] social significance. Place names are used fre-
[101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any
563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are
[832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And
621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat-
575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious
562 association which unites the women of the band
182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total
[186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P. 246-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the archers and the net hunters concerns the initiation of boys. As this is treated more fully below (p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between Pygmy and villager initiates among the net hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places great importance on this pact for his archers, probably because of his insistence (1952, 281) on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an initiation into the religious association of *toré* for both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by Costermans (1938) for the archers and is contradicted by my own experience among the net hunters. In any case, if there is a difference between the two groups over the significance of *nkumbi* initiation (and it may well be only a difference of interpretation rather than of fact), it does not seem directly related to any difference in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with ritual connections, such difference as exists in the two accounts seems to be associated more directly with prevailing differences in villager custom rather than with any inherent differences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the nature and function of the closed associations, are more properly the subject of discussion of the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the difference between net hunters and archers, which is our main concern here.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold equally well among the archers. It is simply one [121] of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [975] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *tore* society is an in- [192] tegral part of the religious system of the archers [776] and that Tore' is applicable as a term for God.

[P. 248-B]

P [P.252-A]
583 local villager custom. The latter ceremony is
585 conducted entirely by the villagers and at their
177 expense. On these occasions the villager takes
Z the leading part and carries out his own ritual,
563 but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his
585 own indigenous way of recognizing the event.
The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy
adds to his own.

P With initiation the situation may seem to be
177 different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the
881 villager custom of initiation accompanied by
• 575 circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend
Z the same initiation schools which are always
563 run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation
881 is nothing if not entry into a very definite indig-
575 enous system of values, yet here we have the
Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordi-
nate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Sche-
besta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or
villager, into membership of the Lese *toré* asso-
ciation (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent,
the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 881 • 575 Z 563 881 575

of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [114] [608]

Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 254-C]

conversation among the *ganza* at night and in their constant burlesque.

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Schebesta (1948, 508–510) says that, for the archers, the *toré* association has both social and religious functions and that membership is common to both villagers and Pygmies through the *nkumbi* initiation. Among the net hunters the term *molimo* is used instead of the term *toré*, and among the Bira villagers the word has apparently similar usage. Thus the *molimo* horn is an instrument that is sacred to both villagers and Mbuti. The villager *molimo* normally makes itself heard during the *nkumbi*, when the young initiates are introduced to it for the first time. It made no appearance at all during the all-Pygmy 1954 *nkumbi*. Evidently it was unable to appear as there were no villager boys among the *ganza*, and the villager *molimo* has a distinct totemic aspect that excludes the Mbuti. Yet for the Mbuti, in particular, the instrument is associated with their most profound magico-religious concepts, and it is inconceivable that they should regard the *nkumbi* as initiation into their own religious society without the inclusion of their version of the *molimo* horn.

P
Z
881
575
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534

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

177 *nkumbi* offers the Mbuti an opportunity for as-
881 serting their individuality at the same time
18 that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

• 575 In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also
575 true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at
881 all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

[P. 256-87]

[P.256-C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and 575 881
even returned to the care and authority of their
mothers. None of these boys was allowed to 882
take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. 885
The reason—they were not "hunters," they had 224
not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large [575]
enough to be worth distributing among the
band, as opposed to the small animals caught
by children and that are not worth dividing
except within the family). To kill "real animals,"
usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to
be allowed to wander away from his father
during the hunt and to try his luck at either
end of the semicircle of nets, where animals
might escape and be shot with bow and arrow,
speared, or caught with the hands.

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on 575
a combination of physical growth and prowess. 885
Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach
the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full mem-
ber; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*;
like the *elima* it is a religious association with-
out priests. There is no ritual to be performed;
all members play the same part in the meetings
of the association with the exception of one
who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The
choice invariably falls on the best performer
present, without regard for age or other quali-
fications.

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[P. 256-D]

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
• 575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
[858] seem to be the non-participation of women and
children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
[885] bers of the band, the use of special songs and
[533] the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
• 575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 257-c]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their 796
unity. Their means of communication are spe- 776
cial songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to 778
the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in 782
terms of explicit supplication. They merely call 575
on the God of the Forest by constant repetition 796
of his name (frequently changing from one 776
name to another, it seems for the sake of variety 778
and euphony), and an occasional recitation of 782
his qualities as the source of all good in the 533
Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the 575
molimo horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women are members, and participation is compulsory in one's own camp or when visiting another. Communication with the forest God is again established by means of songs, special and sacred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The exception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the initiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[p 257-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 258-A]

881 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I
885 have never witnessed nor been told of any for-
224 mal rite introducing the new hunter to the asso-
575 ciation, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only
881 act that might be regarded as a formal token of
885 initiation is the cutting of three sets of three
304 vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each
575 side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

1: Turnbull E-4-5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 The contrast between the more formal *elima* initiation and this informal initiation into the *molimo* requires explanation, and more needs to be known about the function of these associations before any such explanation can be offered. It may be, in part, a consequence of the participation of Pygmy boys in the *nkumbi*; it may be that, as Schebesta (1957, 78) suggests, the *elima* (*elimo*) is of villager origin and has been adopted by the Pygmies. Or it may be that we have underestimated the part played by the young men in the *elima* festival described (p. 216). It is for both girls and boys, equally, a formal occasion recognizing their physical maturity and their prowess—the girls as proficient in womanly art and the boys as proficient in physical strength and endurance.

• 575 [881] Until further material is available it is impossible to elaborate on initiation among the Mbuti. It is sufficient to show that, among the net hunters at least, religious associations there exist for men and women, each with some form of initiation practiced without the aid or presence of villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. The function of these asso-

[P 258-B]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 776 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] [554] [171] [181]

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *tori* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of 594
division would not apply. It seems therefore 224
to be a question of surplus. Every family is 421
entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity 576 •
and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

PLATE 26 $\frac{1}{A}$

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 [292] a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [301] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

$\frac{1}{A}$, /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[P 284]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing. 123 648 764

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint. 123

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family. 123 122 114 [576] [589]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

512 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one
264 person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to
[576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even
[868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, 593
insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious 578
issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and 593
ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest 578
brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been 554
brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed 157
that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, [164]
which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside 578
his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him 609
the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly 276
from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a 576
visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tearlessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

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was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

62 571 561 [888] **Government.**—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 888 [626] A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888] Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] [562] In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological

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539 passing by hear the noise and shoot at it with
186 an arrow. But even though wounded, the clever Pygmy remains very still, so the villagers think they must have been mistaken and go on. Then the Pygmy cuts them off and lies in wait and kills one of them as they come to him. And that began the war.

2. Legends Dealing with Social Relations

539 In this group we have a few legends telling
593 of the good mother (who protects her daughter
577 against nasty villagers) and the good father (who looks after his son when out hunting); the good sister (who protects her baby brother against a *satani*, a forest spirit); and the good brother (who does not quarrel with his brothers).

539 Social behavior is extolled in a similarly pos-
577 itive vein. Marriage and divorce, cooperative effort in the food quest, war and feud, hospitality to strangers—these are common topics, treated by telling how the reasonable Pygmy behaves in any of these situations. The remainder of the legends in this group deal with virtue and vice.

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Among the few legends commending the good mother and father, the good brother and sister, only one takes the opposite approach and tells of the bad mother. I include it in this section because the emphasis seems to be on the thoughtlessness of the mother rather than the trickery of the *satani*.

A Pygmy, his wife, and his child, were all asleep. In the middle of the night the child woke up and began crying. He cried and he cried. He was crying from hunger, because his mother had not fed him. At last the mother got up and gave the child a plantain. Then she went back to lie down and they all fell asleep again. A little while later the child woke up again and started crying again because he was still hungry. He cried and he cried, but his father and his mother went on sleeping.

A *satani* arrived. "Why are you crying, my child?" he asked. "I am crying because I am hungry!" replied the child. "My mother hasn't given me enough to eat and she won't wake up."

So the *satani* fried two pots of plantains, and lots of meat. He put them on the fire to cook. When it was all ready he put the food in front of the child and the child ate, and ate, and ate. "Oh! This is good!" said the child, and he ate still more. When he finished there was still a pot of plaintains and lots more meat, so the *satani* said, "Eat some more, my child, then

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[P 263-C]

you will not wake up hungry again." So the child ate some more. 539 577 593 776

At last the child had finished all but a few plantains and a little meat. "Oh! How full I am!" he said, holding his little stomach. "I have had enough, really." But the *satani* pointed to the plantains and the meat that still remained and said, "You must eat some more, or you will surely wake up hungry!" "But I have eaten all I can, really!" said the child. "Eat!" said the *satani*.

The child took a plantain and slowly began to eat it, then suddenly BAM! He burst. The *satani* vanished. The mother and father woke with a start and saw the dead body of their little child. "Oh, what can have happened?" cried the mother. And there was much grief.

But the father knew what had happened, the mother had let the child go to bed hungry. So the next night when they lay down to sleep, the father slept only with his eyes. In the middle of the night the *satani* arrived to see if there were any more children who had been allowed to go to bed hungry, so that he could feed them until they burst. The father leapt out of his bed and seized the *satani* and cried, "You devil! You killed our son because his mother allowed him to go to bed hungry!"

And the father killed the *satani* completely.

Bati

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Most of the legends extolling social behavior are told in a matter-of-fact way and are not infrequently related to incidents in the lives of members of the community. Again, only one legend in the collection deals directly with antisocial behavior. It concerns a man who constantly maltreated his hunting dog. In net-hunting groups, such as the one in which these legends were collected, anything that concerns hunting concerns the entire society. This particular individual fed his dog only on the genitals of other animals. The dog saw that other dogs were being fed on more dainty morsels, such as liver; so one night when his master was sleeping he got his knife and killed the Pygmy. The Pygmy's wife woke up so the dog killed her also. The dog then disappeared.

Even a brief glance at the legends reveals that the one quality to which these Mbuti attach the greatest importance is cleverness, a term that in certain circumstances also means trickery. Conversely, while selfishness, greed, laziness, and gossiping women are mildly condemned in a number of legends, the sin of sins is stupidity. These two qualities are so overriding that cleverness can make crime pay, whereas stupidity can bring death and disaster to the

[P 263-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 264-A]

539 best-intentioned of Pygmies. It is worth noting
• 577 here that we find an almost exact parallel in the
way these legends deal with the animal world,
539 in which cleverness is the supreme virtue. Leg-
577 ends extolling cleverness among Pygmies must
825 not, then, necessarily be taken as supplying a model for behavior in Pygmy society, but rather as showing how satisfactory relationships can best be established with the animal world. This has much wider implications, as we shall see below.

One of the tales of cleverness tells how a young Pygmy becomes a great hunter, not by killing game by himself, simply, but by killing it with trickery. In such legends the great ideal of the Mbuti seems to be to match the animal world in its own terms. But in other Mbuti legends they rely on aid from the animals to help them in their trickery.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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539 Two men went to their camp. While they were
• 577 walking through the forest they came across a tree
825 called *pusia*, which bears delicious nuts. One of the men gathered nuts from this tree, but the second man gathered from another tree, bearing very bitter nuts. When they reached their camp they roasted their nuts over the fire. The man with the bitter nuts offered them to his friend, who tasted them and said, "Oh! These are terrible, I can't eat them." The two of them shared the sweet nuts.

Later on, the man with the bitter nuts went back to the tree and stole the rest of the sweet nuts and roasted them over the fire. When they were ready he offered them to his friend. His friend tasted them and said, "These are sweet; they must be my nuts. You have stolen my nuts." "I wouldn't steal your nuts!" "Well, tomorrow I'll go and see."

At first light, the man who had found the sweet nuts went to his tree and saw that all the nuts were gone. He returned to the camp and told his friend what he had found. "You see, you did steal all my nuts. You can stay here no longer."

So the man who stole the nuts left the camp and went through the forest until he came to a *konga* bird. When he saw the *konga* bird, he explained what had happened and said, "Please don't kill me." The *konga* bird said, "All right, you can stay here and look after us." In the meantime, the other Pygmy, his nuts all eaten, decided to follow his friend. When he finally arrived his friend said to the *konga* bird, "There is my brother whose sweet nuts I stole. You can kill him if you like." So together, they killed the Pygmy who had allowed himself to be tricked.

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000 As might be expected, cleverness is frequently
[P 264-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539
associated with smallness. In several legends 828
the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825
respect) of small animals over large. It is not [186]
difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539
connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828
are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577
of this quality, which automatically associates 888
them more closely with the animal and spiritual

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

539 828 577 888 539 828 577 888 732 [776] [682] 539 577 888 732

[P 264-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 265-A]

539 about cripples that just happened to disappear
577 or who suddenly just "died completely."

888 There was once a Pygmy named Butuwa. He was
732 in the forest, and was sleeping with his wife, children, and old mother. His mother had no legs. In the middle of the night Butuwa said to his wife: "Mother is sleeping soundly; get the children together and let's go away." So they quietly picked up their belongings, and, together with their children, they crept away. They walked and walked and walked.

Early in the morning the old woman woke up. She said: "Where is everybody? Oh! They are a bad family, they have gone off and left their legless old mother to die. I will follow them." So saying, she stood on her head and walked and walked and walked until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She was very angry with them for having deserted her, and told them how bad they were to have left her alone in the forest. That night they all went to sleep together.

In the middle of the night the Pygmy said to his wife: "Now mother is really asleep; get the children together and let's go away." So they collected the children, picked up their belongings, and stole away. They walked and walked and walked.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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539 Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and
she was very, very angry to find that her family had
• 577 deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she
888 walked and walked and walked, until she caught up
732 with them, walking on her head. She told her son
how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son
went off into the forest and gathered some honey.
And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the
honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be
angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you
some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up
the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the
legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old
mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

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3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

[P. 265-B]

the world of the supernatural. The Pygmy is 538
anxious to preserve the normal, the *status quo.* 183
Although one could hardly determine this with any certainty from the legends alone, they certainly confirm the notion, which is of particular significanec with reference to Mbuti religious thought. We return briefly to this point below.

The second section dealing with social rela- 538
tions also reveals a center of interest on food, 181
the importance of the food quest being implied repeatedly. Also emphasized is the importance [476]
of cooperation, not only between members of the same family, but between all members of the hunting band. These legends tell us that [577]
vice and virtue are scarcely understood as such, that the dominating quality is cleverness, with its converse, stupidity. But, as pointed out, this is a borderline world. Whereas cleverness may 538
be of use to a Pygmy in his normal everyday 181
life, it is really a quality associated with his 183
dealings with the animal and supernatural worlds. In fact, one legend, not mentioned, quite distinctly tells us that in everyday life it is not good to be too clever, but better to be normal. An elephant hunter who loses his normality (by failing to accept food offered to him, and failing to join in the conversation) is

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2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577] magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578] may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778] not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184] rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are countenanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become enraged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
621 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire. 593 578 626

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities. 593 626 822

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[5] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki ukami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*" —"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet." 577 183 822

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En- 577 183 828 [822]

[5] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any measure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as 186
assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount 577
of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no question but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and therefore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

177 * 186 577 626

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt 177 *
that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a 578
village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more 626
ekimi than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

[8] *Vita* is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, [192]
as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kelele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of *vita* clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayelé*, or trickery.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

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[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628
between different bands of net hunters. Infor- 574
mal relationships are created through inter-
band visits. These visits may be made by indi-
vidual Pygmies or by whole families and may be
occasioned by the desire (particularly among
womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse,
or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by
trouble between the individual concerned and
his villager patron. The visits, according to
Putnam, may become permanent but normally
last only two or three months, which would
allow for one or two changes of camp. These vis- [584]
its are important with respect to the practice of [613]
exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which [184]
may amount to exogamy of the hunting band,
though among the net hunters less frequently
than among the archers) as an important way
of allowing marriageable couples to meet and
become known to each other's families.

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628
form a single hunting unit. Under these circum- 476
stances each sets up separate but adjoining 361
camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this
association continues, the camps are moved
closer to each other and finally become part of
the same camp. In one of the final stages of the
process of fusion, the two groups build their
huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct
unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a [578]
gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [621]

[P 228-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P
628 [P 229-A]
476 change of camp may thus reveal significant
361 tendencies not only in interpersonal relations
578 but also in the composition of the band itself.
621

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P
177 Putnam had the advantage of being able to
571 observe the changes in composition of the Epulu
hunting band and its ties with neighboring vil-
Z
563 lagers for more than two decades. As is stated
571 above, the relationship between the net hunters
and their villager neighbors is an individual and
strongly personal relationship, as described by
P
Z Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an in-
[428] herited relationship, but inheritance is not the
basis. The effect is maintained only by the close-
ness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affec-
tion. If these bonds are weakened through any
cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from
changing his allegiance to another villager. It
Z may cause bad feeling between him and his pa-
[628] tron, but it primarily affects the relationship be-
tween the two villagers concerned.

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In the absence of any "elder," it is difficult at first to understand the legal system and how it functions. From the examples cited, however, it appears that one of the first rights of every Mbuti is the right of self help, but because of the nature of the band in which he lives it is unlikely that any serious dispute will remain restricted to the original participants and left to them to settle. Such can happen, and has, but usually the dispute is widened, involving more and more of the others and, finally, the whole band itself, until a settlement is reached. 627 508

Thus in a case of incest between members of the same lineage, the first act on the part of the girl's family was to pursue the boy, threatening him with knives and spears and driving him from the camp. There, they said, he could die. He would get no shelter and no food. Returning from this chase, they promptly tore down the house of the boy's "father" (actually his father's brother, with whom the boy was staying). As far as the offended family were concerned, the matter was finished, but the "father" thought otherwise and threatened to take counteraction. At this point, while the womenfolk on the girl's side were making the usual demonstrations of grief (throwing themselves on the ground and beating themselves) and the men on both sides were brandishing spears, knives, and bows and arrows, the dispute degenerated into the practical consideration of where the houseless "father" was 627 684 [152]

[P. 230-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
629 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
578 monial squabble may well become enlarged
629 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P. 231-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, listening and making loud comments, is not insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions.

Apart from the driving of the incestuous youth from the camp, there is no record of even temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere.

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 578 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p.247-A]

578 have taken part or not. With Schebesta's arch-
621 ers it seems that the lineage elder is the final
627 authority, below which rank the family heads.
[184]
[554] Whereas the status of men is related to hunt-
554 ing ability and to proficiency in the arts of
555 mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in
562 determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebra-
554 tions. The *elima* itself may be connected with
88 adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Put-
[558] nam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

			Male Members		Female Members	
621 614 613	Camp 3a – in	26 huts, there were	13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
	3b –	22	10	5	10	6
	3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

			Male Members		Female Members	
	Camp 3d – in	9 huts, there were	5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
	3e –	9	5	3	6	3
	3f –	6	4	4	4	3
	3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 613 361 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)[A] indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m). 621 114 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonetheless, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), [614] yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

[A] [see pages 340-345 -- Analyst]

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224] other factor.
[184]

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
[578] them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
846 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at
853 a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of 88
the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we 561
are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, 88
but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be 561
able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters 627
that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, 554
and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the [562]
equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in 888
part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elder- [157]
hood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to inter- 888
vene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and 627
often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, 578
though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with [885]
considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

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888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
*177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

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quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

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though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [578]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

224 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the
482 camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or
578 acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt
152 returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be al-
626 most deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the
[496] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

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222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

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222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

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band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

When Njobo was away from the band for a 156
number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Nor- 604
mally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but 592
also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, build-
ing their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would [554]
have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, [571]
but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not [561]
belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not 156
leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, tell- 152
ing everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he 578
told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's 554
camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's 156
net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt 554
and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when 422
his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want 578
to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This tem- 156
porarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the 554
senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his 558
arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave 627
indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and 201
talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

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156 554 558 627 201 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, 156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al- 627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby 621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis- 648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, 554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked 153 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" 627 Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to [202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon 554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he

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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

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554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
627 and morally, beyond the forest.
[578]
[156]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with
[152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

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one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the 621 frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or 578 in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his 626 fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends [593] with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between [522] the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is gen- 578 erally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in 621 his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately 626 involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp [522] clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rig- 627 orously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

Closer to an indigenous system of punishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo* society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

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meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

224 626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of
[821] friction).
[152]
[166] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur-
[648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten-
621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par-
221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old
578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came
593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja.
152 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and
291 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing
621 it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young
[224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some
593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute
621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said
166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being
626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem-
[221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

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their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly (*"apa ndaso aké sinana"*). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: *"kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi"*) and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

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wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

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626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [1965] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

someone's hut.[5] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe 685
named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given 157
a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it 685
had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of 157
the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, 578
a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, [251]
and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated [627]
as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly [554]
respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, [627]
Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, 685
brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, 627
saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if 578
he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and [152]
saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was 627
brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most fre- 431
quently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[5] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nip- 685
pold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African 157
pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. 421
It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only [114]
obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

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754 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters
578 with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a
[535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing
[224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad
578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se-
522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap-
626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a
683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further
648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the
571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between
608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty
[186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were
626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I
683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., indi-
[157] vidual) theft.
[142]

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the
[621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he
[156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

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765 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this
593 point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in
578 the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp
626 that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was
593 dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

834 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

578 13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are countenanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become enraged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

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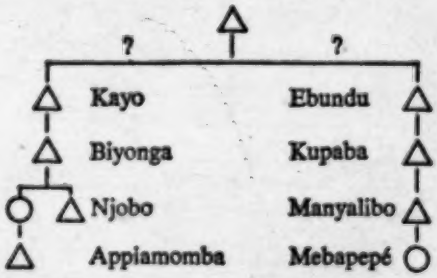
836 upset her father so much as all the accompanying noise. In particular
578 he was irate when waked up by a suitor crawling over him in the middle of the night to get at his daughter. In this instance he gave chase, and woke the whole camp up with a harangue from midcamp. The accused's reply was effective—that if he had made noise and wakened Manyalibo, it was not as bad as Manyalibo's noise, which had awakened the whole camp for nothing.

16. By and large all that the parents can complain about in the sexual life of their children is the noise. If the noise becomes too much, however, it then becomes a matter for the band.

836 Such a matter became the affair between Appiamomba, nephew
578 of Njobo, and Mebapepé, Manyalibo's flighty daughter. The situation
835 was aggravated by the relationship between the two lovers, Appia-
61 momba's mother being descended in the male line from the allegedly same great-grandfather as Manyalibo. When accused of being of the same clan (using the village term) as Mebapepé, Appiamomba denied it and said they shared different hearths. He was then asked, "You cannot deny your mother was a Mupuemi; then so are you."[8] However, his argument about being of a different hearth carried weight, the more so as Njobo was not at this time in the same section of the camp as Manyalibo, and had not been for nearly a year.

One night Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya, chased Appiamomba away and called on the other youths to beat the offender. The others demanded what offense had been committed; there had been no noise. This was the beginning of a major argument which quickly spread all over the camp. Manyalibo went to the midcamp site and said, "Appiamomba is my child and he does not listen to me. Mebapepé is my child and she does not listen. My children are sleeping together and this is bad, for they are making noise all the



[8] An example of a common confusion concerning lineal descent among the Mbuti.

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time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's sister for wife and there will be no more noise."

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the fact that there were far too many young people around who should be married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

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the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage.

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes.

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, *even to the point of retaining favored portions of the* game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut.

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan.

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed

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Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided. Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the village, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

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is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant. 621 593 578 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours. 593 593 516

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal." 593 [564]

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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 152 *DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA*

A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [881] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing. 578 648 578 152

30. A man burped badly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *bnja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin. [264] [534] [765] [533]

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered. [301]

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention. [593] [372]

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest. 578 152 593 [626]

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

685

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled. [177]* [183]

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
186 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
[621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[158] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
[614] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

627 [126] attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

627 578

DISPUTE	*Number Recorded*	*Number of Decisions or Judgments made*	*Instances of Positive Action*
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such [626] [182] disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

627 626 578 121 182 An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. 626 There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including 121 the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the 182 contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in 778 the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[171] [10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

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were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

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Mbuti

[P. 276-A]

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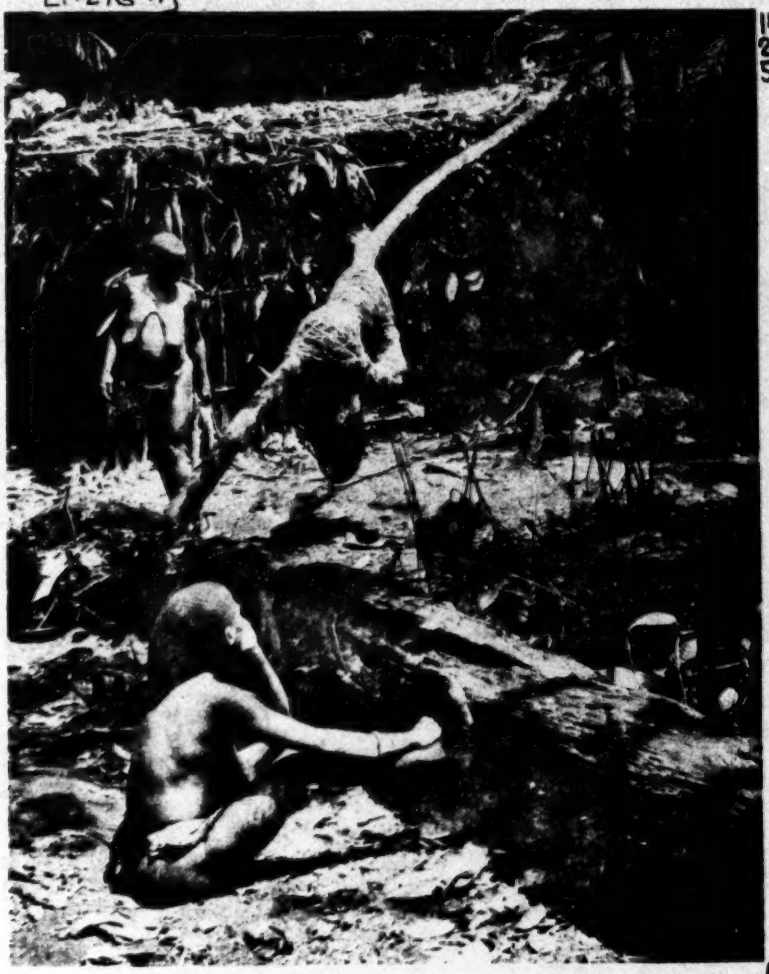

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

[578]
[593]
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonethe- 578 less concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

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Mbuti

bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[8] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*"—"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[8] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

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Mbuti

(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no question but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and therefore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more *ekimi* than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

[8] *Vita* is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kelele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of *vita* clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayelé*, or trickery.

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Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it is practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

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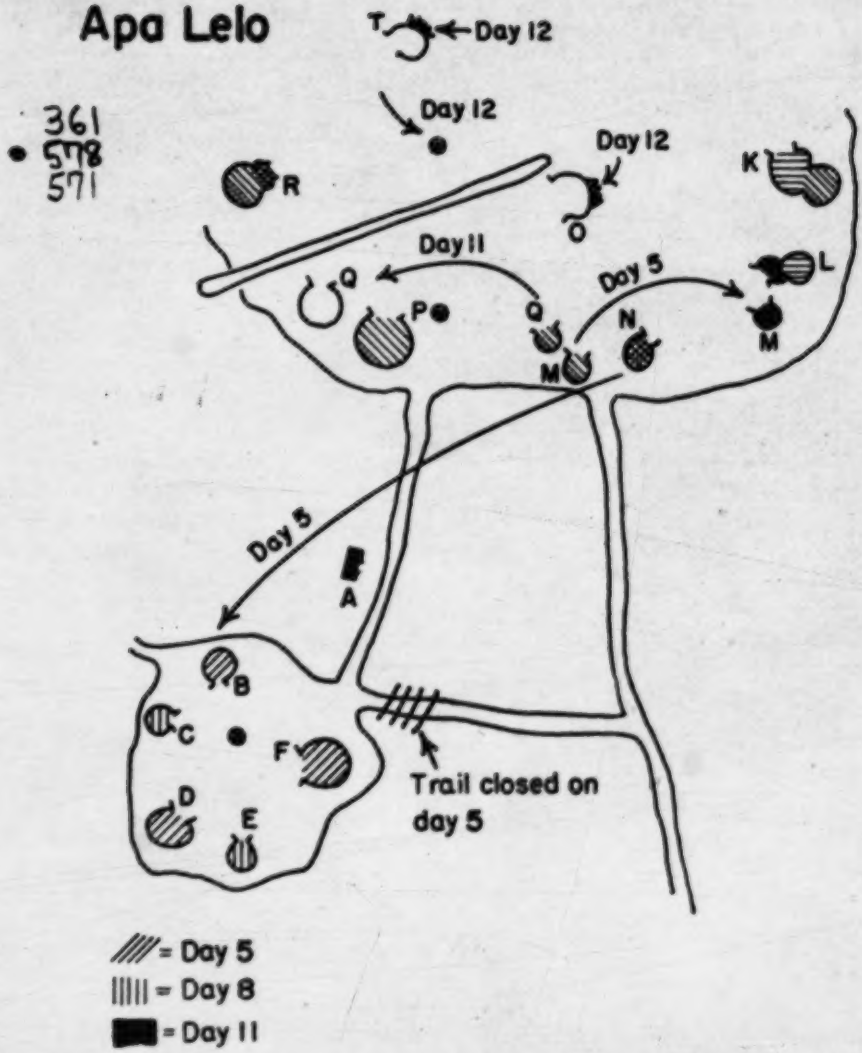
Mbuti

Plan 8
Apa Lelo



Apa Lelo: changes at southern end of camp due to Cephu's arrival.

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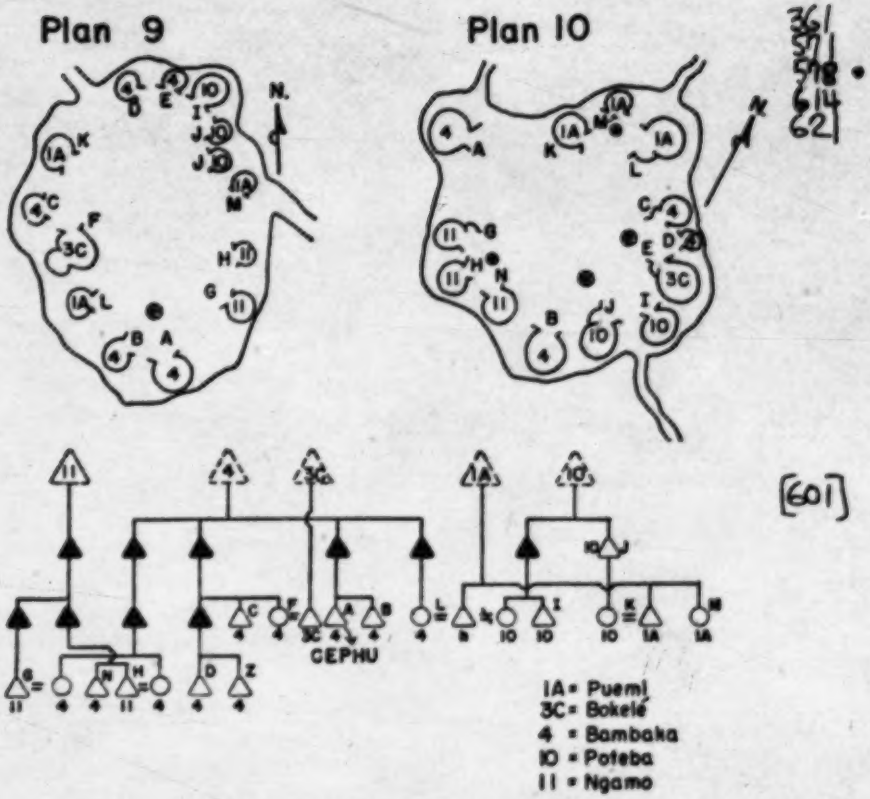
Mbuti



Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

[P.360 is blank]

hunter he was blessed with a large family. He had a powerful and penetrating voice, took an active part in any dispute, and usually managed to shout his opponents down, which is one of the chief ways the Pygmies have of settling a dispute. His family were all strikingly fine-looking, with almost Greek-like appearance although of normal Pygmy stature—under four and a half feet.

Most Pygmies have unmistakable features, other than height, that set them apart from the Negroes. Their legs are short in proportion to their bodies; they are powerful, muscular, and usually splay-backed; their heads are round and the eyes are set wide apart; they have flat noses almost as broad as their mouths are long. The head hair grows in peppercorn tufts, and the body hair varies from one extreme to the other—some Pygmies are covered thickly from head to foot. Another characteristic is the alert expression of the face, direct and unafraid, as keen as the body, which is always ready to move with speed and agility at a moment's notice. All these traits are uncharacteristic of the Negro tribes that live in the forest around the Pygmies. These tribes are a rather shifty, lazy lot who survived the ravages of Tippu Tip's slave-traders by treachery and deceit. In the villages you will sometimes find Pygmies who are like this too, but they are scorned by the BaMbuti who have remained in the forest and have refused to be settled.

Masisi's children had finer features, with longer faces and straight noses, and they were slimmer and less stocky. His eldest son, Agerronga, was a fine hunter and often used to take his father's place.

Another member of the same clan, a cousin of Masisi's, was Manyalibo. A traditionalist, he was older than Masisi, and the son of an elder brother of Masisi's father, yet he had less say in everyday matters because he was not such an active hunter. Nor did he have such a fine family. He had two daughters of his own, but no sons, and although he had adopted a distant nephew, Madyadya, the boy was proving a great trial, having been spoiled by everyone, as orphans

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

156

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with 578 the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [754] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 578 [583] If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Ageronga were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
589 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
462 had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the
[578] invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

352 the same way, the frame resting on four forked sticks, but we were the only household to bother with a table. The others would build [251] them later, Kenge said, when the hunting brought in so much meat that they could spare some to dry for the villagers. Then they would build tables higher than ours, and light fires under them.

[284] Chairs were even simpler to make. Kenge cut four sticks, each about three and a half feet long, and twisted a vine thong around the middle of the bundle. He stood them on the ground, and with a turn of his hand he splayed out the ends and had a comfortable 352 seat. When you get used to this kind of chair you can even go to 516 sleep, resting your back along one stick and hooking your feet over 515 the opposite one. Pygmies, in the forest, are clean people, and they do not like sitting on the ground. Either they make these simple chairs or they sit on logs, often on the end of a log that is sticking out of a fire. If the worst comes to the worst they will pull a leaf from the roof of the nearest hut and sit daintily on that.

361 During the day more families arrived, and while they were busy 578 building their huts, those who had arrived the day before put the finishing touches to theirs. Sometimes someone would apparently have a grudge against a neighbor, or a dislike for someone who had built a hut opposite. I saw several women turning the entrances of their huts to point in different directions, toward friends or relatives. During the course of any one camp women are continually adding to their huts or changing the way they face. I found that a good [126] way of keeping track of the little jealousies that exist in any small community was to make a daily plan of the camp, noting which huts were being altered to face in which direction. I noticed that Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, faced her hut very deliberately away from old Sau, and that nobody was anxious to make use of the space between Sau's hut and mine to build there.

361 On the third day Ekianga arrived with Kamaikan, and they in-

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 837 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
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688

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
• 518 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves anu sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I [illegible] that air of importance and

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

of protest that not even Cephu would do such a thing. There was much shaking of heads, and when Ekianga arrived and was told what had happened he stood still for a moment, then turned around, looking in all directions to see if there was any sign of smoke from another fire. He said just one word, "Cephu," and spat on the ground. [201] 224 372 578 156

By the time we got to the place where we were to make our first cast of the nets everyone was more silent and miserable than ever. It did not make matters any better to find Cephu there already, [262] contentedly sitting over a fire eating roast plantains. He looked up and greeted us in a friendly way, and when asked why he had followed his own path he opened his eyes wide and softly said that he had misunderstood and taken the wrong trail. There were angry remarks, but Cephu ignored them all and went on munching at his plantain, smiling at everyone in his kind, gentle way.

Ekianga and a few others made a brief reconnaissance, and when 224 they came back they gave instructions as to the best direction for setting up the nets. The womenfolk, who had been foraging around for mushrooms and nuts, picked up their baskets and went ahead with the small children. They trod lightly and made no noise beyond an occasional crunch of a rotten branch, buried deep beneath the carpet of leaves. We all spread out in a long semicircle, each man knowing exactly who should be to his right and who to his left. I went with Maipe, who had been sent by Njobo with his net. We soon lost sight and sound of the others, but Maipe knew just where he would be expected to set up his net, and he took a short cut. I lost all sense of direction and could not even tell on which side of us the women were waiting for the signal to beat in toward our nets. We followed a little stream and paused by an enormous outcrop of huge stone boulders, almost perfectly square in shape, some of them eight feet across each face. Maipe looked around, then sat down to wait. After a few minutes Moke's nephew appeared to our left, stringing his net out through the undergrowth as he came.

825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and 578 assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and 136 complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I 123 had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

224 This dance[1] was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
• 5 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
162 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
[165] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

[1] [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

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for reviving his earlier show of wit, relayed Manyalibo's message by standing in midcamp and shouting over in Cephu's direction, *"Nyama'e, nyama'e! Pika'i to, nyama UE!"* (Animal there! Animal there! Come at once, *you*, you animal!") The youngsters all laughed loudly, but the older men paid no attention. This sent Kenge into a sulk and he started calling us all animals, adding that we were a lot of savages, just like the village people. But now not even the youngsters were listening, for Cephu had appeared.

Trying not to walk too quickly, yet afraid to dawdle too deliberately, he made an awkward entrance. For as good an actor as Cephu it was surprising. By the time he got to the kumamolimo everyone was doing something to occupy himself—staring into the fire or up at the tree tops, roasting plantains, smoking, or whittling away at arrow shafts. Only Ekianga and Manyalibo looked impatient, but they said nothing. Cephu walked into the group, and still nobody spoke. He went up to where a youth was sitting in a chair. Usually he would have been offered a seat without his having to ask, and now he did not dare ask, and the youth continued to sit there in as nonchalant a manner as he could muster. Cephu went to another chair where Amabosu was sitting. He shook it violently when Amabosu ignored him, at which he was told, "Animals lie on the ground."

This was too much for Cephu, and he went into a long diatribe about how he was one of the oldest hunters in the group, and one of the best hunters, and that he thought it was very wrong for everyone to treat him like an animal. Only villagers were like animals. Masisi spoke up in his favor and ordered Amabosu to give up his chair. Amabosu did so with a gesture of contempt and moved over to the far side of the group. Moke was the only one to stay completely apart. He sat outside his hut. He had finished skinning the [281] civet and was twisting strands of vine together to make a frame for the hat. He looked peaceful and contented.

224 765 578 156 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 765 578 156 593 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, [602] [621] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 156 152 224 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu 224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, 578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped 156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857] by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593] burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] [593]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602]
the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them- [522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

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This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, 593
insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious 578
issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and 593
ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest 578
brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been 554
brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed 157
that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, [164]
which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside 578
his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him 609
the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly 276
from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a 576
visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

578 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and
607 knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only
276 wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take
576 offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to
[152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should
593 never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This
578 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier
276 than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tear-
152 lessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed. 593 578 276 152

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was positively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he 593 578 152 [141] [536]

593 578 152 [536] was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 578 152 621 626 689 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 626 576 836 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an [152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four 685
hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to 159
his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine 627
and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly [752]
because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It 578 •
blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very 578
involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a 583
sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married. 543
as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had 595
just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since 578
Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not 853
to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they 607
could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health. [583]

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

607 593 595 853 918 [252] the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time, and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 595 411 578 607 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end, Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 595 918 607 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that. 593 595 598 607

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake. [853]

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

593 595 578 606 607 887 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 578 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

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The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway. 621 626 578

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass. 626 593 584

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility. 626 157 181

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator. 621 829 778

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
• 578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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222 gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy
262 months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing.
222 It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller
621 units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it
222 is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the
177 villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.
222 Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley
621 that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest.
[439] A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

222 Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan.
621 The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said,
• 578 and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco
177 and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 621
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 578
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted 177
by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister, Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734]
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda, shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the [821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred 578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including 602 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had 224

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey.

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One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962. FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as every-
578 one would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet
224 later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?
[602]

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and
[574] industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters
628 to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement. 621 628

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory. 621 578 [628]

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and marking out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me. 621 [222] 621 122

exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*ospita*" or "*sultani*"[a] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[a] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's sister for wife and there will be no more noise."

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the fact that there were far too many young people around who should be married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subenenji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sula banyama, sula Betubenji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongo su puti mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 • [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

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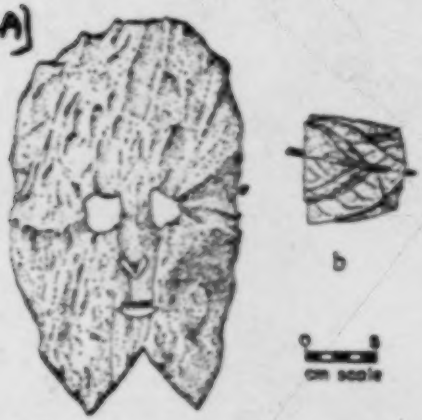

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

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fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved.

621 582 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor.

621 58 [591]

[P 220-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
574 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 591 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered preferable, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable • 58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status [851] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 621 583 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut, a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

602 621 561 121 We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

• 58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *epud'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship. 58 • 621 602

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels. 561 621 [571]

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation. 881 885 581 561

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition. 888 561

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual 621 613 561 621 [582] [591] [181]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P [P, 180-A]
Z society. Schebesta also mentions other instru-
881 ments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and
177 the secret society) among the south Lese,
608 namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or
534 *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot
(*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asa-*
Z *ragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part
[563] in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the
villagers seek to maintain and extend their
control over the Pygmies.

Z Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish
P two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager ele-
881 ment of initiation associated with circumcision
177 and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element
P of initiation into the men's secret society (*iori*).
[578]

Marriage

P Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult
581 to determine which is the stronger, the interests
584 of the hunting band or the interests and mutual
621 affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [836] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [684] [177] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai hopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dima hopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180-B]

[ARCHERS]

[p.180-c]

Marriage, however, is not necessarily preceded by a period of courtship. Schebesta (1952, 233) attests to the betrothal of infants by their parents but does not know how frequently these betrothals result in marriage. The ultimate essential is agreement between individuals and their respective lineages. The qualities in a man appreciated by a girl are courage, decision, prowess in the hunt, and ability in the dance. Her hunting band also appreciates these qualities and receives favorably any suitor who brings presents of game that he has killed, but it is said to be more interested in the suitor's band. There is no formal adult betrothal; the boy visits the girl's camp and spends some days there, giving her small presents. Her acceptance of the presents and reciprocation of his attentions constitute betrothal; it remains only to secure the agreement of the two bands and to overcome the obstacle of exchange price. If a youth fears that his prowess as a hunter or dancer is not sufficiently impressive to prove his manliness, he will resort to various love philters. Philters are also used by Mbuti girls.

584 [581] • [431] [832]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p. 220- D.]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
174 will constantly assert every claim he has, or
thinks he has, to her services, even to her
children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus
maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable
girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to
find one. There is always the alternative of
compensation or service, or both. For compen-
sation the help of the village patron is usually
sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the
first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which
involves no ceremony other than a mutually
agreeable exchange and a token offering of
gifts, such as a few arrows.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 571 602 563 608 P 571 602 use the appropriate kinship terminology and follow the appropriate behavior patterns. It is difficult to see what attracts the Mbuti girl to such a union except the politically advantageous position in which it places her. Unfortunately, little is known of the extent to which she stays in the village, or to which she takes advantage of her ability to slip into the forest unpursued and rejoin her band from time to time.

C 563 177 571 608 However, this is considered a selfish and antisocial way of attracting Mbuti adherents, and it is only countenanced by other villagers if it is done because the villager concerned is unable, for one reason or another, to acquire a villager wife. More generally the villagers try to introduce the Mbuti into their own kinship framework by insisting not only on the myth of hereditary ownership, but by positing a parallel relationship, a *kpara* referring to his Mbuti as his "children," but not allowing them sibling status with his real children.

C 563 608 582 571 P *177 571 582 As their "father" he then claims the right to concern himself with all their domestic problems, and most particularly with marriage. For an Mbuti boy to marry an utterly unrelated Mbuti girl owned by his *kpara's* brother, for instance, would be considered by the villagers as incestuous, and prohibited. It could only take place if either the boy or girl changed allegiance. Marriage between the Mbuti, then, becomes a matter of major concern to the villagers, who will not only provide all the necessary ritual for the Mbuti but who will also have to negotiate between themselves, just as if it were a village marriage, the *kpara* of the groom paying appropriate wealth to the *kpara* of the bride. In every respect the *kpara* act as parents, except that it is as if they were considering a less important line of children by some very inferior wife. In 1957–58 the wealth paid by one villager to another C [583] for an Mbuti wife for his own Mbuti "child" was about a tenth of what he would have to pay for a villager wife for his real child.

C 608 582 583 571 P *177 582 571 • 581 The matter is one of some concern, because a wealthy villager might "own" or claim to own a hundred or more Mbuti, and his only assurance against bankruptcy is an insistence upon his hereditary rights over the offspring of his male Mbuti, and his right to demand wealth from other villagers whose Mbuti married his own Mbuti girls. Considerable conflict arose between villagers as a result, because while the Mbuti accepted the feasting and their share of the wealth, they did not accept any of the obligations, and according to their own custom of betrothal and marriage they did not consider the marriage final until a child had been born. At any time before then, without asking leave of anyone, Mbuti or villager, they were free to sepa-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective *kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatural sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 581 789 P 581 #177 [789] craft or to a breach of marital taboos, as indeed are any disasters, natural or unnatural, that befall the couple. The Mbuti, not having any traditional means of divination, are considered by the villagers to be dependent on them for help, though a few Mbuti have learned the art and become quite highly respected by the villagers. Sometimes if villagers come to hear of a marital dispute within a band, they will try to settle it by reference to divination, and if so the Mbuti appear to accept the settlement without question, in the village, but in no way allow it to impinge upon the reality of the situation in the forest. So once again the only dependency that exists is in the minds of the villagers.

DEATH

C 761 784 754 P 761 #177 [608] Even when it comes to the greatest crisis of all, death, the Mbuti seem to accept all the externals of village ritual but none of the implications. The invariable accusation of witchcraft and the equally invariable mention of supernatural sanctions as an alternative cause of death are made to remind the Mbuti not to falter in fulfilling their obligations to their *kpara*. Village insistence upon the unnatural causes of death serves to sow enough seeds of doubt in the mind of the Mbuti to cause at least momentary fear.

C 764 761 [608] P 764 761 #177 The actual ritual of burial is conducted under strict village supervision, the necessary payments being made by the *kpara*. The *kpara* and his family, as well as many other villagers, attend personally in the procession to the grave, and the *kpara* is almost certain to take a prominent part in the subsequent discussion as to the cause of the death and be present at the divination, if one is held. But whereas the Mbuti generally subject themselves to village ritual with the best of grace, they become quickly impatient following the burial of the dead and sometimes simply walk out of the *bawza* where the cause of death is being determined, leaving it entirely to the villagers to decide whatever pleases them. The village preoccupation with death and its unnatural causes disquiets the Mbuti, and when an Mbuti dies in a village there is frequently voiced suspicion that somehow the village is responsible; maybe one of the old curses is at work, perhaps a neglected *kpara* is employing a sorcerer to seek revenge, or, more likely, it is impersonally simply the village itself that caused the death.

P 761 764 Among themselves the Mbuti do not bother to settle the question, if they ask it, but if they feel that the village is to blame in some un-

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is required. 621
In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
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Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do 578
that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and 589
Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted 581
desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moke refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It 589
was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké 581
had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill 753
that promise had brought about her illness.

Moke sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but [577]
it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are counte- 836
nanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately [578]
descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become en- 836
raged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, 578
Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 582 583 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. 628 581 594 182 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 224 131 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 224 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married. If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 P 583 462 [581] P [601] [561]

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583

Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593

He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

573 152 bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry
• [581] Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that
[836] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire,
521 with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder,
583 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was
584 not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and
584 saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

P 177 439 571 [640]

wants something from a Negro, he wheedles and "begs" for it. He may thus "borrow" a mortar, a skin-headed drum for dancing, etc., and will not return it until the Negro comes after it or sends for it. He will not put any of these things under cover, or care for them; he leaves them out in the rain to mildew and rot. The owner has to see that his property is cared for, and this forms a subject on which the Negro can make fun of the pygmy.

The form of this relationship is therefore a grudging duty in the case of giving, and a wheedling begging in the case of receiving. These outer forms fail to reveal the inner feeling of loyalty and affection between the parties concerned, but rather symbolize the existing situation in which the Negro is at the top of the scale and the pygmy at the bottom.

Z 186

Negro attitude toward their pygmies.—The Negroes distinguish four ranks or orders of living beings: people, pygmies, chimpanzees, and other animals. The pygmies are thus considered a species apart, neither human nor animal, but in between. The main point of distinction lies not in their size or physique, but in the fact that the pygmies do no cultivation.

Z 186 563 581 P 581

The Negroes think of their pygmies as barbaric and uncultured, but at the same time they are often fond of them. A Negro may occasionally marry a pygmy woman, and the children are considered real children, complete human beings; they are brought up with the Negro's other children. The Negroes say that pygmy women are good in bed, cheap, and prolific, but that they are useless for women's work—cultivation and cooking. For a pygmy woman it is a great rise in the scale of living to marry a Negro as his second or third wife, despite the fact that pygmy wives are usually the butt of humor from the Negro wives. This is, how-

Z [515] [522]

[P·324-B]

Z 186 562 581 P

ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

Z 186 246 291 193 P

. . . .

Z 563 881 P 171 821

In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

Z P 561

The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

[P. 336-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

563
.582
[166]

There is no reliable detailed information as to population movement, though the general opinion is that the population has remained static for some time; nor are there data on the frequency of intermarriage between Mbuti and villagers. Jadin (1936) and Costermans (1937) confirm Schebesta's (1952, 47) opinion that miscegenation is a one-way movement. A village male may take a Pygmy wife, in which case the children will be brought up in the village, but a Pygmy male will never take a villager wife. This holds equally among archers and net hunters (Putnam, 1948, 325). Information for the Aka is, as usual, conflicting and unreliable. Schweinfurth (1874) asserts that there is intermarriage between the Aka and the Mangbetu; Burrows (1898) claims that there is no such intermarriage.

Information as to the attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward miscegenation is also lacking. Schebesta says that certain northern tribes of villagers aver horror at the idea of intermarriage, but that in spite of this it takes place and is nowhere unknown. Both the Lese and the Bira tribes, with which the archers and net hunters are most in contact, are considerably modified physically owing to the frequency of miscegenation (Schebesta, 1952; Geluwe, 1956),

[144]

[P.161-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 161-C]
but Schebesta estimates at only 5 per cent "the 563
proportion of Negro blood passed to the 582.
Pygmies" (1938, 111). Costermans (1937), how- [144]
ever, who made a detailed study of the Watsa-Gombari population, says that in most villages (in his area anyway) marriages of Lese or Mamvu with Pygmy women are rare.

LANGUAGE

Contemporary linguists are divided as to the 197
question of Pygmy language. Some take the 114
view that a search for such a language is bound to be fruitless; others (Putnam) find traces of it only in personal names and a few place names and names of animals and plants. Schebesta (1952), however, believes that he has found the remnants of the original Pygmy tongue among the Efe archers. Efe and KiBira are the two main camp languages of the Mbuti, the former belonging to the Mamvu-Lese-Mvuba language group, and the latter to the semi-Bantu Bira.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band. 000 582 621

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of 583 [171] [439]

[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage. [613]

[P. 180-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objections to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to polygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment. 595 [177] [582]

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band. 587 587 589

Relations between husband and wife and their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride. 593

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*.

P 628 [574]

P [582] [224]

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

P Z 648 186 Z [563]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[P. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved. 621 582. 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor. 621 58 [591]

[P.220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p. 220- D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
58 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
179 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Intermarriage

P 144 582 As pointed out above, this traffic is one-way. There are no records of Pygmy men taking villager wives, nor any acknowledged instances Z 144 563 582 of Pygmy men begetting children by villager mistresses. Blood counts (Schebesta, 1938, 111), however, reveal a small proportion of villager influence in hunting communities, which may or may not be accounted for by the return of the half-breed offspring from the village to the P Z [851] forest. Normally the children of such unions are brought up as villagers. The father will, to the best of his ability, prevent children by his Pygmy wife from returning to the forest, and apparently the Pygmies themselves regard such children as villagers.

Z P 582 There are not enough data on individual intermarriage for us to determine how far this one-way tendency is a form of hypergamy. It may, in fact, simply be the result of the practical consideration that no villager woman could fulfill the requirements of a woman and wife in a Pygmy hunting camp. Even if the latter is the P 582 case, it does not answer the question as to why a Pygmy girl should marry a villager. Unfor- 186 tunately, there is no evidence that gives us even the hint of an answer. There is certainly no

[P 251-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

P 582 186

P [583] [439]

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

Z 563 179

P 179 62 36

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

use the appropriate kinship terminology and follow the appropriate behavior patterns. It is difficult to see what attracts the Mbuti girl to such a union except the politically advantageous position in which it places her. Unfortunately, little is known of the extent to which she stays in the village, or to which she takes advantage of her ability to slip into the forest unpursued and rejoin her band from time to time.

However, this is considered a selfish and antisocial way of attracting Mbuti adherents, and it is only countenanced by other villagers if it is done because the villager concerned is unable, for one reason or another, to acquire a villager wife. More generally the villagers try to introduce the Mbuti into their own kinship framework by insisting not only on the myth of hereditary ownership, but by positing a parallel relationship, a *kpara* referring to his Mbuti as his "children," but not allowing them sibling status with his real children.

As their "father" he then claims the right to concern himself with all their domestic problems, and most particularly with marriage. For an Mbuti boy to marry an utterly unrelated Mbuti girl owned by his *kpara's* brother, for instance, would be considered by the villagers as incestuous, and prohibited. It could only take place if either the boy or girl changed allegiance. Marriage between the Mbuti, then, becomes a matter of major concern to the villagers, who will not only provide all the necessary ritual for the Mbuti but who will also have to negotiate between themselves, just as if it were a village marriage, the *kpara* of the groom paying appropriate wealth to the *kpara* of the bride. In every respect the *kpara* act as parents, except that it is as if they were considering a less important line of children by some very inferior wife. In 1957–58 the wealth paid by one villager to another for an Mbuti wife for his own Mbuti "child" was about a tenth of what he would have to pay for a villager wife for his real child.

The matter is one of some concern, because a wealthy villager might "own" or claim to own a hundred or more Mbuti, and his only assurance against bankruptcy is an insistence upon his hereditary rights over the offspring of his male Mbuti, and his right to demand wealth from other villagers whose Mbuti married his own Mbuti girls. Considerable conflict arose between villagers as a result, because while the Mbuti accepted the feasting and their share of the wealth, they did not accept any of the obligations, and according to their own custom of betrothal and marriage they did not consider the marriage final until a child had been born. At any time before then, without asking leave of anyone, Mbuti or villager, they were free to sepa-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective *kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Of all the various *rites de passage* practiced by the villagers, and to which they are forced to introduce the Mbuti, none probably is so important as the *nkumbi* initiation of the boys into manhood. Among the Bantu tribes this is practiced with circumcision, among the Sudanic it is without circumcision, though there is a tendency among some Sudanic tribes situated close to the Bantu, such as the Lesé bordering on the Bira, to adopt the custom, one village at a time.

The major purpose of the *nkumbi*, as stated by the tribes that practice it (I refer mainly to the Forest Bira here), is to fit the youths as men, to make them men in the eyes of the ancestors. A boy who does not undergo the *nkumbi* is denied access to the ancestors after death, and during his life has the status of a child. Boys between the ages of eight and twelve, generally between nine and eleven, are eligible for the ceremony, which now takes place once every three years and lasts for two or more months. The traditional time element has been completely upset by the administration, which, together with the missionaries, has tried to discourage the whole institution. But the *nkumbi* initiation has remained as the only way to achieve adult status within the tribe. I have seen an entire *nkumbi* ceremony, including circumcision, held for a boy who died just prior to being initiated.

Effectively the *nkumbi* also unites a few neighboring villages as a single political unit, and affords an opportunity though the system of *karé* blood brotherhood, of cementing specific political bonds. It also effectively unites those tribes who practice circumcision in opposition to those who do not practice it, and it determines certain lines of marriage prohibition.

One such line, of course, divides the circumcised from the uncircumcised, and theoretically marriage between a Bira and a Lesé would be unthinkable. The only cases known to me allegedly happened during war, captive women being taken as wives. But equally theoretically these prohibitions should apply to the Mbuti who, according to the practice of their *kpara*, not having any of their own, either do or do not suffer circumcision at village hands. As we shall see, however, forest territorial organization is no respecter of village tribalism, and band composition is fluid, to say the least. Consequently, in any one band one can by no means be sure that all the men are circumcised, and the question is never raised. Further than that, there is no objection to marriage, among the Mbuti, between a family whose *kpara* circumcises and one whose *kpara* does not. Such marriages would cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to his credit, increasing his prestige and also somewhat increasing his trading opportunities. The trade is mainly thought of in terms of meat and labor on the side of the Mbuti, village foods, clothes and tobacco on the side of the villager. A fairly friendly relationship does sometimes develop between two *karé*, who, regardless of the status differentiation, undergo the whole *nkumbi* together, suffering the same ordeals side by side, and are perhaps more united by age than they are separated by the status differentiation.

The political aspects of *karé* brotherhood reinforce the economics, not only serving as a basis for compensation against a migrant Mbuti, but also for extending the *karé* relationship to link the Mbuti's *kpara* with the village boy's father. The relationship is primarily between individuals, but it nonetheless creates felt obligations between the families involved, and one family of villagers may invoke the help of another family in a dispute, through an Mbuti *karé* link. The kinship ramifications of *karé* brotherhood are still far from clear from the village point of view, and it seems that the introduction of the Mbuti to the system may have somewhat disorganized the traditional system. For the Mbuti there is no connection between *karé* and kinship, and effectively there can be none among the villagers. If there were, then the formation of a *karé* tie between *kpara* and their own Mbuti would be incestuous, and the formation of such ties with unrelated families, conceived of as a sibling relationship, would effectively prohibit marriage in that direction and create an impossibly confused dual kinship system. Yet *karé* do refer to each other sometimes as "brother," and take advantage of their thus extended kinship relations.

The religious aspects of *karé* brotherhood are far less easy to define, and far less easy for the investigator to determine because they are seldom, if ever, discussed. I have never heard such a discussion, unless I instigated it, except on the occasion of the death of a villager. On the death of an Mbuti it is generally only the other aspects of the *karé* relationship that are discussed, involving liability for funerary expenses, compensation for outstanding obligations, divination of the cause of death. But when a villager dies the Mbuti *karé* is introduced into the heart of the funerary ritual, having to perform divers functions such as beating the villager's wives, leading an attack upon all close kin of the deceased, conveniently clustered together for the purpose, "to drive away evil," as the villagers explained it among themselves and to me. The Mbuti *karé* is also made responsible for providing certain foods for the deceased and, I believe, certain herbs

P C 121 648 There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist between two peoples in a context such as this. Apart from one of symbiosis, implying interdependence, there could be political subjugation, such as existed, say, between the Tussi and the Hutu. But that is plainly not the case here. The villagers themselves admit their inability to exert physical force to bend the Mbuti to their will, for the Mbuti always have the ultimate escape of flight to the sanctuary of the forest. The villagers are completely unequipped to pursue the Mbuti into the forest, and never attempt it. They are incapable of even finding the Mbuti if the hunters wish not to be found. And, as we have seen, there is no effective political mechanism for maintaining any kind of political relationship, let alone one of superordination/subordination.

C 563 121 P *177 121 Another possible relationship would be one of assimilation, such as occurred among the Ganda of East Africa, where two different peoples merged, as did their two different economies. At the present there is no question of actual assimilation, but the existence of linguistic and institutional similarities certainly indicates an interchange of ideas, at least. But it is, at the moment, an interchange of outward forms only, and not of the accompanying systems and structure. And while a great deal of intimacy is expressed, in action as in word, between the two groups, there is also a great deal of expressed opposition, and sometimes hostility.

C 563 121 P *177 • 582 121 The intermarriage between Mbuti girls and village men and the attempted absorption of the Mbuti into the village kinship system may be considered as steps toward assimilation, but if so they are very tentative and preliminary steps, and as such need not concern us here. Indeed we shall find that there are other indications of the reverse process, of separation. There is no question of physical separation in the sense of the expulsion of one group by the other, but a perfectly valid alternative relationship left to us for consideration is one of ideological separation accompanied by a mutually accepted territorial separation—a form of indigenous apartheid.

P 166 *177 182 This in fact seems to be the case, for in common conversation, as in action, both groups distinguish the village and the village people from the forest and the forest people. The Mbuti effectively are the only group to cross the territorial boundaries, and the ideological boundaries remain inviolate on both sides. When the Mbuti cross into the village world they leave the forest behind them, and with it they leave their forest social system. Forest values cannot be so easily left

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 628

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred 166
territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry 574
far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assump- 131
tion that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus 628
territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to ex- 166
press and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also 574
used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it 131
is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights 582
as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity 621
in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even 614
when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over 613
the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[8]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[8] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net. [592]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance. P 601

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment. P 768 602 [768] [602] P [597] [56] P [591]

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only P 582 835 61 [60] [55]

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little
[578] between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6 shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[see page 328 -- Analyst]

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [588]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4'
Mbuti

 836

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582] •
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. [829]
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

 628

tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary 584
complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level 561
of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band 628
where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of 591
whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict.

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the 628
balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, 591
this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only 583
called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation.

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily 628
adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic 582
strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue 583
that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue [561]
is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant mar-
582 riage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing
583 between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible.
628 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relation-
581 ship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a
594 basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such
182 an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is
224 generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are fre-
131 quently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of
224 the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

602 621 561 121 We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apua'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and [592] twenty-five the average. Each hut [162] contains one man, his wife, or wives, and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

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628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

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[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band. 000 582 621

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of 583 • [171] [439]

[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage. [613]

[P. 180-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-A]

583 the forest, pay a dog, five spears, and five arrows. Schebesta also cites the third possibility: a youth lives with his wife's band for some years, "pays" for his wife by his service to that band, then returns with her to his own band. If the payment or service proves to be insufficient, the girl's lineage claims the children, which otherwise belong to the father's band. Marriage by capture is unknown, and there are no indications that this practice ever existed.

583 585 [177] Nuptial ceremony is lacking among most Mbuti, but Schebesta says that in imitation of the Lese the southern archers practice a form of double ceremony in which the two bands formally meet and exchange their daughters. Normally, however, the archers seem to have, if anything, little ceremony. A youth, having secured the agreement of his betrothed, takes her back to his camp, with or without the permission of her band. There she lives with his mother, who teaches her the customs of the camp. Shortly afterward members of her band arrive. They demand their side of the bargain, either a bride in exchange or a gift of arrows,

[ARCHERS]

583 585 axes, and other implements. If the young man is unable to produce these, they take the girl back to her own camp, but cannot prevent her from returning to her betrothed. The process is then repeated. The youth exhorts his betrothed to return to her own camp until he can find the necessary wealth, but if she insists on staying with him, her relatives will leave her and the matter will be settled later. The girl builds a house, and the two live together. There is no ceremony, although the youth's band will, if possible, arrange a feast and dance to celebrate the event. The marriage contract, such as it is, is essentially between the two bands concerned.

583 Marriage by exchange, by which two hunting bands exchange girls, has its complications. The girl received replaces the girl given, not only in her capacity for work but as a child bearer. If either girl falls short in these respects, the double union is nullified. Similarly, if either of [586] the parties willfully brings about the dissolution of one marriage, the contract is void, thus possibly breaking up the other perfectly happy and fertile union. This dissolution can be avoided either by making another exchange or by substituting a payment.

595 Marriage by exchange is not conducive to the practice of polygyny, and Schebesta (1952, 244) estimates that 6 per cent of Mbuti marriages are polygynous; 10 per cent, in the border re-

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[NET HUNTERS]

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621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
574 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

Z 563 796 P 177 796 P Z [844] [764] [765] P 583 585 177 Z 563 585

[P.251-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.252-A]

P 583 585 177 Z 563 585 local villager custom. The latter ceremony is conducted entirely by the villagers and at their expense. On these occasions the villager takes the leading part and carries out his own ritual, but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his own indigenous way of recognizing the event. The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy adds to his own.

P 177 881 575 Z 563 881 575 With initiation the situation may seem to be different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the villager custom of initiation accompanied by circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend the same initiation schools which are always run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation is nothing if not entry into a very definite indigenous system of values, yet here we have the Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordinate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Schebesta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or villager, into membership of the Lese *tori* association (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent, the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatural sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[574] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[2]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [2] The drama not only appears like a reenactment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 591 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered preferable, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable 58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status [851] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 621 583 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut, a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is re- 621
quired. In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
591
621

 628

tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary 584
complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level 561
of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band 628
where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of 591
whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict.

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the 628
balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, 591
this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only 583
called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation.

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily 628
adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic 582
strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue 583
that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue [561]
is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 582 583 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. 628 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relation- 58: ship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a 594 basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such 182 an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 224 131 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 224 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

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About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 578 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [754] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 578 [583] If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

P 177 585 C 563 585 good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C 881 [584] The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584 The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584 Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Katala, several miles

beyond Eboyo. So she refused to have anything to do with Pumba. 584

Since the prime objective was to get Akidinimba married, once it was plain that Kidaya would not take Pumba, everyone lost interest in her and returned to the problem of her fellow initiate. Circumstance forced the issue, for while all this was going on a close relative of Akidinimba's, a boy named Mulanga, decided to get married to Atete's sister. Nobody saw any harm in this, and so arrangements were pursued and they were duly married. Mulanga was quite non- 585
plused by the ritual, for he had spent most of his life in the forest 179
and knew little of village customs. He was particularly perturbed when at the end of the ceremony his bride was seized by a village woman and led away. He was not quite sure what to do and trotted behind them at a safe distance until he was able to follow his wife into the house that had been set aside for him.

Mulanga's marriage meant that he was obliged to provide a sister 583
for his bride's brother, Atete, to marry. Villagers will compensate 584
families for the loss of a daughter by the payment of money or goods, but the Pygmies find it necessary to arrange for an exchange, so that no group is ever depleted of its womenfolk. Akidinimba, who had still not forgotten how she had been jilted and insulted, saw in this situation an opportunity for revenging herself on Kidaya, the unwilling receiver of Pumba's attentions. So she volunteered to marry Atete. Everyone, except Kidaya, was delighted, and Atete and his family agreed. By the time the date for the wedding was set, Akidinimba began to have doubts and thinking of the freedom she was about to lose she wept day and night. But there was no escape. The villagers of Katala had arranged a great feast and this made everyone all the more anxious for the wedding.

Atete, however, heard of some honey far off in the forest, several 585
days' march away, and at the last moment he set off. The villagers protested loudly, but Atete merely said that the wedding could take place any time, but the honey could not wait. As it was only a

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed 574 house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to [593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage, [583] [586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home, 585 the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the 602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi- 593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 583 829 177 C 583 462 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. P 583 462 [581] To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies P [601] [561] extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

593 152 [581] bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that [836] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 521 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, • 583 584 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 584 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to 593
have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what 584
did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Badorinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Badorinji ended 593
with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth 584
her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry 626
Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless [583] •
a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and [554]
no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was 584
not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Babama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust 584 Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had 177 already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to [836] wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the vil- [571] lagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good ex- [439] change-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games [186] of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry 584 Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an ele- [583] phant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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585 nyunga on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Babama.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambabo's marriage to Taphu, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had [583] given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 179 186 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Masisi said that even if Munyunga *was* a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Mulanga, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*bule*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

361 621 widows; there are no ritual structures. There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts 361 621 572 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is dictated more than anything else by the friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 361 Once they are in this camp they will stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do [805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 574 **Intercamp visits.**—For various reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring [583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

[P. 336-A]

628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

[P. 336-B]

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of 583 trouble. However, if the family group 591 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 584 he may, in desperation, appeal to his 602 mother's family group to provide one. If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

[P. 337-A]

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

[P. 337-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P [P, 180-A]
Z society. Schebesta also mentions other instru-
881 ments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and
177 the secret society) among the south Lese,
608 namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or
534 *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asa-ragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part
Z [563] in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Z Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish
P two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager ele-
881 ment of initiation associated with circumcision
177 and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element
P of initiation into the men's secret society (*tore*).
[576]

Marriage

P Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult
581 to determine which is the stronger, the interests
584 of the hunting band or the interests and mutual
621 affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [836] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [684] [177] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.180-C]

Marriage, however, is not necessarily preceded by a period of courtship. Schebesta (1952, 233) attests to the betrothal of infants by their parents but does not know how frequently these betrothals result in marriage. The ultimate essential is agreement between individuals and their respective lineages. The qualities in a man appreciated by a girl are courage, decision, prowess in the hunt, and ability in the dance. Her hunting band also appreciates these qualities and receives favorably any suitor who brings presents of game that he has killed, but it is said to be more interested in the suitor's band. There is no formal adult betrothal; the boy visits the girl's camp and spends some days there, giving her small presents. Her acceptance of the presents and reciprocation of his attentions constitute betrothal; it remains only to secure the agreement of the two bands and to overcome the obstacle of exchange price. If a youth fears that his prowess as a hunter or dancer is not sufficiently impressive to prove his manliness, he will resort to various love philters. Philters are also used by Mbuti girls.

584 • [581] [431] [832]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
58 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628 between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through 574 interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families. [584] [613] [184]

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628 form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining 476 361 camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [578] [621]

[P. 228-D]

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

PUBERTY: THE *ELIMA*

At the next crisis in the life cycle, however, it is the band rather than the nuclear family that takes charge. By early childhood the child has already grown away from its family to some extent, and become more a member of an age group cutting across kinship lines. At puberty the boy or girl may not even be living with kin any more, let alone in the nuclear family. But even if they are, the band takes control of the situation. It is an occasion that concerns the band as such, for adolescence leads into marriage, and marriage will inevitably bring about a significant change in the economic structure of the band. A member of the band may leave it, or a new member may join it, or, if the marriage is within the band, then at least there will still be an additional net, and a change in the hunting and gathering pattern and perhaps in interfamily alliances. The process of fission and fusion might also be affected by the political implications of the marriage. The *elima* is best regarded as a premarital festival. It does not necessarily lead directly into a marriage that is marriage in the sense of a final, childbearing union. It is rather a preparation for marriage, an opportunity for the youngsters to find suitable partners. It does not even have to end in betrothal, so there cannot be said to be a functional connection between *elima* and marriage.

The arrival at puberty among boys being somewhat less easy to determine, the signal for an *elima* is the first appearance of menstrual blood in a young girl. This is something that fills the local villagers with horror, and with fear of evil influences against which they take elaborate ritual precautions to protect themselves. These precautions are costly and inconvenient, and the girl who has brought both shame and annoyance to her family is hidden and treated harshly. There are elaborate cleansing ceremonies for the girl and her family. Among the Mbuti, however, the appearance of menstrual blood is a sign that the girl is now a potential mother, and it is consequently a signal for rejoicing and for preparation for motherhood. Thus an integral part of the festival is the selection of suitable potential husbands. Such selection demands that the boys prove their manhood, since it cannot be proven as simply as is the womanhood of the girl. In this sense, then, the *elima* is a joint initiation of boys and girls into adulthood. Having dealt with it in descriptive form elsewhere (Turn-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[574] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[2]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [2] The drama not only appears like a reenactment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable opportunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 591 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered preferable, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable 58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status [85] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 621 583 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut, a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is re- 621
quired. In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761
602 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
[177] phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the
761 whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so
761 with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
763 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
152 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[887] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.218]

CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 *Marriage*
621 As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which
584 might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass.
574 The third, probably the most important structurally, is the inter-
571 family visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns,
561 each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands,
584 it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial ex-
574 change, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of
[591] visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each
584 band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-
561

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tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary 584
complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level 561
of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band 628
where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of 591
whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict.

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the 628
balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, 591
this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only 583
called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation.

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily 628
adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic 582
strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue 583
that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue [561]
is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem-

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
771 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
765 festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
533 dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
182

P 177 585 C 563 585 good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C 881 [584] The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584 The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584 Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Katala, several miles

beyond Eboyo. So she refused to have anything to do with Pumba. 584

Since the prime objective was to get Akidinimba married, once it was plain that Kidaya would not take Pumba, everyone lost interest in her and returned to the problem of her fellow initiate. Circumstance forced the issue, for while all this was going on a close relative of Akidinimba's, a boy named Mulanga, decided to get married to Atete's sister. Nobody saw any harm in this, and so arrangements were pursued and they were duly married. Mulanga was quite non- 585
plused by the ritual, for he had spent most of his life in the forest 177
and knew little of village customs. He was particularly perturbed when at the end of the ceremony his bride was seized by a village woman and led away. He was not quite sure what to do and trotted behind them at a safe distance until he was able to follow his wife into the house that had been set aside for him.

Mulanga's marriage meant that he was obliged to provide a sister 583
for his bride's brother, Atete, to marry. Villagers will compensate 584
families for the loss of a daughter by the payment of money or goods, but the Pygmies find it necessary to arrange for an exchange, so that no group is ever depleted of its womenfolk. Akidinimba, who had still not forgotten how she had been jilted and insulted, saw in this situation an opportunity for revenging herself on Kidaya, the unwilling receiver of Pumba's attentions. So she volunteered to marry Atete. Everyone, except Kidaya, was delighted, and Atete and his family agreed. By the time the date for the wedding was set, Akidinimba began to have doubts and thinking of the freedom she was about to lose she wept day and night. But there was no escape. The villagers of Katala had arranged a great feast and this made everyone all the more anxious for the wedding.

Atete, however, heard of some honey far off in the forest, several 585
days' march away, and at the last moment he set off. The villagers protested loudly, but Atete merely said that the wedding could take place any time, but the honey could not wait. As it was only a

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

593 152 [581] bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that [836] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 521 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, 583 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was 584 not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 584 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to 593
have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what 584
did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Badorinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Badorinji ended 593
with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth 584
her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry 626
Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless [583]
a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and [554]
no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was 584
not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Babama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

584 [17] [836] [571] [459] [186] 584 [583]

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however, sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi, who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

[P. 336-B]

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of trouble. However, if the family group 583 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 591 he may, in desperation, appeal to his 584 mother's family group to provide one. 602 If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

[P. 337-A]

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

[P. 337-8]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-A]

583 the forest, pay a dog, five spears, and five arrows. Schebesta also cites the third possibility: a youth lives with his wife's band for some years, "pays" for his wife by his service to that band, then returns with her to his own band. If the payment or service proves to be insufficient, the girl's lineage claims the children, which otherwise belong to the father's band. Marriage by capture is unknown, and there are no indications that this practice ever existed.

583 585 [177] Nuptial ceremony is lacking among most Mbuti, but Schebesta says that in imitation of the Lese the southern archers practice a form of double ceremony in which the two bands formally meet and exchange their daughters. Normally, however, the archers seem to have, if anything, little ceremony. A youth, having secured the agreement of his betrothed, takes her back to his camp, with or without the permission of her band. There she lives with his mother, who teaches her the customs of the camp. Shortly afterward members of her band arrive. They demand their side of the bargain, either a bride in exchange or a gift of arrows,

[ARCHERS]

583 axes, and other implements. If the young man is
585 unable to produce these, they take the girl back to her own camp, but cannot prevent her from returning to her betrothed. The process is then repeated. The youth exhorts his betrothed to return to her own camp until he can find the necessary wealth, but if she insists on staying with him, her relatives will leave her and the matter will be settled later. The girl builds a house, and the two live together. There is no ceremony, although the youth's band will, if possible, arrange a feast and dance to celebrate the event. The marriage contract, such as it is, is essentially between the two bands concerned.

583 Marriage by exchange, by which two hunting bands exchange girls, has its complications. The girl received replaces the girl given, not only in her capacity for work but as a child bearer. If either girl falls short in these respects, the double union is nullified. Similarly, if either of
[586] the parties willfully brings about the dissolution of one marriage, the contract is void, thus possibly breaking up the other perfectly happy and fertile union. This dissolution can be avoided either by making another exchange or by substituting a payment.

595 Marriage by exchange is not conducive to the practice of polygyny, and Schebesta (1952, 244) estimates that 6 per cent of Mbuti marriages are polygynous; 10 per cent, in the border re-
[P 181-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
58 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
584 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
will constantly assert every claim he has, or
thinks he has, to her services, even to her
children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus
maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable
girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to
find one. There is always the alternative of
compensation or service, or both. For compen-
sation the help of the village patron is usually
sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the
first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which
involves no ceremony other than a mutually
agreeable exchange and a token offering of
gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

Z 585 628 563 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and P 172 585 Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). Further, P [533] [535] even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 571 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[p. 221-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-C]

married life free from the normal household chores. 609 57 585.

Unlike Schebesta's description of passionate lovers who, as married couples, in no way exhibit their affection in public, both premarital and postmarital sexual relations among the net hunters seem equally open, if not quite equally free. Flirtations among unmarried boys and girls of the same band, providing again they do not openly flout exogamic convention and do not result in childbirth, arouse no interest among the adults other than casual gossip. Married women, while as incorrigibly flirtatious as ever, are not expected to have sexual intercourse with any but their husbands. On the other hand, no social convention prevents the husband from having sexual intercourse with unmarried girls, though he does so with care to avoid unpleasantness with his wife. 836 837

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

Z 563 796 P 177 796 P Z [844] [764] [765] P 583 585 177 Z 563 585

[P.251-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P [P.252-A]
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local villager custom. The latter ceremony is conducted entirely by the villagers and at their expense. On these occasions the villager takes the leading part and carries out his own ritual, but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his own indigenous way of recognizing the event. The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy adds to his own.

P
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With initiation the situation may seem to be different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the villager custom of initiation accompanied by circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend the same initiation schools which are always run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation is nothing if not entry into a very definite indigenous system of values, yet here we have the Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordinate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Schebesta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or villager, into membership of the Lese *toré* association (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent, the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatural sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[R.108-J]

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*P [177] 12. Mbuti women may take part in a hoop dance while in the village, but traditional forest songs and dances are forbidden outside the forest. Note the body decoration on the leg of the woman to the rear; the dye is obtained from the gardenia fruit.

P [302] [386]

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13. A village wedding is arranged for the Mbuti hunter Makubasi. Here his bride, flanked by two sisters, stands in the middle of the village on banana-leaf cushions, fanned by her *kpara*'s sister. By arranging such marriages, the villagers hope to maintain some control over the Mbuti they believe they "inherit."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound. 778 822 533

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti. 533 [822]

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.) 533 881 [844] [585]

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or 000

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*. [192]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Opposite: Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with *kangay* juice for a wedding.

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Akidinimba (in hat) celebrates her forthcoming wedding with the other girls of the *elima*.

[P. 72-G]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with
kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

11

The Marriage of Kenge

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THE END OF THE ELIMA precipitated a crisis in the village. One of the many ways in which the villagers try to exert control over the Pygmies is by seeing that they are married according to Negro custom. The villager believes this achieves two ends—it subjects the married couple to the same supernatural authority that controls married villagers (the authority of village ancestors), and by careful manipulation and matchmaking it can increase and improve his own stock of Pygmies.

The Pygmies accept this, but in point of fact they consider a village wedding as no more than a formal betrothal at the most, and a

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 177 585 C 563 585 good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C 881 [584] The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584 The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584 Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Katala, several miles

beyond Eboyo. So she refused to have anything to do with Pumba. 584

Since the prime objective was to get Akidinimba married, once it was plain that Kidaya would not take Pumba, everyone lost interest in her and returned to the problem of her fellow initiate. Circumstance forced the issue, for while all this was going on a close relative of Akidinimba's, a boy named Mulanga, decided to get married to Atete's sister. Nobody saw any harm in this, and so arrangements were pursued and they were duly married. Mulanga was quite non- 585 •
plused by the ritual, for he had spent most of his life in the forest 177
and knew little of village customs. He was particularly perturbed when at the end of the ceremony his bride was seized by a village woman and led away. He was not quite sure what to do and trotted behind them at a safe distance until he was able to follow his wife into the house that had been set aside for him.

Mulanga's marriage meant that he was obliged to provide a sister 583
for his bride's brother, Atete, to marry. Villagers will compensate 584
families for the loss of a daughter by the payment of money or goods, but the Pygmies find it necessary to arrange for an exchange, so that no group is ever depleted of its womenfolk. Akidinimba, who had still not forgotten how she had been jilted and insulted, saw in this situation an opportunity for revenging herself on Kidaya, the unwilling receiver of Pumba's attentions. So she volunteered to marry Atete. Everyone, except Kidaya, was delighted, and Atete and his family agreed. By the time the date for the wedding was set, Akidinimba began to have doubts and thinking of the freedom she was about to lose she wept day and night. But there was no escape. The villagers of Katala had arranged a great feast and this made everyone all the more anxious for the wedding.

Atete, however, heard of some honey far off in the forest, several 585
days' march away, and at the last moment he set off. The villagers protested loudly, but Atete merely said that the wedding could take place any time, but the honey could not wait. As it was only a

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 574 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to [593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have [583] no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage, [586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home, 588 the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the 602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi- 593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidinimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Atete. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned.

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Atete was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Atete arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidinimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was telling her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Atete was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidinimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper.

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Atete arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sondu antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often.

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however, sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi, who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

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585 179 He did not seem particularly interested, because after listening to the argument for half a minute he yawned and went back into his hut without saying a word to anyone.

We all trekked back to the village, and there, under the watchful eye of the villagers, the wedding began. Masisi had refused to come, saying the Babama villagers were the worst savages of all, so Mambunia came in his place. He supervised as all the wedding gifts were placed on the ground, and he watched as various villagers, each in the hopes of improving his chances of getting some meat from the young couple, came forward and added either money, ax-blades, or small pieces of cloth. There were already several pots, quite a number of arrows, and a few trinkets given to the party at Katala village. The villagers who claimed Maliamo felt that this treasure belonged to them, but Mambunia denied this strongly. He pointed out that in any case, according to their own village custom, the gifts should sleep with the couple that night. Reluctantly the villagers agreed, and Mambunia promptly scooped the gifts up and brought them into the wedding house.

Taphu was supposed to put in an appearance at this point, but he could not be found. It was two hours before he was discovered, asleep, and dragged to the spot where we were all sitting around, eating
585 292 and drinking and singing. He arrived in his tattered village clothes but was promptly taken inside and made to change into a new cloth, put on a woven straw hat decorated with feathers, and arm himself with a new bow and a sheaf of arrows. Arrayed like this he appeared at the doorway in the late afternoon. Yambabo looked up and actually smiled. Taphu looked very handsome and imposing, if somewhat uninterested, and having made his duty appearance he went back inside and fell asleep again.

585 179 That night the wedding party stayed at Babama, all sleeping in the wedding house, feasted royally by the villagers. The next day the
[574] rites were completed in a ceremony which consisted largely of the

formal appearance of Yambabo, standing between two of her sisters, 585 •
preceded by a still uninterested-looking groom. As villager after 177
villager lectured the bride, Taphu shifted his weight listlessly from one foot to the other, scratched his back with his new arrows, and gazed longingly at some monkeys in the trees nearby. The villagers warned Yambabo that she belonged to them now; she could not call on Kenge whenever she wanted help but would have to come to them. They pointed out which villagers she was expected to help when she and her husband came from the forest, and she was told of all the things they would expect her to do for them. She was finally reminded of the villagers that had contributed gifts for the wedding.

Yambabo and Taphu were led back into the house, and the others resumed their singing and dancing and drinking. Munyunga, the burly villager who had done most of the talking and who claimed to "own" Taphu and Maliamo, said that he wanted to wait a while, according to custom, and then bring Maliamo with a large wedding party to Kenge's village. But to this the Pygmies as one man absolutely refused to agree. There was a great deal of argument, and it was plain that Munyunga was determined to have at least a return feast arranged for him. Normally he would have arranged this with Kenge's "owner," but this was wily old Kapapela, the paramount chief's brother, who had already made it known that he was in complete agreement with Kenge's refusal to have a village wedding, thus saving himself the expense. So Munyunga knew his chances were slim, particularly as Kenge was no longer even at Kapapela's village and refused to go there. He finally agreed to arrange matters with Kapapela later; in the meantime he would bring Maliamo to Kenge with a small party, but he would expect food, drink, and some kind of gift. He suggested a new hat. He agreed to come the next day, so we returned to Camp Putnam well pleased.

Munyunga arrived early the following morning, with Maliamo and an escort of three villagers. He was clearly annoyed by the fact

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177

that only Moke and Masisi were there to greet him. Everyone else had disappeared, many of them to hunt and others simply because they did not like Munyunga. He was even more upset when Masisi, instead of greeting him first, and then the villagers, went straight to Maliamo and led her away to his hut so that she could put down her bundle and refresh herself. Kenge was nowhere to be found. Moke invited the villagers to sit on my baraza, and they made loud remarks among themselves to the effect that as I was Kenge's new "owner" I should offer them beer. But I wanted to see what Kenge would do on his own, so I did nothing, although I had several containers of palm wine waiting inside the hut.

Kenge was finally found, engrossed in a gambling game behind Ekianga's house. He had hoped that the villagers would become discouraged and leave. But after two hours of patient waiting he emerged and slowly wandered across the clearing toward us. He stopped to look inside several huts on the way, chatting to anyone he could find as though he was completely unaware that the wedding party was waiting for him. He was as slow and as surly as he could be, and when he finally reached the villagers, who by then were not even trying to disguise their anger, he just took each of their hands in turn and then turned his back on them and asked me what I would like to have for lunch.

This was too much for Munyunga, who stood up and shouted that he was going to take Maliamo back with him, that Kenge was a child who did not know how to behave like an adult. This touched Kenge on a very sore spot, for he prided himself on being extremely adult. He motioned Munyunga to sit down again, and said, "You are only villagers—Ebamunyama is a white man. Isn't it right that I should ask him first?" I hastily said that I could wait, and without another word Kenge went away. About half an hour later he returned with two bottles of beer, some dried fish, and a bottle of palm oil. He put these on the ground beside Munyunga, and then wan-

dered out into the middle of the village, where he played with the 585 •
children. The next thing I knew he had disappeared again, and I 177
was told he had stolen one of the villager's bicycles and gone off [685]
down the road to Katala.

The Pygmies were obviously going to have nothing further to do with the villagers, and I felt sorry for Maliamo who had come and sat down beside them in the baraza. Feeling that I was in some way [123]
responsible, I asked if it was proper for me to offer them some palm wine. This eased the situation slightly. Munyunga and his friends stayed and drank their beer and palm wine, while Masisi and Moke did their best to pacify them by offering to have a meal cooked. But they said no, all they wanted was to drink. Only two Pygmies came to join them, and then only to see if they would be offered any leftovers. But Munyunga was not parting with a drop, even for Maliamo, who continued to sit uncomplainingly by his side. When the beer and palm wine were all finished, Munyunga still stayed —angry, surly, and very drunk indeed. Occasionally he called for more to drink, or asked where his new hat was, but nobody answered him. The few people that were in the village just went their way as though there were no visitors at all. Moke was fast asleep outside his hut, and Masisi was fashioning a new bow, never so much as glancing at the baraza.

It was beginning to darken when the villagers left, saying that the Pygmies were a lot of animals who didn't know how to behave, and that if Maliamo did not bear Kenge any children it would not be *their* fault.

As soon as the unwelcomed guests had left, the whole atmosphere 585
changed. Pygmies appeared unexpectedly from all directions, crowding around Maliamo to greet her. She went to the little hut that had been given to her and Kenge and began cooking. Kenge appeared, as if by magic, laughing and telling how he had met Mu-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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585 nyunga on the road, and that at the rate he and his friends were going it would take them three days to get back to Babama.

When evening fell, Kenge went up to Maliamo for the first time during the entire day and sat down with her as she served the food she had cooked. He brought me over a bowl and said he wanted me to try his wife's cooking. He sat beside me and ate, as he often did, from the same dish. I was a little curious that he had not paid more attention to Maliamo and I asked him about it. He laughed and replied that Maliamo was no stranger to him; the only difference now was that with Yambabo's marriage to Taphu, Maliamo was able to come to his village instead of his having to go to hers. He had [583] given her father an antelope; why did the villagers have to make all this fuss? He abruptly turned the conversation back to more important things—did I or did I not like his wife's cooking? I did.

585 177 186 At the central fire everyone was discussing the way Kenge had treated the villagers. They were mostly secretly delighted, but Masisi said that even if Munyunga *was* a drunken fool, there was no need to be quite so rude to him; that Kenge should have stayed, as he and Moke had done, and merely sat and said nothing. Mulanga, remembering his own wedding, said that he could see no sense in a village wedding anyway. But Masisi pointed out, "If we did not let the villagers think that they arrange our marriages, then how could we expect them to give us such fine feasts and present us with so many gifts?" Moke, picking up his pipe and passing it to his son to be filled, added, "After all, it doesn't really make any difference; you are not married properly until you give your in-laws a forest antelope. If you don't like your village wedding, don't give the antelope."

And so, everyone agreed, a village wedding was great fun, but "*bule*"—empty. It was completely empty, completely and absolutely. With that they laughed loudly and slapped one another on the back, and forgot all about it.

855 There is a
597 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister
[768] will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

• 585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta[8] describes one of the lat-
628 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in *peace and bear many offspring. After* this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

[P. 340-A]

585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

757 For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

755 177 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The greatest single cause of mortality in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

[p. 340-B]

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583 axes, and other implements. If the young man is
585 unable to produce these, they take the girl back to her own camp, but cannot prevent her from returning to her betrothed. The process is then repeated. The youth exhorts his betrothed to return to her own camp until he can find the necessary wealth, but if she insists on staying with him, her relatives will leave her and the matter will be settled later. The girl builds a house, and the two live together. There is no ceremony, although the youth's band will, if possible, arrange a feast and dance to celebrate the event. The marriage contract, such as it is, is essentially between the two bands concerned.

583 Marriage by exchange, by which two hunting bands exchange girls, has its complications. The girl received replaces the girl given, not only in her capacity for work but as a child bearer. If either girl falls short in these respects, the double union is nullified. Similarly, if either of
• [586] the parties willfully brings about the dissolution of one marriage, the contract is void, thus possibly breaking up the other perfectly happy and fertile union. This dissolution can be avoided either by making another exchange or by substituting a payment.

595 Marriage by exchange is not conducive to the practice of polygyny, and Schebesta (1952, 244) estimates that 6 per cent of Mbuti marriages are polygynous; 10 per cent, in the border re-
[P 181-B]

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 832
body and birth of twins are, among some 845
[P. 181-D] 829

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[P. 182-A]

832 Mbuti, considered as signs that adultery has
[845] taken place. An offended wife has the right to
[827] leave her husband; an offended husband may chastise his wife and attack his rival, possibly leading to a feud between two bands. If he finds his wife *in flagrante delicto*, he has the right to kill her lover. However, Schebesta cites no case histories.

Separation

• 586 A husband's justification for separation is based on the constant infidelity of the wife, her sterility, her selfishness leading to neglect of her husband, sickness, or suspicion of sorcery. On the woman's side, separation is justified by ill treatment by her husband, neglect of his hunting duties, and his infidelity. Separation is achieved simply by each band's reclaiming the daughter it gave in exchange, or effecting compensation. It does not necessarily involve hostility between the two bands, in which case the children may remain with their father, without their mother's becoming ostracized from the community. Also, a child may remain with its mother, even if she returns to her own band or remarries into another. Only when a child marries is there a necessity to settle the question of its economic allegiance.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Zaire F01

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives. P 593

Divorce

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost *certainly involves the village patrons*, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride. P 586 • P Z [177] [571] Z [563]

[P 221-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.222-A]

595 Polygyny exists but is almost as inconsiderable as among the archers. It sometimes 587 comes about through the very informality of • [586] divorce. A husband who has been deserted, having made every effort to retrieve his wife, seeks another. After remarrying in this way, he may find that he still misses his old companion and will try to woo her back, or she may return of her own accord. There is no information as to the relationship between the two wives, except that they have separate huts and that there is no open friction.

Widowhood

589 Information on widowhood, though not given in detail by Putnam, seems to correspond to the general information given by Schebesta for the archers. Widows tend to remain in their late husbands' band and are cared for by their children unless they remarry. 589 Aged widowers are similarly provided for. But 887 even widows and widowers too old to remarry can play a useful economic role by attending to various chores in camp when the entire band is out hunting, helping in the constant manufacture of *nkusa* twine and barkcloth, and by looking after small children.

585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed 574 house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to [593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage, [583] [586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home, the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the 585 602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi- 593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of trouble. However, if the family group 583 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 591 he may, in desperation, appeal to his 584 mother's family group to provide one. 602 If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

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[ARCHERS]

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gions most exposed to village influence. Objections to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to polygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment. 595 [177] [582]

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band. 587 587 589

Relations between husband and wife and their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride. 593

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[ARCHERS]

Widowhood

589 In any hunting band one may find divorced men and women between two states of marriage, and also widows and widowers who have had no chance to remarry. Widows, as mentioned, may remain in their late husbands' bands with their children or return to their own band. Aged widowers, no longer able to provide for a woman by hunting, remain single, as do the infirm, and both are provided for by their relatives.

589 179 Mbuti girls who have married villagers return sooner or later to their parental band; almost certainly when they are no longer fertile and cease to be of interest to their villager husbands. [587] If still young they may take a Pygmy husband; if too old to remarry, they live the life of a widow. These "widows" do their own cooking and receive frequent visits in the forest from their children who otherwise remain in the village. Sometimes one or another of the children will remain with her in the forest.[1]

[1] Such a practice is contrary to what I was told among all Mbuti groups, namely, that such children are never accepted in the forest as Mbuti and may make only short visits, like other villagers.

[P 182-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.222-A]

595 Polygyny exists but is almost as inconsiderable as among the archers. It sometimes
587 comes about through the very informality of
[586] divorce. A husband who has been deserted, having made every effort to retrieve his wife, seeks another. After remarrying in this way, he may find that he still misses his old companion and will try to woo her back, or she may return of her own accord. There is no information as to the relationship between the two wives, except that they have separate huts and that there is no open friction.

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589 Information on widowhood, though not given in detail by Putnam, seems to correspond to the general information given by Schebesta for the archers. Widows tend to remain in their late husbands' band and are cared for by their children unless they remarry.
589 Aged widowers are similarly provided for. But
889 even widows and widowers too old to remarry can play a useful economic role by attending to various chores in camp when the entire band is out hunting, helping in the constant manufacture of *nkusa* twine and barkcloth, and by looking after small children.

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[P. 181-C]

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choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing. 123 648 764

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint. 123

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family. 123 122 114 [576] [589]

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• 589

Being a bachelor made my integration into family life somewhat easier than it might have been otherwise, and my reciprocal duties were not heavy, mainly involving my working with other bachelors in collecting the saplings and leaves used for making the huts. But being unable to make any great contribution to the food economy, although I participated in the hunt, I found myself pushed into another category that I subsequently discovered to be a perfectly traditional one for incompetent hunters and some others—that of buffoon. This was very convenient, as it meant that I was the recipient of threats, ridicule, jokes and gossip, all of significance, and being made a general scapegoat I was also the center of a number of disputes. I have observed similar buffoons in almost every other hunting band, fulfilling the same function, harmlessly dispelling the many little jealousies and hostilities that arise in everyday camp life.

Later on I acquired a hunting net of my own, by virtue of my proven adult status, and was so able to contribute to the food economy. At this time I was able to watch another bachelor take my place as buffoon.

123

The advantages of this kind of participation are obvious enough, and particularly desirable when a six-foot field worker is living among four-foot pygmies is the way it helps him blend into the social landscape, at least. Among the Mbuti, however, there was an additional advantage. The amount of information I could get from them, even the extent to which I would be allowed to participate, depended upon my attitude to the forest. Fortunately this was something of which I was well aware. But the fact that I was prepared to eat the same food, and that often entirely excluded village plantation foods, and the fact that I was prepared to carry my few belongings myself, to sleep on leaves or branches, and take part in the forest songs that were sung almost nightly around a central fire, conveyed enough of my respect for the forest for the Mbuti to admit me still further.

The process was an interesting one, because it again demonstrated the close relationship between the Mbuti and the forest world around them. But it was also an exhausting and arduous one, and because of the very nature of forest life it was impossible for me to observe all that went on. As will be seen, in the normal course of events a number of different things are going on in different places at different times, and even in the course of the year I cannot be sure that I saw everything of significance. During the *molimo*, for instance, men were expected to stay awake and sing throughout the night until about an

561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting 732 and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

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Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are countenanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become engaged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

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him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their 476
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But [622]
I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589 •

122 and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought
132 our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that
• 589 and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and
132 then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny
342 waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like
[581] this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married.
[593] If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

512 The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over
[132] everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside
[372] again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they
[462] had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and
[224] arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds
[578] burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to
[122] sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

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to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

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578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[389] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of trouble. However, if the family group of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, he may, in desperation, appeal to his mother's family group to provide one. If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

583 591 584 602

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621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[82] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[428] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
• 59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

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same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost ex- [829]
clusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the
future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

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[ARCHERS]

[P.176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision. Z P 117 439 608

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *tori*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence. P 621 602 [608] [575] [61] P 621 602 114 P [591]

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved. 621 582 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor. 621 58 [591].

[P.220-C]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *ahwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

3: Turnbull B-6 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
bibwi

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered prefer-
591 able, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable
58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status
[85] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut,
621 a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be
583 called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is re- 621
quired. In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
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584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
761 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person,
152 it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
761 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
763 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not
152 going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some dis-
[887] approval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

[P.218]

CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 621 *Marriage*

As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 584 574 571 561 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass. The third, probably the most important structurally, is the interfamily visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns, each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 584 574 [591] If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands, it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial exchange, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 584 561 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict. 584 561 628 591

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation. 628 591 583

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem- 628 582 583 [561]

B: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange. 628 224 [602]

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other. 628 224 221 621

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible. 628

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month. 628 602 594

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have [621] [591] [594]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[629] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
MButi

62 value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at
591 home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value.
181 The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to
101 perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by
103 territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toungbe* is the camp under the *toungbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

62 Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory
131 conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it gen-
224 erally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may
602 well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may
628 be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But
192 the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

62 When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndamu*"),
186 he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers.
222 Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may
131 be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

574 [4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

881 533 were women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires.
881 885 533 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that
• [571] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 885 157 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 533 415 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya.
881 152 302 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

584 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of 583 trouble. However, if the family group 591 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 584 he may, in desperation, appeal to his 602 mother's family group to provide one. If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

[P. 337-A]

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

825
644
262

This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

[P. 337-8]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
individual family and only indirectly with that
592 of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[B54] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

621 group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by
361 Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20
and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man,
[592] his wife or wives, and a few children, so the
[162] total number of Pygmies to an average camp is

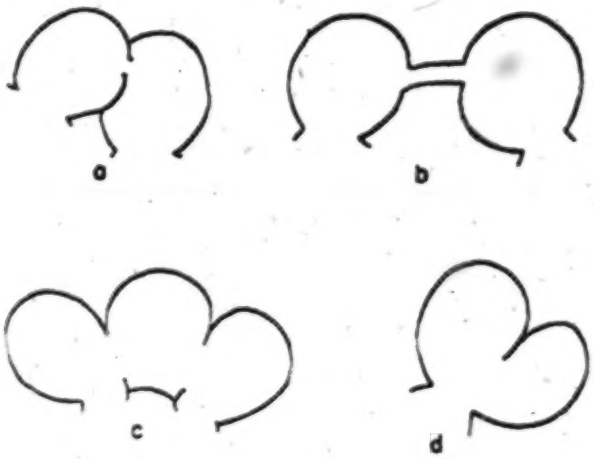

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[P. 194-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 195-A]

36 built, though the basic structure is expected to
[342] last for the duration of the camp.

In the choice of a situation for a camp, the
[312] main considerations are the close proximity of game and fruit, but a *sine qua non* is the presence of drinking water within 50 yards. Other considerations are the absence overhead of dead branches or leaning trees which might fall on the camp in the violent windstorms that occur frequently in the forest; also, a slight slope to the ground to prevent the camp from becoming swamped during rains.

Camps are moved every month or two be-
[514] cause in that time game will have been scared away and local vegetation (fruits, fungi, and other vegetable foods) used up, and also (Putnam, 1948) because, as the Pygmies relieve themselves only a short distance from the camp, it will in that time become extremely malodorous and uncomfortable even by Pygmy standards.

HABITATIONS

[592] A camp consists of one hut per family. The
[342] huts are built by the women, in just the same
[462] shape and manner as by all Ituri Mbuti, in a
[184] circle with doors facing toward the center.
[346] There are no bachelor huts or huts for unmarried girls or widows, and no ritual structures. The relation of the huts to one another in the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 628

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred 166
territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry 574
far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assump- 131
tion that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus 628
territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to ex- 166
press and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also 574
used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it 131
is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights 582
as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity 621
in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even 614
when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over 613
the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[3]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[3] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net. [592]

When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: *"Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Plan 3a-g: KEY

= Baraza (meeting veranda)

= Hut

= Abandoned hut

= Living but not in camp

= Hearth, used by more than one nuclear family

= Brush and tree trunks that effectively divide a camp

	CLAN	TOTEM		CLAN	TOTEM
1A,1B	PUEMI	2	11	NGAMO	1
2	BOMASUA	1	12	BANDOHWA	2
3A,B,C	BOKELÉ	3,1,6	13	POYA	4
4	BAMBAKA	6	14	MOLOMBA	4
5	BWANGO	1	15	POTOLA	1
6	UNGBAUSU	2	16	PASAMA	5
7	MEKI	4	17	PONGWANA	2
8	POKBAYA	1	18	PUKENA	1
9	POKAMA	6	19	PUSA	7
10	POTEBA	1	20	PUMA	4

TOTEMS: 1 LEOPARD
2 CHIMPANZEE
3 BUFFALO
4 SNAKE
5, 6, 7 — Different kinds of rare antelope

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3a

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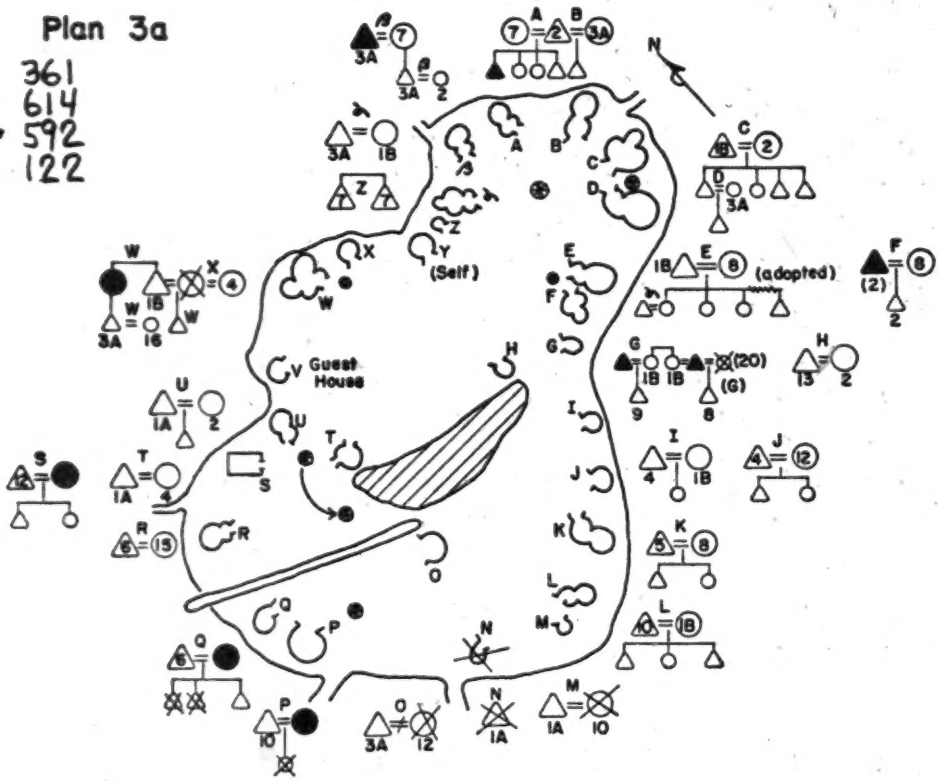

PLAN 3a–g *Composition of hunting camps cited p. 98 for large and small camps of Epulu band.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

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592
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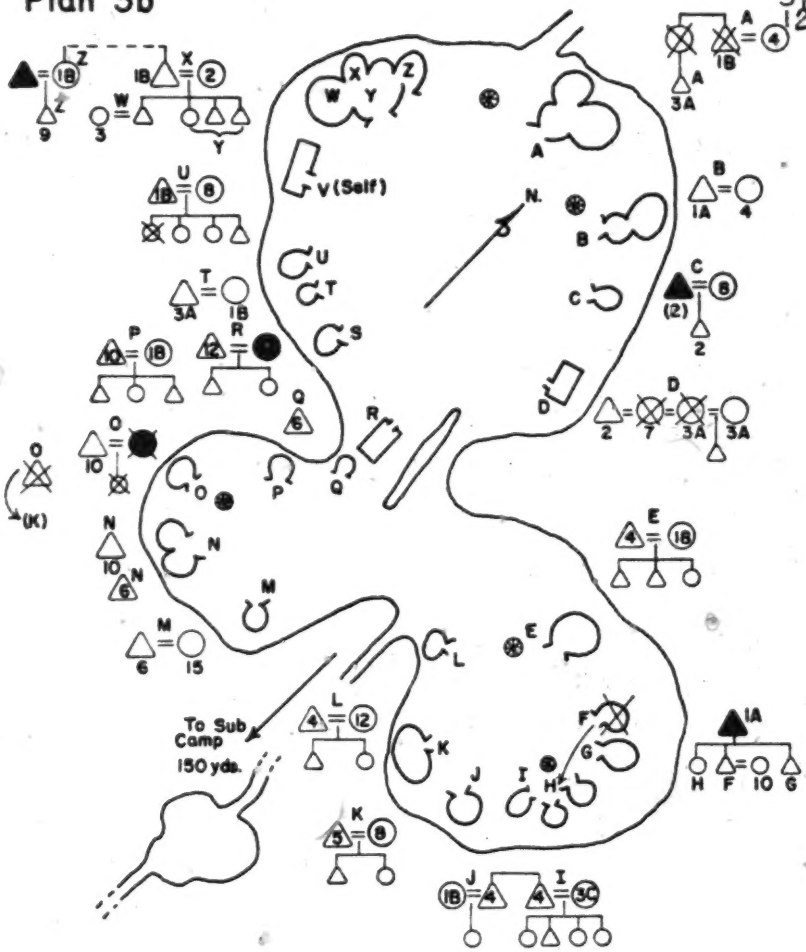
Plan 3b



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3c

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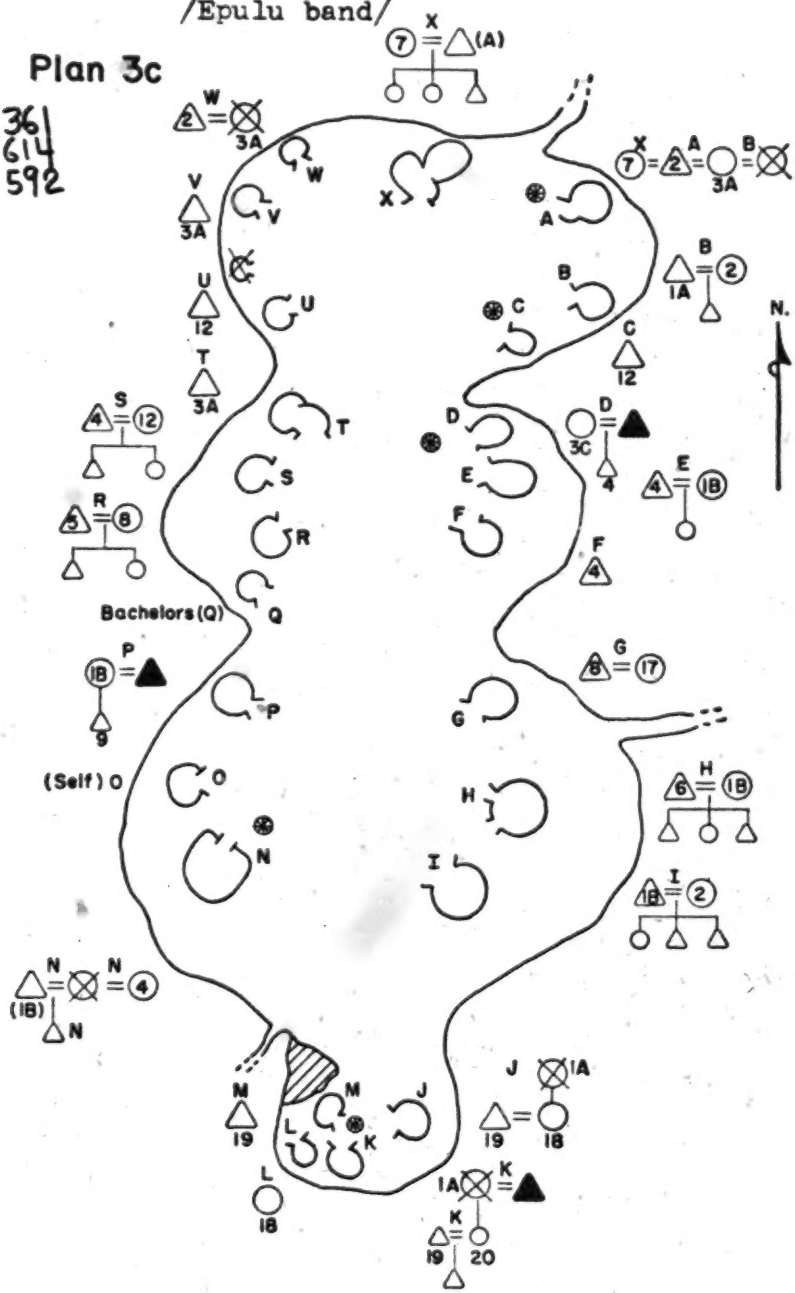
• 592



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

[P. 343]

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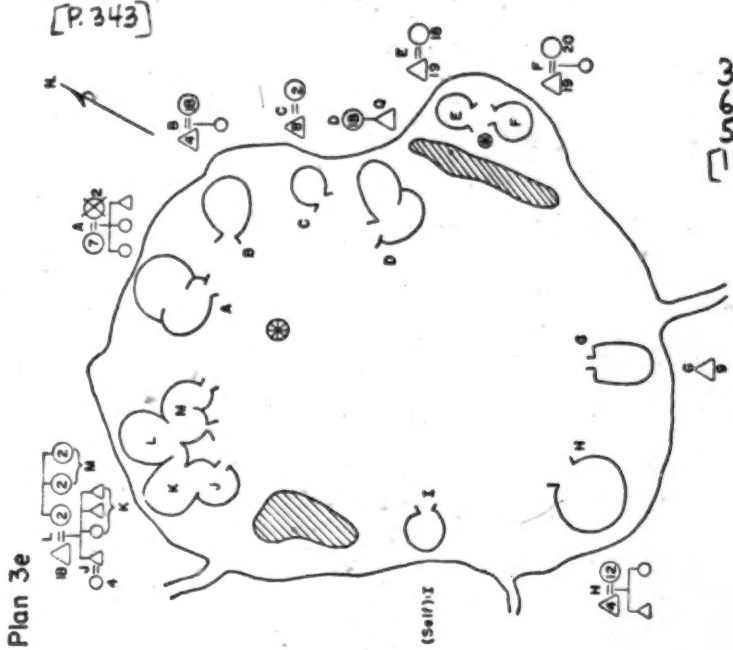
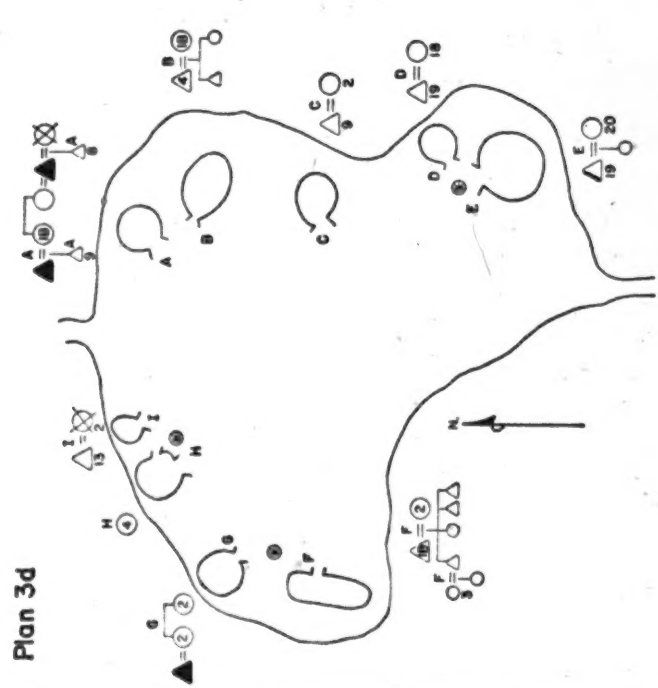
[122]



Plan 3e



Plan 3d

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3f

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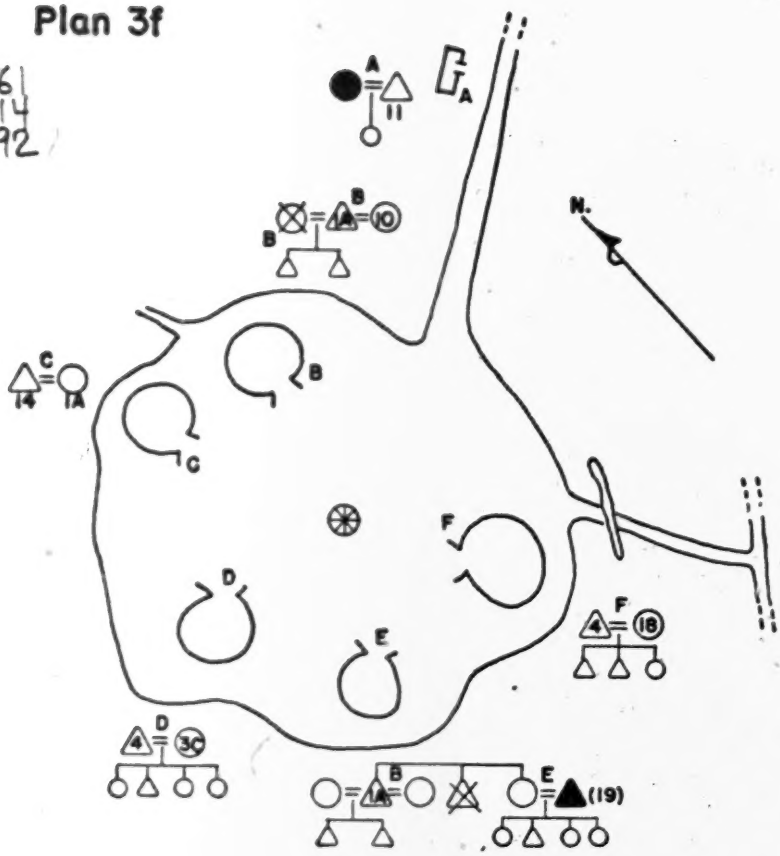

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

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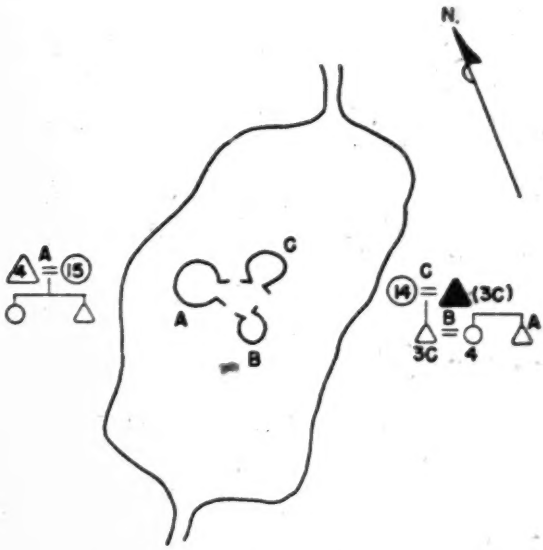
Plan 3g



594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[P. 335-A]

621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [482] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

[p. 335-B]

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
592 individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
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593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

593 Both parents have an equal responsibility in
861 the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively,
514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from
264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimina-
361 tion takes place close by, two factors favoring the frequent moving of camp.

[P. 177-B]

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

858 Only when children approach the age of
593 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the
[861] same age (and older). During this period there is no formal training (Schebesta, 1948, 415 ff.), but boys and girls alike learn all there is to be learned by simple emulation and by assisting their parents and elders in various tasks.

At puberty the boys break completely away
882 from their mothers who have no more to do
883 with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objec- 595
tions to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to po- [177]
lygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to [582]
villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment.

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is 587
usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a 587
man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in 589
his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band.

Relations between husband and wife and 593
their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride.

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593 •
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 832
body and birth of twins are, among some 845
[P. 181- D] 829

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [p.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

• 593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 216-A]

857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp. 881 Even at this age, however, and after under- 882 going the *nkumbi* initiation, they are still under • 593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumbi*.

868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

After marriage the affection between the young husband and his bride is no less open than before marriage. An estimation of any degree of affection necessarily depends on one's own attitude, but Schebesta's description of "passion" and "ardor" would hardly be applicable to the net-hunting Mbuti; "determination" would perhaps describe the situation better. Initial flirtations that lead to marriage openly change in character from relations on a purely sexual basis to a more intimate relationship of companionship, which is manifest by the way young grooms behave toward their brides and even older men to their wives. P 593

Divorce

Divorce is achieved as informally as marriage, whether the union dissolved involves just the one or two bands. It is usually initiated, says Putnam (1948, 337), by the woman's simply packing her household goods into her basket and leaving with her children. In such a case, the sons, when old enough, return to their father and the daughters remain with their mother until married. Such a divorce may well upset the complementary marriage if it is a marriage by exchange. Such a dispute almost certainly involves the village patrons, who may finally be called upon to settle it between themselves, the patron of the happily married Mbuti making a compensatory payment to the patron claiming the return of that Mbuti's bride. P 586 P 2 [177] [571] Z [563]

[P 221-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly
578 heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
627 monial squabble may well become enlarged until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P 231-B]

[p. 245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

539 Among the few legends commending the good
597 mother and father, the good brother and sister,
593 only one takes the opposite approach and tells
776 of the bad mother. I include it in this section because the emphasis seems to be on the thoughtlessness of the mother rather than the trickery of the *satani*.

A Pygmy, his wife, and his child, were all asleep. In the middle of the night the child woke up and began crying. He cried and he cried. He was crying from hunger, because his mother had not fed him. At last the mother got up and gave the child a plantain. Then she went back to lie down and they all fell asleep again. A little while later the child woke up again and started crying again because he was still hungry. He cried and he cried, but his father and his mother went on sleeping.

A *satani* arrived. "Why are you crying, my child?" he asked. "I am crying because I am hungry!" replied the child. "My mother hasn't given me enough to eat and she won't wake up."

So the *satani* fixed two pots of plantains, and lots of meat. He put them on the fire to cook. When it was all ready he put the food in front of the child and the child ate, and ate, and ate. "Oh! This is good!" said the child, and he ate still more. When he finished there was still a pot of plaintains and lots more meat, so the *satani* said, "Eat some more, my child, then

[P.263-B]

[P. 263-C]

you will not wake up hungry again." So the child ate some more. 539 577

At last the child had finished all but a few plantains and a little meat. "Oh! How full I am!" he said, holding his little stomach. "I have had enough, really." But the *satani* pointed to the plantains and the meat that still remained and said, "You must eat some more, or you will surely wake up hungry!" "But I have eaten all I can, really!" said the child. "Eat!" said the *satani*. 593 776

The child took a plantain and slowly began to eat it, then suddenly BAM! He burst. The *satani* vanished. The mother and father woke with a start and saw the dead body of their little child. "Oh, what can have happened?" cried the mother. And there was much grief.

But the father knew what had happened, the mother had let the child go to bed hungry. So the next night when they lay down to sleep, the father slept only with his eyes. In the middle of the night the *satani* arrived to see if there were any more children who had been allowed to go to bed hungry, so that he could feed them until they burst. The father leapt out of his bed and seized the *satani* and cried, "You devil! You killed our son because his mother allowed him to go to bed hungry!"

And the father killed the *satani* completely.

Basi

PLATE 30

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.
824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women,
but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.
571
352 1,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P292]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[572] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [554] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

554 156 522 626 627

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit. 554 522 156 [626]

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father. 554 156 157 [555] [626] [595] [593] [626] 156 554 842

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a 554 156 157 595

156 157 [595] particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). 554 156 593 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 554 555 157 [224] Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and [648] frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, 156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or 152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him 554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 604 596 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is generally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rigorously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

224 626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of
[821] friction).
[158]
[166] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur-
[648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten-
621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par-
221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old
578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came
593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja.
152 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and
291 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing
621 it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young
[224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some
593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute
621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said
166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being
626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem-
[221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this
• 593 point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in
578 the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp
626 that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was
593 dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

834 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX
578

13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant. 621 593 578 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours. 593 593 516

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal." 593 [554]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 152 DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [881] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 602 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 601 593 [561] We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[114] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

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Mbuti

[P. 276-A]

142
29
516

27. A common way of showing displeasure is to sulk, talking to no one. A young girl here keeps her back to her husband, wherever he might be, and refuses to cook his food.

[578]
[593]
[152]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-G]

142
302
291
883
224

34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[881
885
593]

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Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

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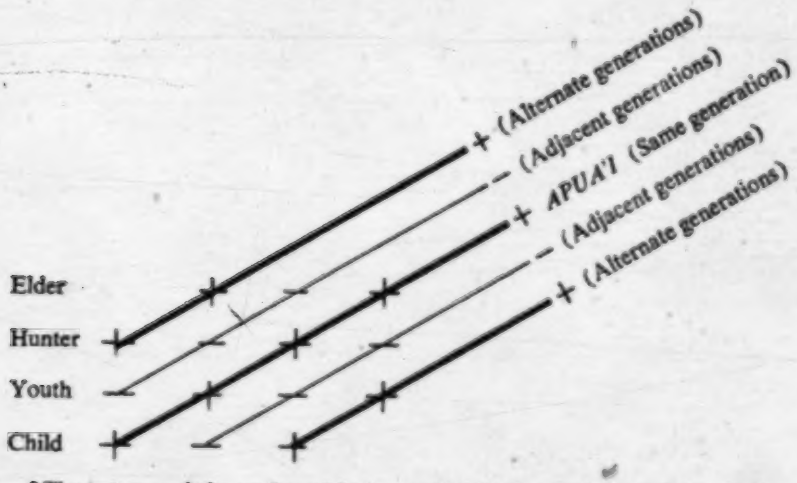
Mbuti

602 would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between
121 *f/s* and *mb/zs*.
561 *b/z* and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative
571 briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential
593 of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

602 Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick
121 lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points
561 at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the cor-
593 respondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonethe- 578 less concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

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bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[8] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*"—"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[8] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

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Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

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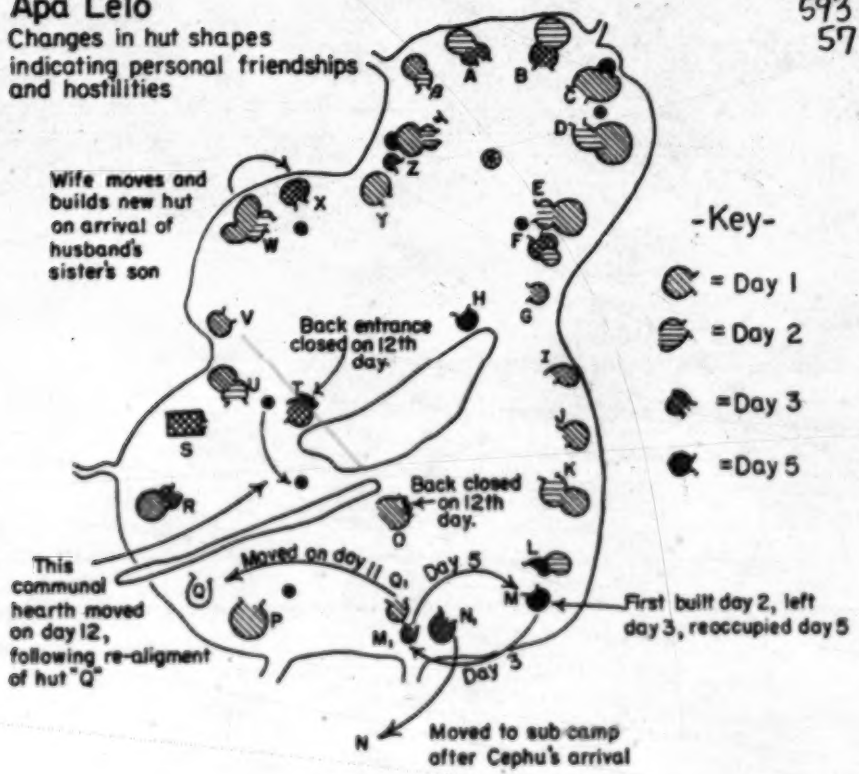
Plan 7
Apa Lelo

Changes in hut shapes indicating personal friendships and hostilities



and, not being married, had no huts of their own. We had brought our fire into the hut when the rain started, and with the heat of that and of about fifteen bodies I was nearly suffocated. Every now and then the rain found its way through the leaves above and sent a tiny waterfall cascading to the floor. Then someone would stand up and inspect the roof carefully, decide which leaf should be moved, and pushing his fingers through the lattice adjust it. If he moved the wrong leaf it started a leak in another place, bringing howls of annoyance from whoever was beneath. Kenge said it was always like this with a new hut, that was why it was so bad not to be married. If you were married, naturally your wife would get up when it rained at night and fix the roof. But once the leaves had settled down, not even the hardest rain would come in until the leaves got old and dried out and began to curl. Tomorrow, he said, he would cover the roof with dead wood and branches to hold the leaves flat.

The rain lasted only for half an hour, and as soon as it was over everyone came out of the huts. The fires were built up outside again; the women made a few adjustments to the roofs where they had found bad leaks; the men wandered off idly with their bows and arrows to see if they could find a bird or monkey for the evening meal before it was too dark. The huts steamed as they dried out, and a blue haze of smoke hung above the camp and was colored suddenly with orange and gold and red as the clouds parted and the sun on the invisible horizon sent a last blaze of light across the sky. The birds burst into a final chorus of song, and two women argued loudly with each other as to which should have the rest of the leaves that Masamba had cut to help them.

Everyone was tired from the long day's trek and from the flurry of building camp so quickly, and as soon as it was dark and the evening meal had been eaten we all crept into our huts and went to sleep. Kenge, seeing that I was a little concerned, had turned some of the bachelors out, so there were only nine of us. For an hour the

each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I felt that air of importance and

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, *unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their* friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

224 765 578 156 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 765 578 156 593 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, [602] [621] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 156 152 224 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu 224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, 578 156 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857] by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593] burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say [593] they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602] the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

835 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that
684 they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon,
684 Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though
626 he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years
[554] later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The
[157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor;
[181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them-
[522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

• 593 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who
578 had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

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This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, 593 insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious 578 issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive.

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and 593 ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest 578 brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been 554 brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed 157 that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, [164] which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin.

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside 578 his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him 607 the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly 276 from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a 576 visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke.

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

578 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and
607 knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only
276 wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take
576 offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to
[152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should
593 never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This
578 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier
276 than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tear-
152 lessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

his head he stalked back to the main camp shouting at the top of 593
his voice what miserable wretches his brother and his sister-in-law 578
were. The dirty old pipe was damning evidence, and all sympathy 276
was with Masalito. Njobo's wife took her husband's pipestem and 152
gave it to Masalito, who quickly regained his good humor. But by now Aberi was aroused, and came storming into the camp, saying that his brother had insulted Tamasa. He declared that it was a matter for serious action; Masalito should be thrashed.

Everybody thought this was a great joke, and burst into laughter Only children and youths get thrashed, and Masalito was a father. Aberi did not like being laughed at and he went over to where Masalito was sitting down on a log, smoking his new pipe. He demanded an apology. Masalito, now completely composed, simply picked up the old pipestem and threw it at his brother's feet, saying, "There! That is for her!" By now a crowd had gathered around, and the hotter Aberi became the more relaxed Masalito seemed to be.

Aberi shook his fists and said that if nobody else was going to 593
thrash Masalito he was. This brought more laughs as Aberi was posi- 578
tively puny beside Masalito, who himself was little more than four 152
feet tall. Masalito invited his brother to come and try. Aberi then [141]
pretended that he was holding a spear, and in a high-pitched voice, squeaking with anger, he cried out, "I am going to get my spear and I am going to kill you completely!" Whereupon he imitated a spear thrust in Masalito's direction. There was a gasp of horror, as this is something one does not say to one's brother even in jest. But Masalito replied calmly, "Go and get your spear, then, and come back and kill me. I'll still be here. You don't have the courage to kill your brother." He said a lot of other things, goading Aberi on to an even higher pitch of fury. Aberi tried to make himself more impressive by [536]
a graphic dance, which was meant to show exactly how he was going to leap in the air and twist around and drive the spear home. But he

593 578 152 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 578 152 621 626 689 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 626 576 836 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an [152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four 685
hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to 159
his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine 627
and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly [152]
because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It 578
blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very 578
involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a 583
sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, 593
as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had 595
just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since 578
Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not 853
to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they 607
could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health. [583]

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

607
593 the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself
595 and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time,
853 and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening
578 [852] meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu
595 continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange
411 eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end,
578 Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He
607 looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives
595 were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's
578 wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her
607 brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

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the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that.

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake.

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

573 595 578 606 607 827 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amaboru ducked and it missed him. Amaboru then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 578 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

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The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway. 621 626 578

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass. 626 593 584

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility. 626 157 181

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator. 621 829 778

286 women, and although a man will attend to his own net, repairing it
[462] and adding to it, a mother will often make a complete hunting net to present to her son when he gets married.

342 The other major activity that goes on almost every day in any
356 Pygmy camp is the repairing and alteration of the huts. New leaves have to be added, or the old ones changed to avoid leaks. If relatives come to visit, either the house has to be enlarged or a new one built. Whenever this happens there are repercussions throughout the camp, since people will have to change the entrances to their huts to avoid
342 looking directly into the stranger's hut. The entrances also get changed
356 if there are arguments between two families. The two disputants,
578 though they may be next door to each other, will build little "spite fences" between them, so that their huts are turned almost back to back, the walls in effect turning the doorways to face in opposite directions. Then the doorway may face into someone else's hut, and if that family is not in sympathy, their doorway in turn will be changed, and so on.

342 These changes are usually made by the women, since the hut is
462 considered the woman's property. This is one of the strongest points
593 a woman has in arguments with her husband. I have seen a woman
[356] who has failed to get anywhere in a matrimonial disagreement simply
[423] turn around and start methodically pulling all the leaves off the hut. Usually the husband stops her halfway. In this case, however, the husband was particularly stubborn. He waited until she had taken all the leaves off, then remarked to the camp at large that his wife was going to be dreadfully cold that night. There was nothing for her to do, without losing face, but to continue; so reluctantly, and very slowly, she started to pull out the sticks that formed the framework of her home.

By this time the camp was agog, because it had been a long time since anyone had seen a domestic argument carried quite this far. The poor woman was in tears, for she was very much in love with her

husband, and the final step, if he did not stop her, was for her to pack her few belongings and walk off, having completely demolished their home first. Then she would return to the home of her parents. It is the nature of a Pygmy never to admit he is wrong, and the husband was beginning to feel equally anxious. Things had gone too far for either of them to patch up the quarrel without being shamed in the eyes of all those who were watching to see what would happen next. He sat silent, hugging his knees, looking as miserable as his wife. Then he brightened up suddenly and turned around to see how far the demolition had gone. Only a few sticks had been pulled out. He called to his wife not to bother with the sticks, it was only the leaves that were dirty. She looked at him with a puzzled "*Ayiiiii?*"—and then, understanding, asked him to help her carry the leaves down to the stream. This they did, and together they gravely washed every single leaf and brought them back. While she joyfully put the leaves back on the hut he stoked up the fire and then went off with his bow and arrows to see if he could find some game to bring back for a special dinner.

The pretense was that she had been taking the leaves off not because she was angry, but because they were dirty and attracted ants and spiders. Nobody believed this, but everyone was glad the quarrel was over. For several days women talked politely about the insects in the leaves of their huts, and took a few leaves down to the stream to wash, as if this was a perfectly normal procedure. I have never seen it done before or since.

But apart from little excitements of this kind during the day, the camp really comes to life only when the hunt returns. Long before the first hunter appears the whole camp knows exactly who has caught what. They know partly by listening for the shouts and arm-claps of the returning hunters, which they can hear from a considerable distance, and partly because throughout the day children come and

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chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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blanket, no matter how annoyed with me he was. These villagers—they were just animals.

When I awoke in the morning I hardly dared open my eyes, but a tentative exploration proved that the other half of the bed was empty. I thought all was well after all. Amina had cut her losses and left at dawn. But when I had put my trousers on and stooped through the low entrance of the hut into the camp, there she was. She was sitting on a log beside the hut, quietly fanning the fire and cooking my breakfast, just as every other wife was doing for her husband. Kenge was making it very obvious to everyone that he was eating with the bacheloes, who were making it obvious that they had not slept in my hut that night. Everyone else studiously ignored my appearance, except old Moke, who was walking past on his way to the stream to bathe. He looked at me sideways, shook his head and gave a little knowing old laugh. And as he walked on he shook his head all the more vigorously and laughed all the louder.

I was about to go after him, thinking that at least I could ask his advice, but Amina caught hold of my trouser leg and said, "There is no need for you to go to the stream to bathe. I have brought you water—behind the hut." So I went behind the hut and washed, and then sat down and had breakfast, while Amina went to join the other women and chat with them. While she was gone Kenge strolled by and elaborately asked me if the food was all right. He also asked me, rather loudly, if I had slept well. Amina answered from across the camp, "Yes, he told me to mend the leak in the roof!" This proof of domestic bliss brought howls of mirth from all around, the more infuriating because I could not see what was funny about it. Then Kenge told me that this was what men always said to their wives when they wanted to be allowed to sleep in peace.

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That night, Amina and I came to an agreement. She was to stay with me and cook my food—and mend leaks in the roof every night.

585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed 574 house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to [593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have [583] no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage, [586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home, 585 the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the 602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi- 593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

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marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidinimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Atete. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned.

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with 585
several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Atete was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Atete arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidinimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was tell- [177]
ing her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Atete was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidinimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper.

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to 593
whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Atete arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sondu antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often.

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used 000

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere P 583 462 [581] producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies P [601] [561] extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 • 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

593 152 [581] bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that [836] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 521 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire, with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder, 583 584 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 584 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to 593
have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what 584
did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Badorinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Badorinji ended 593
with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth 584
her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry 626
Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless [583]
a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and [554]
no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was 584
not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Babama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

• 593 He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

584 Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

584 [836] [571] [439] [186] 584 [583]

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [P.160-B]

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the
[613] trading is carried out. He says that there is, however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

• 594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate
[613] residence, as a social unit it is far less significant than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict [578]
between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 609 613 own lineages and can at all times return to them or count on their aid, but economically they are members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 512 592 Among the archers a woman's daily activity is concerned primarily with the welfare of the individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

[B54]

593 594 621 Her husband spends less time near the family hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in general, however, a family eats together, though the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

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THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

62 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] The composition described is the same, i.e., a [594] number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patriclan, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

[NET HUNTERS]

• 594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[591] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p. 220- D]

[NET HUNTERS] A

421 224 lazy hunter and his family go without meat; an idle woman goes without vegetables and has no roof to her hut. The division of game obtained during a net hunt is the only division that includes everyone in the band, whether or not they attended the hunt. Even then we do not know whether those who did not attend had any arrangement with any of the actual hunters. Nets are frequently lent, as are spears. It may well be that absentee members of the hunt participate by proxy and in this way entitle themselves to a share. The division itself, as is mentioned above, is said to be subject to complicated rules.

594 224 421 Apart from the net hunt, which is essentially collective and cooperative and concerns the band, other forms of food quest are familial. A woman is entitled to what she finds, for herself and her family. Similarly a man, hunting 594 224 421 individually with bow and arrow, may claim as his own anything that he may bring in, though in such a case there is some doubt. Using bow and arrow he would be likely to bring in only small game, and rarely, these Mbuti being very poor shots. If however, he killed or found large game, such as an okapi, on his own, it would be

[P. 230-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-C]

most unlikely that the collective rules of division would not apply. It seems therefore to be a question of surplus. Every family is entitled to a minimum insured by the collective hunt and is equally entitled to the maximum that it can acquire and consume itself. Any surplus is not used for trade but becomes the share of the rest of the community. Maximum here must imply a correlation of capacity and decency. Putnam says that a woman who does not share the products of her gathering expedition with her friends (regardless of the quantity) is looked on with scorn. Similarly, when a man is sitting among his fellow hunters and his wife brings him a meal, he eats most of it himself but shares at least some with his companions. There is a definite preference in such sharing, but whether the amount of the portion depends on kinship or friendship or both is not clear in the sources under consideration.

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lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.) [593]
does not deny the authority of the father in the
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *kuré*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

594 621 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsibility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 860 The age group functions as a major institution of education, instructing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 857 883 [476] As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Children scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trapping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 626 627 [765] Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its members, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Further, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

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Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [627]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[82] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[57] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

62 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[428] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[82] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 *Even fission and fusion are a part of family life*, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P118]

CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

621 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of
626 the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which ac-
• 594 tivities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on
62 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal in-
183 stitution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream *should wash himself*, or at least a part of himself, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is being done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted. Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to learn a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

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Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lullabies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [533] [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 [621] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [564]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, 851
including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social [171]
position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, [597]
regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among 856 854
the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar [751]
as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of [778]
forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of 844
supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication [782]
that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness de- [778]
rives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although [594]
birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the [621]
band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

766 two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt
765 with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it
621 should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes
[778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature
621 of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest con-
.594 text, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one
765

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 152 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 765 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not [783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an- [594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 462 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] [171] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[8]

[8] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[9]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[9] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Area	Portion of body	Given to
Ndaye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasu	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

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It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

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The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

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The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and 571
boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and 12
any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than 621
others will lead immediately to ridicule. 554

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a 571
man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of 554
the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with 621
other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar 439
as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an [438]
individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there [628]
either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, [571]
even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions con- 621
cerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village 166
is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in 621
the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really 621
be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly 594
true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic 554
leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of 157
the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1961 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

582 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant mar-
583 riage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible.
628 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relation-
581 ship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a
584 basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such
182 an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is
224 generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are fre-
131 quently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of
224 the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange.

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
607 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
594 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
577 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull, E-6 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masini, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masini who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masini ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masini was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masini had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would being advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the
761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74
[574] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[128] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apusi*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamodimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji ekw*, or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingine*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one never "walks emptily" (*tambe bulé*). One of the great molimo songs is "*me tambe bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 131 [598] [192] 628 602

621 710 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also represents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

922 4. NOISE, or *ekimi*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

224 vision among the pygmies different than among food-gatherers who have a more direct and immediate dependence on hunting. The principles which the pygmies follow are: (1) The biological family is the least common denominator, the basic unit in sharing. No man would think of eating his meat without giving some to his wife and children. (2) The next unit in sharing is the family group. Any man who has acquired meat will share some of it with other biological families within his family group, but all the shares may not be equal or equivalent. (3) Each man who participates in a hunt is given a share commensurate with his degree of participation. Thus if men from several family groups combine in a hunt, the meat goes to them, and they share their portions within their family groups by single unit families.

For practical purposes, the chief distinction is between meat acquired by stalking and that acquired by net hunting. In the case of stalking, only one man, or more often two or three, will be involved, and these men may well belong to the same family group. With net hunting, however, the whole camp joins the hunt and the whole camp shares the bag.

When an animal is caught net hunting, a number of people have special rights. The man who owns a hunting dog which chased the animal gets the neck. Other special pieces go to the man in whose net it was caught. However, someone else may have borrowed the net and been tending it at the time, and the net tender thus gets a special piece. Then there are pieces for the men whose women bayed it in, and every degree of participation in the killing is recognized and suitably rewarded.

If they bring in five or six antelope there is enough meat for everyone to eat well that night. One family may

[P.332-B]

62 571 561 [888]

Government.—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 828 [626]

A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888]

Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] [562]

In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

994

Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological [P. 334-B]

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

592 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [621] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[P 335-A]

[ARCHERS]

583 axes, and other implements. If the young man is
585 unable to produce these, they take the girl back to her own camp, but cannot prevent her from returning to her betrothed. The process is then repeated. The youth exhorts his betrothed to return to her own camp until he can find the necessary wealth, but if she insists on staying with him, her relatives will leave her and the matter will be settled later. The girl builds a house, and the two live together. There is no ceremony, although the youth's band will, if possible, arrange a feast and dance to celebrate the event. The marriage contract, such as it is, is essentially between the two bands concerned.

583 Marriage by exchange, by which two hunting bands exchange girls, has its complications. The girl received replaces the girl given, not only in her capacity for work but as a child bearer. If either girl falls short in these respects, the double union is nullified. Similarly, if either of
[584] the parties willfully brings about the dissolution of one marriage, the contract is void, thus possibly breaking up the other perfectly happy and fertile union. This dissolution can be avoided either by making another exchange or by substituting a payment.

• 595 Marriage by exchange is not conducive to the practice of polygyny, and Schebesta (1952, 244) estimates that 6 per cent of Mbuti marriages are polygynous; 10 per cent, in the border re-
[p 181-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 181-C]

gions most exposed to village influence. Objections to polygyny are based on economic rather than moral grounds. A further obstacle to polygyny is one-way marriage of Mbuti girls to villagers, a practice that Schebesta considers occurs with sufficient frequency to account for the gradual replacement of marriage by exchange by marriage by service or payment. 595 [177] [582]

Polyandry is unknown.

The sororate, writes Schebesta (1948, 384), is usual in the wide sense of the word, and is practiced when the wife has had no children. When a man dies, his widow is not obliged to remain in his band or to remarry; she may choose for herself. But if she is childless, then her own band is obliged to make some compensation and this may influence her decision. Normally, a widow with children remains with them in her late husband's band. 587 587 589

Relations between husband and wife and their children are mentioned above (p. 177). It may be added here that Schebesta notes that, for the few days following the marriage, the young man is freed of any obligation to hunt and may devote his time to his bride. 593

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-A]

585 587 586 Polygyny exists but is almost as inconsiderable as among the archers. It sometimes comes about through the very informality of divorce. A husband who has been deserted, having made every effort to retrieve his wife, seeks another. After remarrying in this way, he may find that he still misses his old companion and will try to woo her back, or she may return of her own accord. There is no information as to the relationship between the two wives, except that they have separate huts and that there is no open friction.

Widowhood

589 Information on widowhood, though not given in detail by Putnam, seems to correspond to the general information given by Schebesta for the archers. Widows tend to remain in their late husbands' band and are cared for by their children unless they remarry. 588 887 Aged widowers are similarly provided for. But even widows and widowers too old to remarry can play a useful economic role by attending to various chores in camp when the entire band is out hunting, helping in the constant manufacture of *nkusa* twine and barkcloth, and by looking after small children.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to follow lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping of the huts themselves.

For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
361 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
621 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
613 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages
765 were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
361 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
621 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
593 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
595 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate
613 change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Asua (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Asua, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobunsi (A), next door. Arobunsi had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Aura, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubusi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubusi's father, Tungasu (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

[P.156-8]

[95]

16. Ape Kadikelo, showing Ituongo's village-style hut, where he lived with his contemporaneous youngest wife.[1]

[1] [see pages 119-120 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

554 156 522 626 627

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit. 554 [626]

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father. 554 156 157 [555] [626] [595] [593] [626] 156 554 842

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a 554 156 157 595

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Everyone agreed that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and that her belly should not become big again until her child became big.

One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense, all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed. Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

Z: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabou had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabou, and hearing it Arobanai sounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabou was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabou chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

Dr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1961 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided. Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the village, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungama, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masini's camp staying with Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masini made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masini's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative—to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko*, a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

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484 other wives, and they left without saying a word to him. As Kamai-
125 515 kan squatted over the fire, fanning it until it glowed red, I saw that she was pregnant, and I gathered from the look she cast after her two co-wives that her condition was the cause of some jealousy in the household.

115 482 484 Kenge delayed leaving, finding one excuse after another, until the sun was up. He then admitted that he had thought it silly to leave so early, when the forest was still wet and cold. He disappeared for
[519] [197] an hour after that, and when he returned he was carrying a sleeping mat he had scrounged from a Negro (Pygmies generally sleep on leaves or sticks), a large bunch of plantains, and a cake of scented soap. He decided he could not carry my bundle as well as these things, so he told me I would have to carry my own. Anyway, he
[522] said, he wanted to leave his hands as free as possible in case he saw a bird or monkey he could shoot for dinner. He pulled the string of his bow and let it go with a loud twang, shooting an arm out in the direction the arrow would have gone, pointing to a tree top where a black-and-white Colobus monkey, idly scratching its stomach,
[126] gazed down at the scene below. I heard later that Kenge considered himself above acting as a porter; he apparently thought of that as a job fit only for people of the village, not people of the forest. Any self-respecting Pygmy carries his own load and no one else's.

484 When the sun was above the trees and the birds were singing and
114 the village half empty, we crossed the road and walked through the
[273] Negro settlement, stopping for a quick last drink of palm wine, for no such luxuries are to be had in the forest. There were six of us in all: five Pygmy youths and myself.

[481] The palm wine finished, they set off through the Negro planta-tions at such a pace that I almost had to run to keep up. At the edge of the plantations the forest was thick and matted, and the path entering it was narrow. The ground was still rough where saplings had been hacked off just above ground level, and on either side was

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sesi's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekiangs's sister, and Ekiangs had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekiangs was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadikeru. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

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the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time, and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end, Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

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the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that. 593 595 598 607

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake. [253]

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

3: Turnbull E-8 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

593 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout,
595 with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping
598 daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekiangs
606 were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and
607 three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau
887 hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekiangs's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekiangs was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of
626 Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack
578 of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can
181 expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leader-
626 ship appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involv-
578 ing the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [577] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

• 595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] **Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present**

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Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1960 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no interest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nombikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*). Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed, four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However, if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

156

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekiangs, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekiangs was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekiangs's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekiangs had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with 578 the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

224 vision among the pygmies different than among food-gatherers who have a more direct and immediate dependence on hunting. The principles which the [594] pygmies follow are: (1) The biological family is the least common denominator, the basic unit in sharing. No man would think of eating his meat without giving some to his wife and children. (2) The next unit in sharing is the [596] family group. Any man who has acquired meat will share some of it with other biological families within his family group, but all the shares may not be equal or equivalent. (3) Each man who participates in a hunt is given a share commensurate with his degree of participation. Thus if men from several family groups combine in a hunt, the meat goes to them, and they share their portions within their family groups by single unit families.

For practical purposes, the chief distinction is between meat acquired by stalking and that acquired by net hunting. In the case of stalking, only one man, or more often two or three, will be involved, and these men may well belong to the same family group. With net hunting, however, the whole camp joins the hunt and the whole camp shares the bag.

When an animal is caught net hunting, a number of people have special rights. The man who owns a hunting dog which chased the animal gets the neck. Other special pieces go to the man in whose net it was caught. However, someone else may have borrowed the net and been tending it at the time, and the net tender thus gets a special piece. Then there are pieces for the men whose women bayed it in, and every degree of participation in the killing is recognized and suitably rewarded.

If they bring in five or six antelope there is enough meat for everyone to eat well that night. One family may

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594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

592 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[P. 335-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
• 597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions
[177] are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and adoption may also take place if a mother is without milk, or if one woman is childless and a baby is born to a friend or relative who already has a large family. 597 85

Twins

There is no information available, except that twins have been born and survived, and that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is known. It is believed that to separate them is to kill them. 845

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net hunters are given every care and attention. They are breast-fed until after they can walk and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of this group are much more prone than the archer women to leave their children with sisters or close friends for short periods. A great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and trying to climb trees before it can walk. When a camp is moved, an infant is carried either on the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide sling (Fig. 44) across the hip. 854 [184] [853]

The children, as they grow older, tend to play together, frequently away from the camp. 857

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved. 621 582 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor. 621 58 [591]

[P.220-C]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

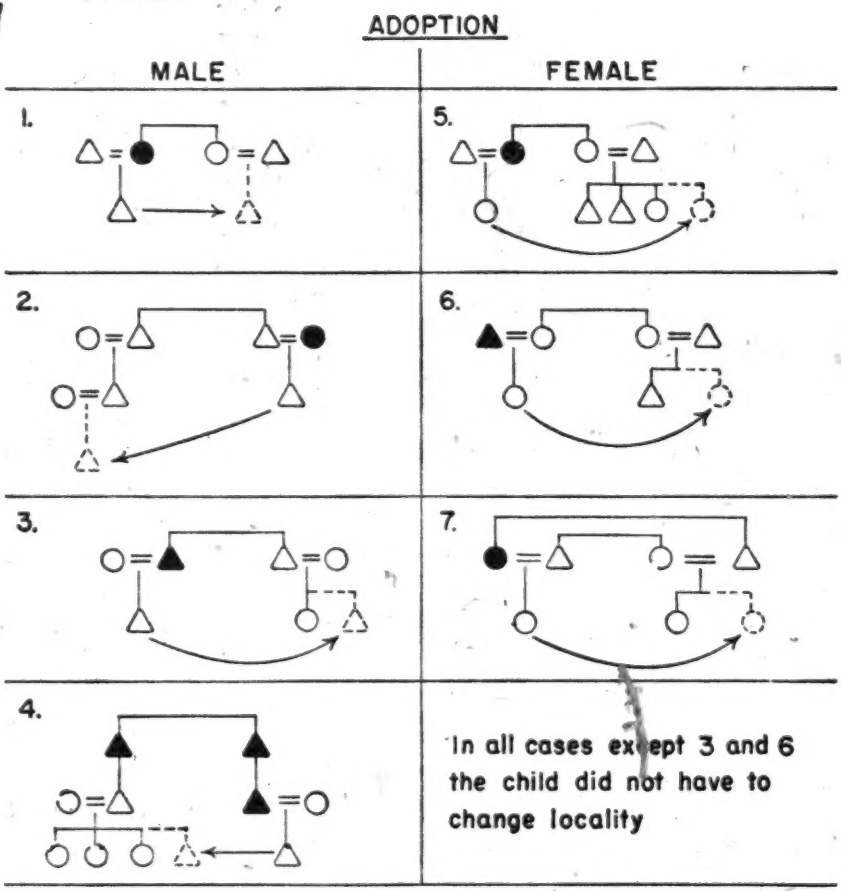
The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 597

TABLE II



Patterns of adoption.

855 There is a
• 597 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

[762]

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta[8] describes one of the lat-
628 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

[P. 340-A]

[P.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

• 601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more fre-
551 quently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 26 [1]

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 [292] a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [601] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

[1], /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[P 284]

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(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)

Chart of Positions of End Plate 2 (Table 4).
[facing End Chart 2]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 4

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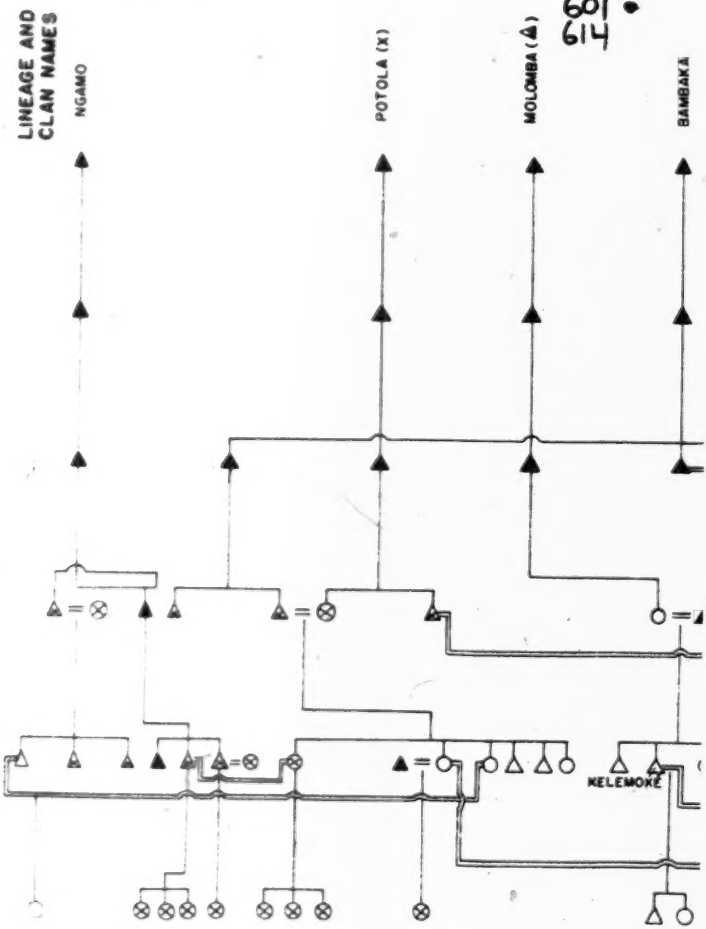


[E. Chart 2, (A)]

LINEAGE AND CLAN NAMES:

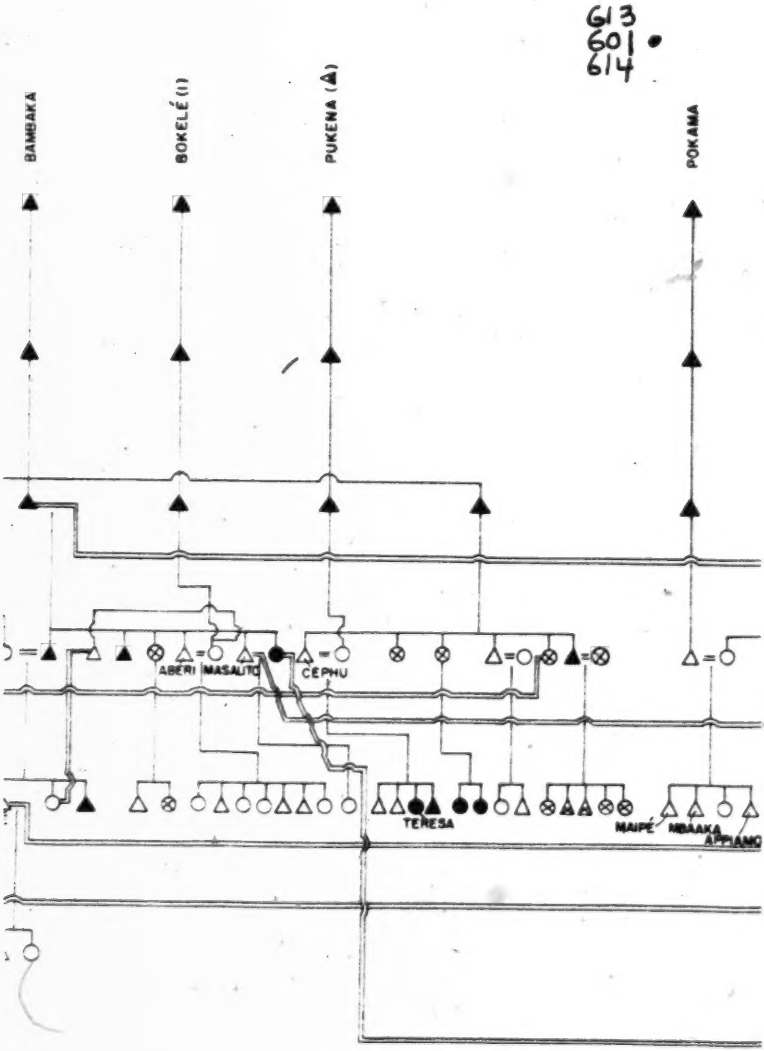
PUEMI (1):(2): Indicates different totemic branches of the same clan

Δ ; ⊗ : Living members of other hunting bands not present at the molimo

: An extended form of the conventional marriage symbol (=)

: Is used when for convenience the eldest sibling has had to be placed on the right

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 2.(B)]

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right

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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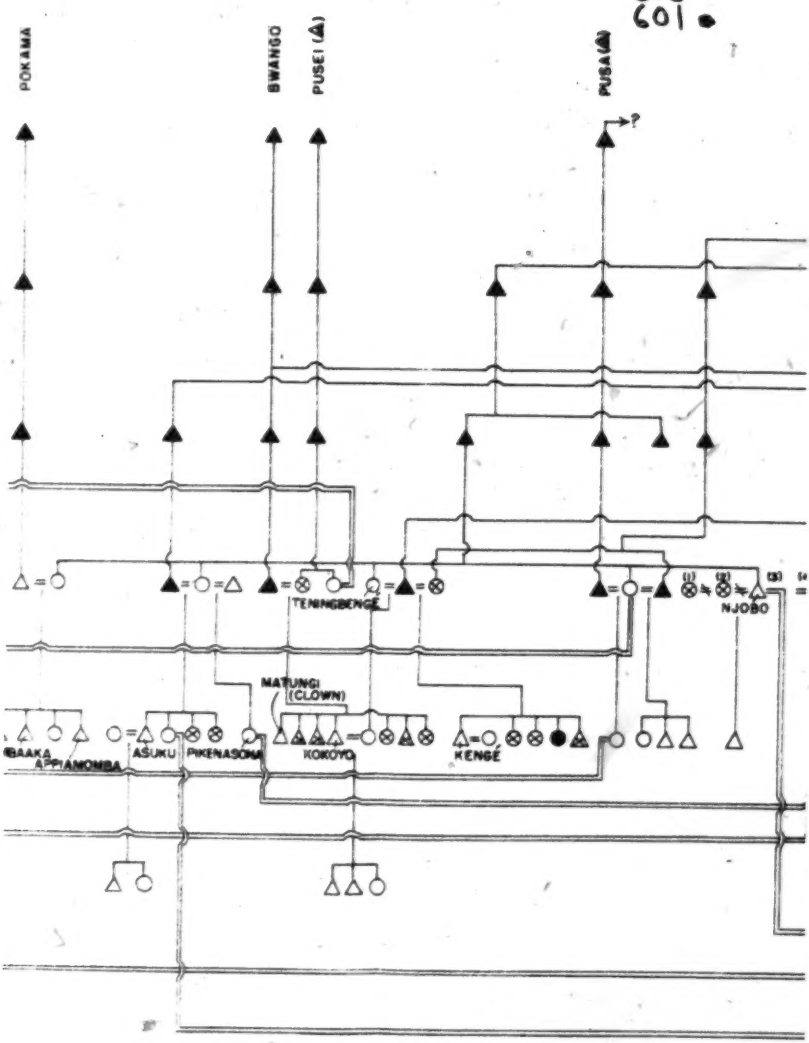

[End Chart 2.(C)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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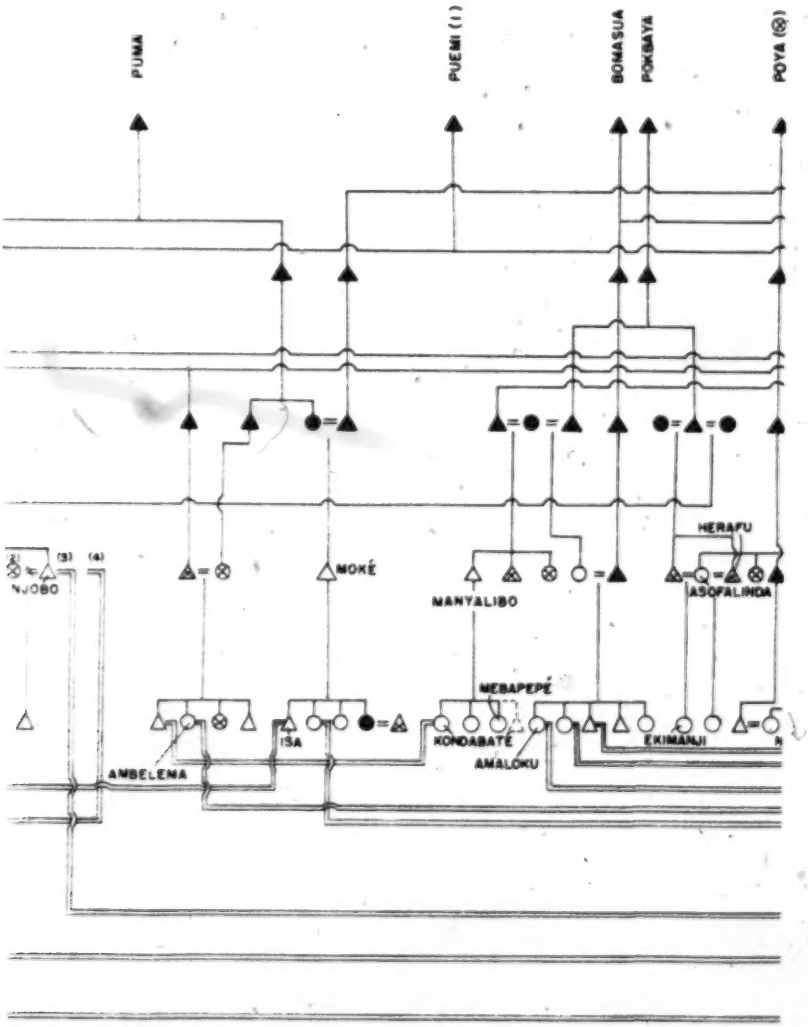

Composition of Epulu Net-Hunting Mbuti

[End Chart 2, (D)]

OCT.-DEC. 1957

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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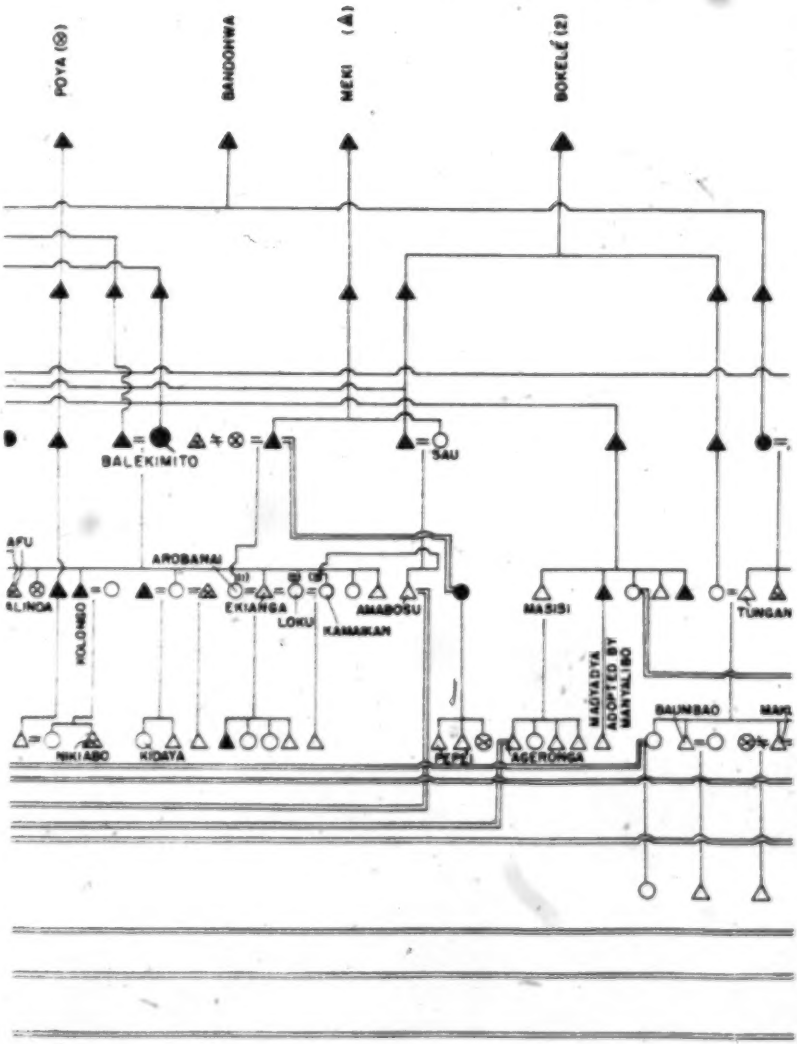

[End Chart 2, (E)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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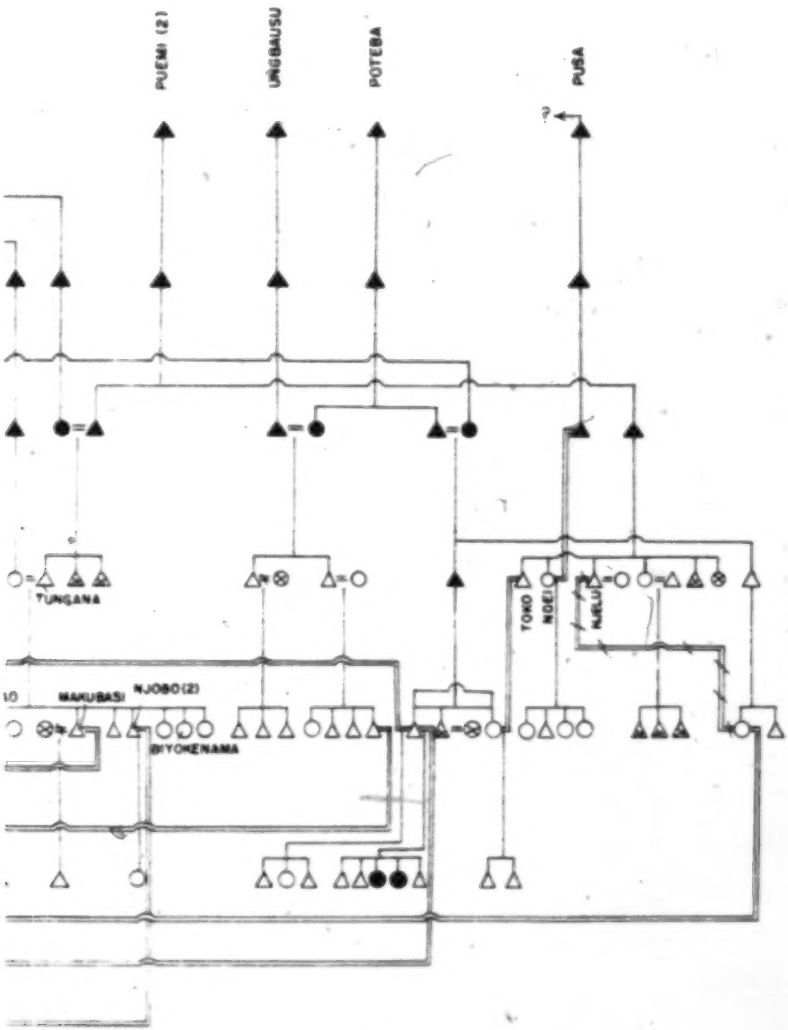

[End Chart 2, (F)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

181 the economic and political life, and even in the religious life of the
611 Mbuti, who are supremely concerned with the present.

p 601 The effective kinship terminology at once reflects the situation, which only becomes confused when any attempt is made to relate the terms to their usage in village society. It distinguishes generations rather than kin, and cuts indiscriminately across actual kinship boundaries. Through its effective organization of the band into age groups, it emphasizes the economic basis of band unity rather than any kinship bonds. The only terms in general usage in the Epulu region, and among the Mbuti bands to the east-west extremes of the Bira-speaking net-hunting territory, are as follows:

Grandparent:	*tata*	for address and reference
Father:	*epa*	for address and reference
Mother:	*ema*	for address and reference
Sibling:	*apua'i* or *moko*	for address and reference

(*apua'i* is used rather than *moko*, though its connotation is one of close friendship)

Child:	*miki*	for address or reference

Except at the parental level, there is generally no sex differentiation. At times it seems that *taté* is used for grandmother, *tata* for grandfather. Similarly, *amua'i* is a possible variant to denote a female sibling. But as frequently, if not more so, and more consistently, I found *tata* and *apua'i* used for either sex. Differentiation is also made, if necessary, by adding the terms used for boy or girl—*moko* or *kali*, respectively. Thus *miki a moko* is a boy child; *miki a kali* is a girl child. There is also a way of distinguishing the younger from the older: *vomia* is older, *motoa* is younger, but the Mbuti generally only couple these designations to kinship terms in direct imitation of the village usage and only in village contexts.

K 601 Bira terminology, with minor dialectal variations, is similar to the above, but with the addition of terms such as *noko* for mother's brother; *kola* for father's sister; *om-epa* and *mot-epa* for the older and younger brother of the father; and *om-ema* and *mot-ema* for the older and younger sister of the mother. The Bira call an older brother *homioné*, an older sister *alwané*, and a younger brother or sister simply *moto*. The Mbuti normally refer to their father's sister simply
p 601 as *ema* ("mother"), but if trying to refer to her for the benefit of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
[578] them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse. (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[755] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by
[855] sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.268]

CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 602 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 601 593 [561] We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective element between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[114] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 561 121 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionalization of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 561 562 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 462 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the interdependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines. [224] [222] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[2] [193] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *taté* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko, miki a kali.*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

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601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

602 621 561 121 We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apua'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

TABLE 6

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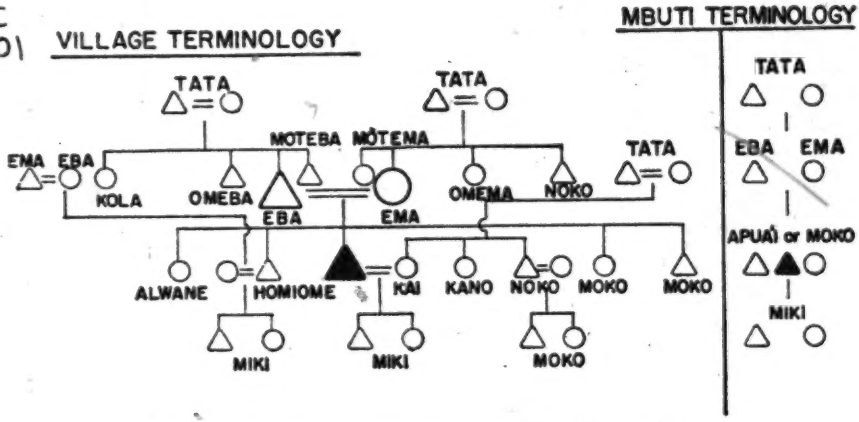
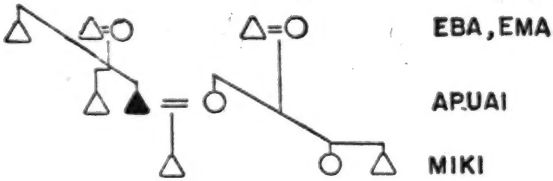


Mbuti terminology may also vary according to age, if one brother or sister is much older than another, thus:



Village and Mbuti kinship terminology.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

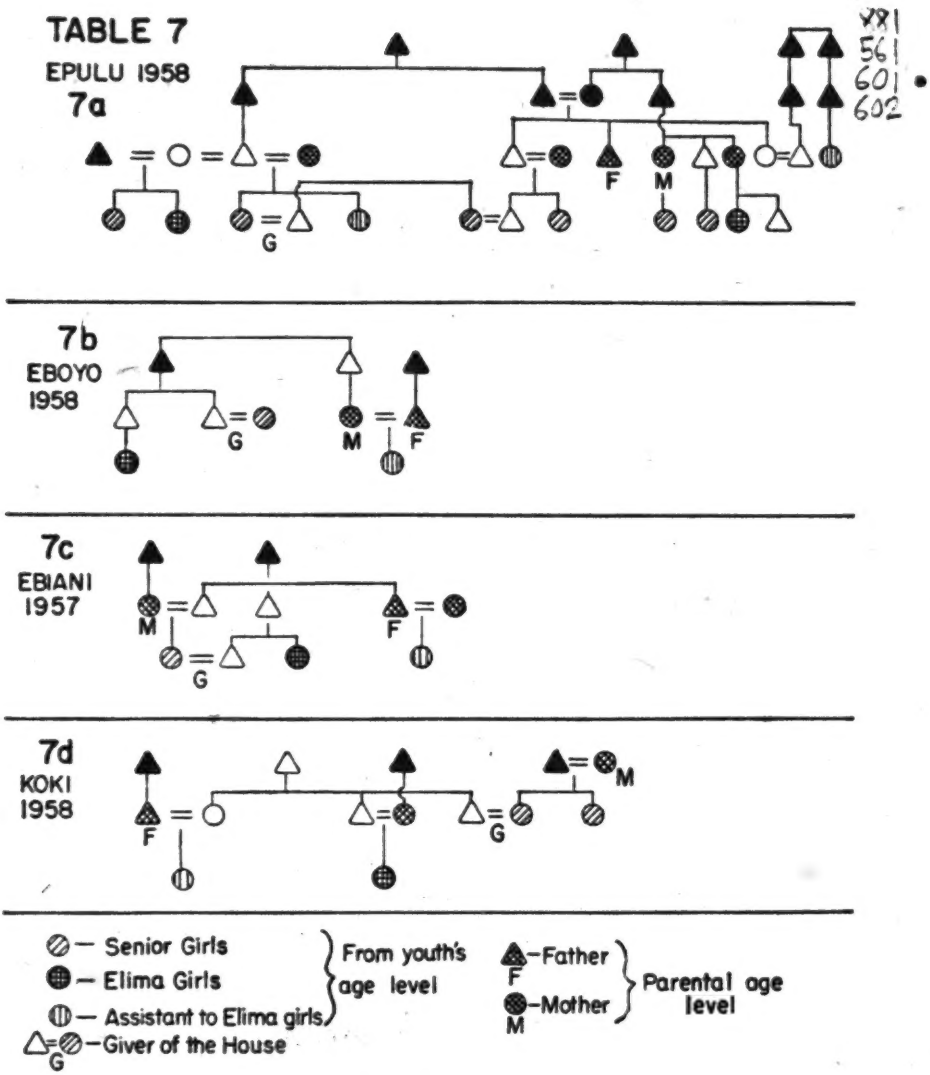


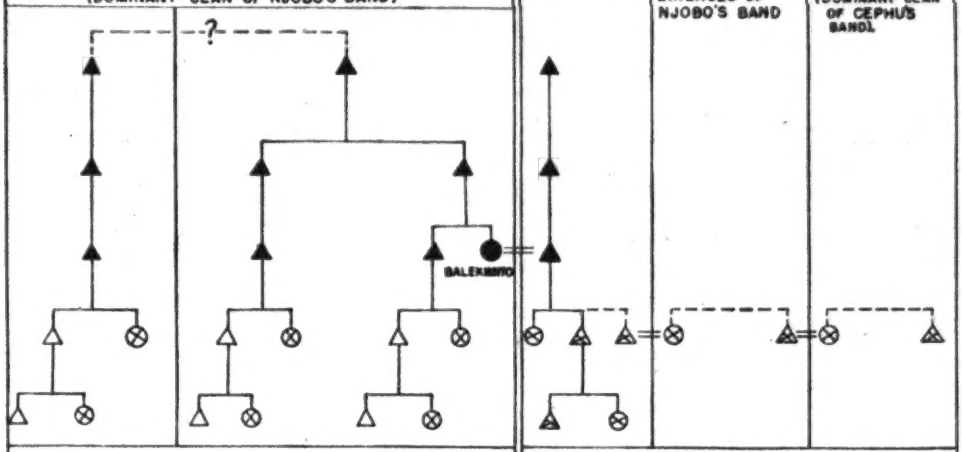
TABLE 7a–d *elima* participation

TABLE 9

SCHEMATISED GENEALOGY SHOWING AGNATIC PARTICIPATION ALLOWED ACCORDING TO VILLAGE CUSTOM

TABLE 10

AFFINAL MEMBERS OF GROUP BARRED FROM PARTICIPATION ACCORDING TO VILLAGE CUSTOM



ANALYSIS OF FULL GENEALOGY SHOWING ACTUAL PER-PARTICIPATION IN MOLIMO FOR		CENTAGE OF CONSANGUINEAL AND AFFINAL BALEKIMITO		
△ = 14.9% ○ = 12.7 %	△ = 12.1 % ○ = 16.4%	△ = 8.1 % ○ = 18.2%	△ = 43.3% ○ = 34.5%	△ = 21.6% ○ = 18.2 %
△ = 27.0 % ○ = 29.1 %		△ = 73.0 % ○ = 70.9 %		
△ = 35.1 % ○ = 47.3 %			△ = 64.9 % ○ = 52.7 %	
△ = 78.4 % ○ = 81.8 %				△ = 21.6% ○ = 18.2%

▲ = DECEASED

△, ⊗ = NON-PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

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2-1-3
765

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.346]

Plan 4a

G'BAO	1
RANGANA	2
MAU (a)	5
MAU (b)	6
GBÉ	4
"LESÉ"	7
GBOSU	8
HAGBÉ	9
BUGBU	10
GANI	11

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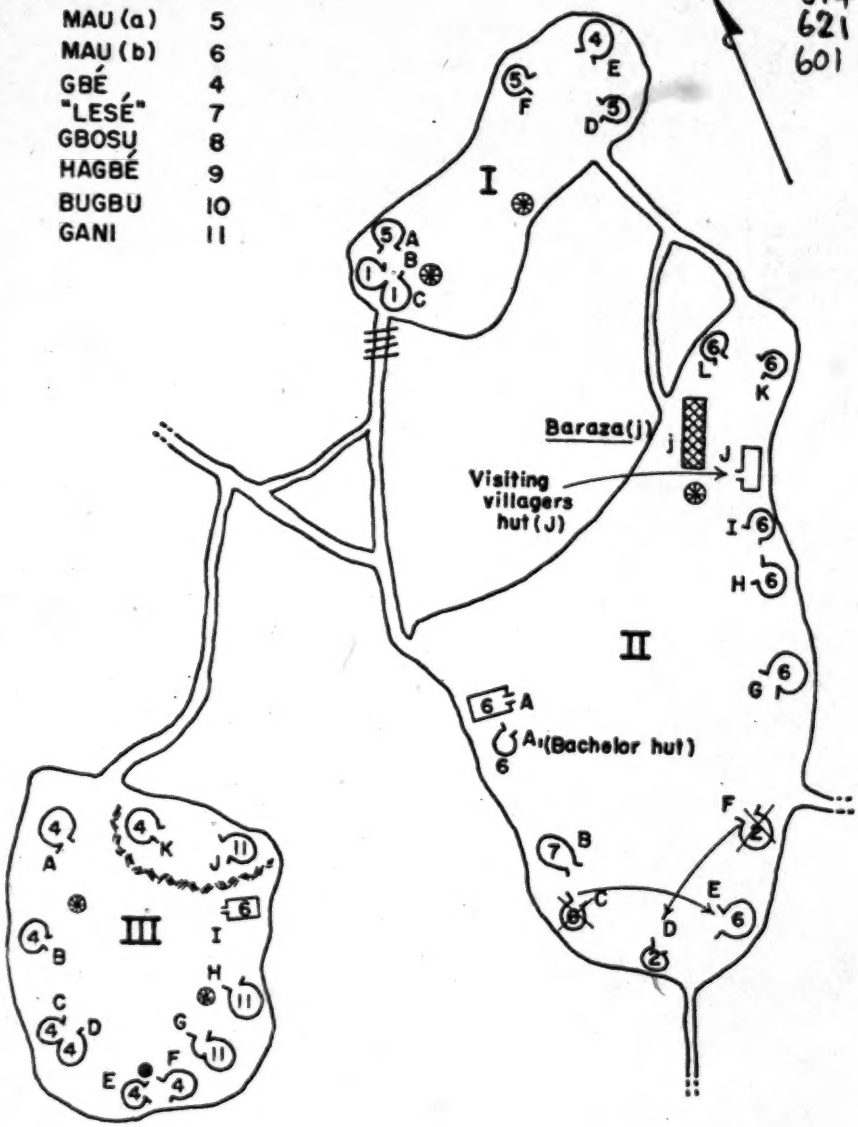
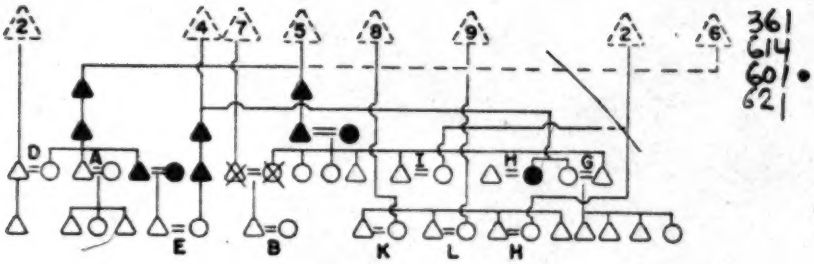


2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 347]

I



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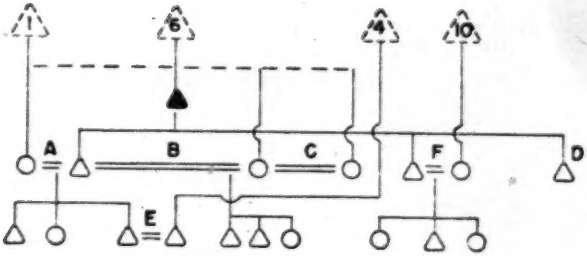

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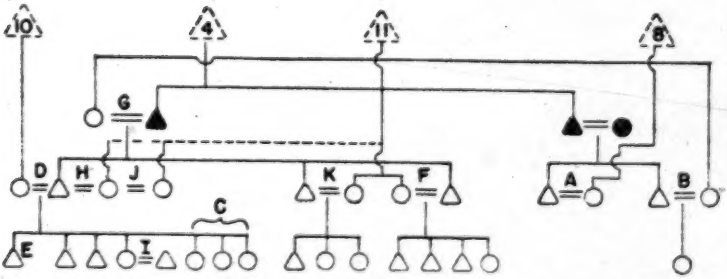

PLAN 4a–m *Hunting camps of net-hunters and archers other than at Epulu, showing composition.*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.348]

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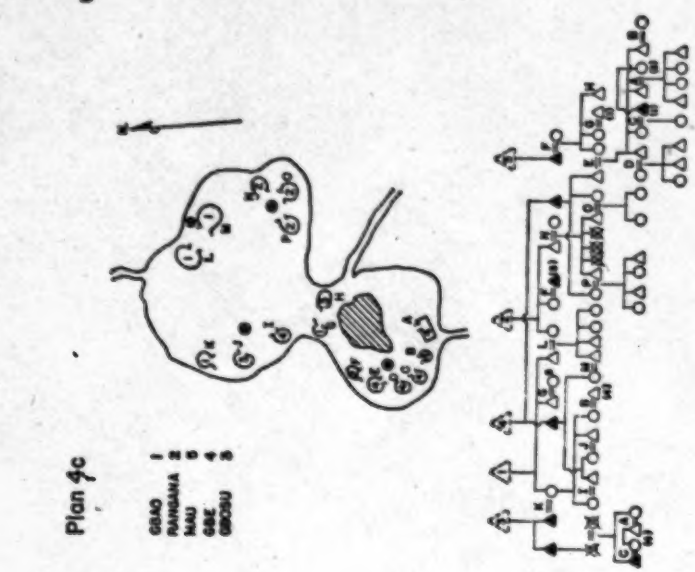
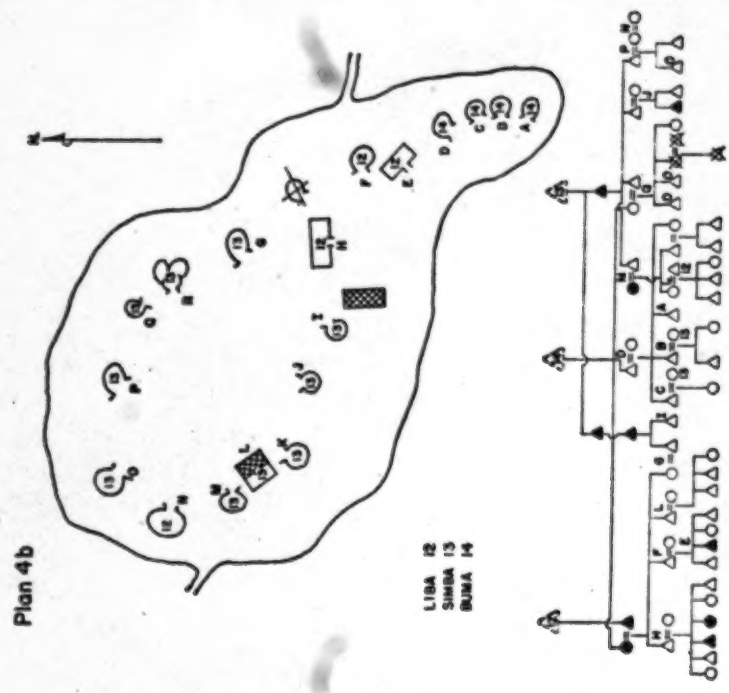
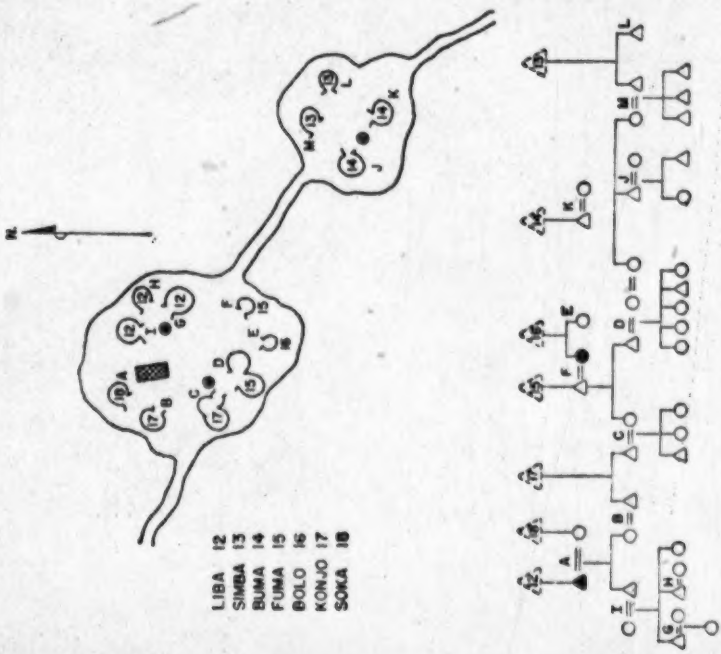




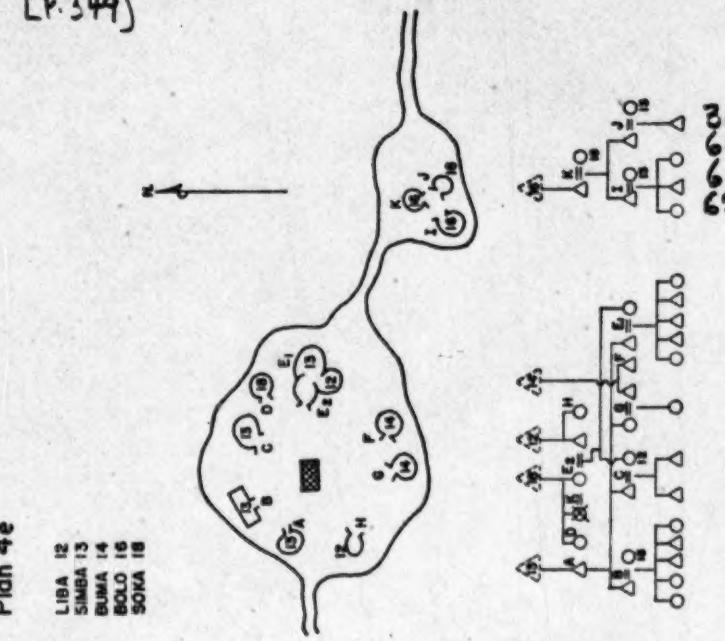
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.349]

Plan 4d



Plan 4e



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4f

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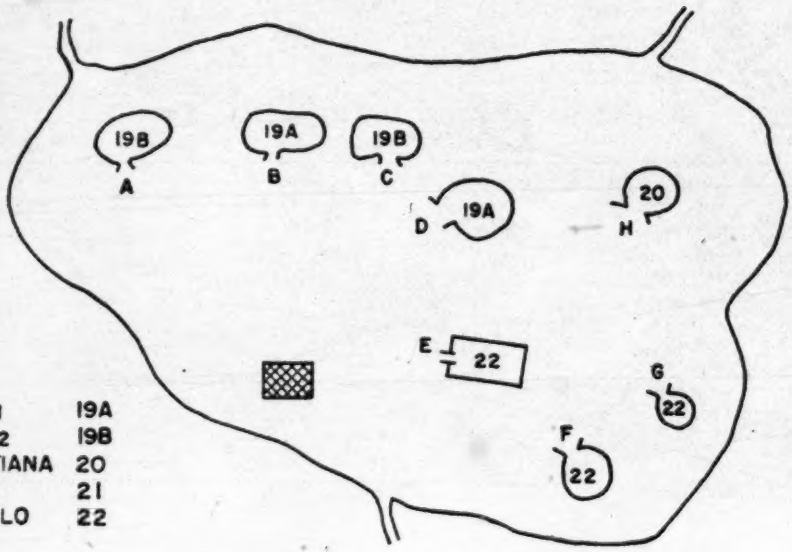
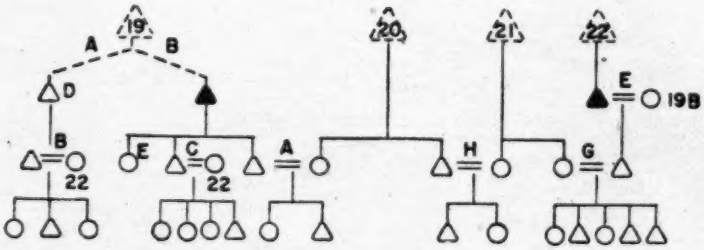


KIMA1	19A
KIMA2	19B
PIPUTIANA	20
DOLÉ	21
TOBOLO	22



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4g

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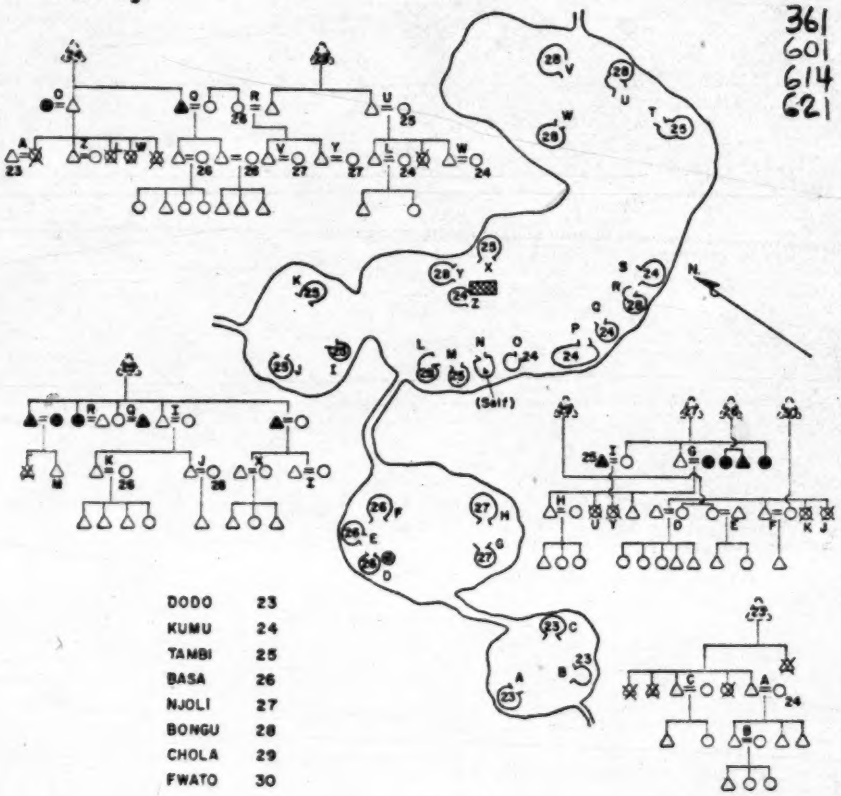

DODO	23
KUMU	24
TAMBI	25
BASA	26
NJOLI	27
BONGU	28
CHOLA	29
FWATO	30

[P.352]

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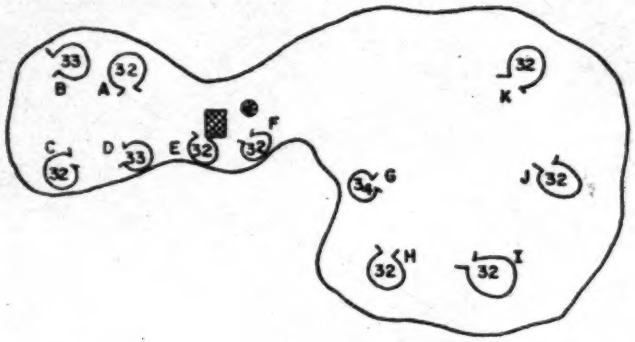
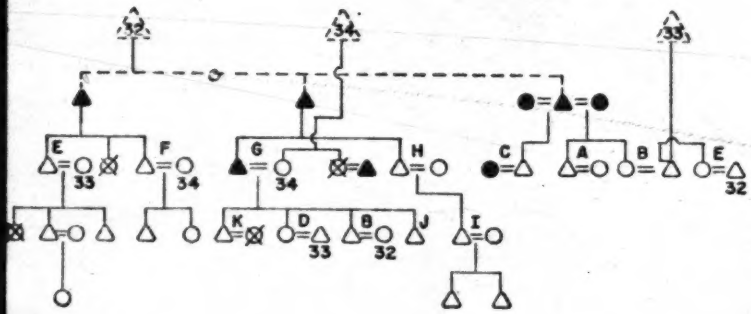
Plan 4h

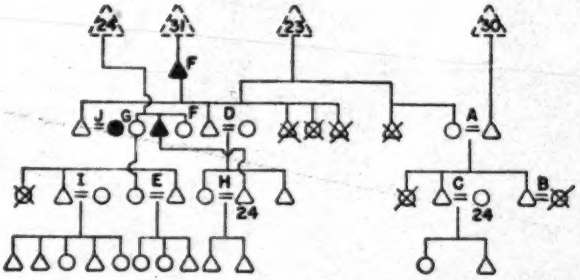
SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34





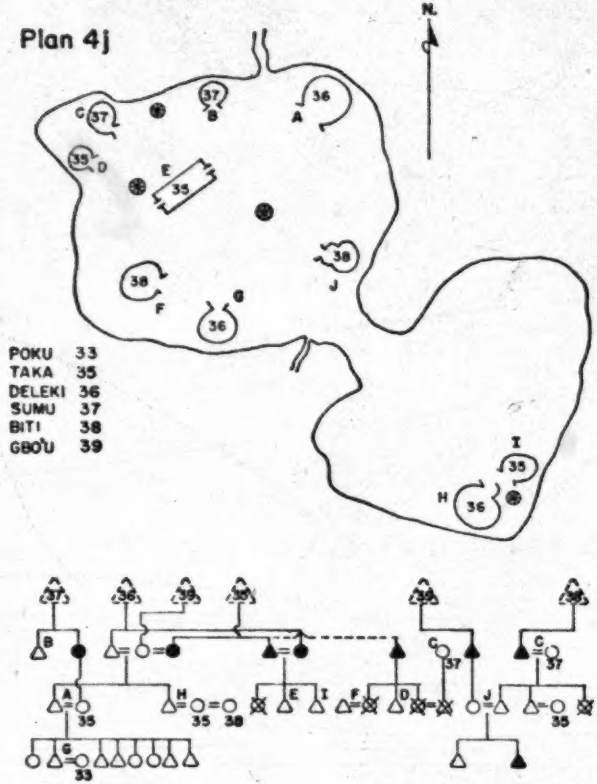
Plan 4i

DODO 23
KUMU 24
FWATO 30
DENA 31

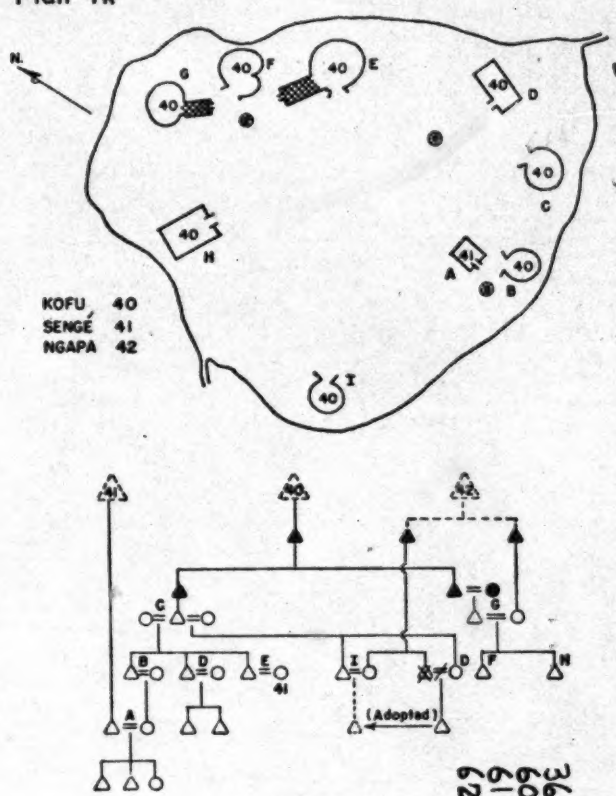


[P 353]

Plan 4j



Plan 4k



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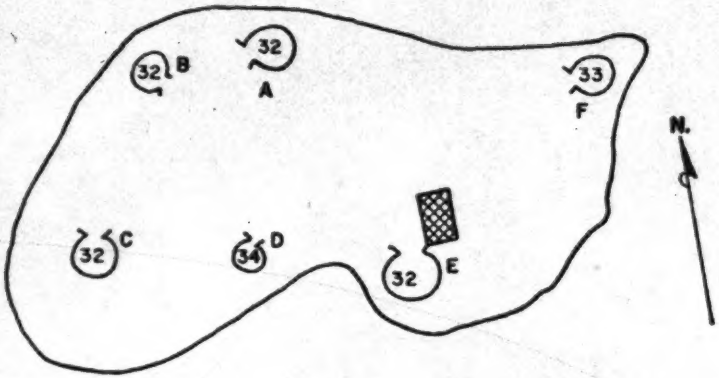
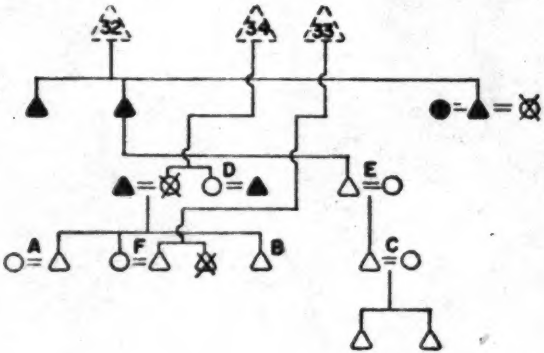
[P. 354]

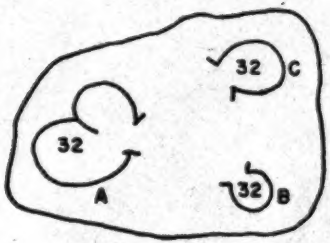
Plan 4L



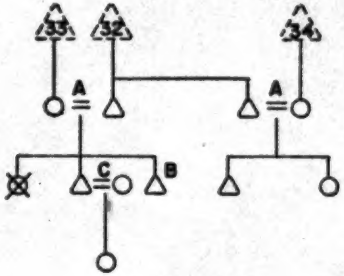


SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34

Plan 4m



SEMBI 32



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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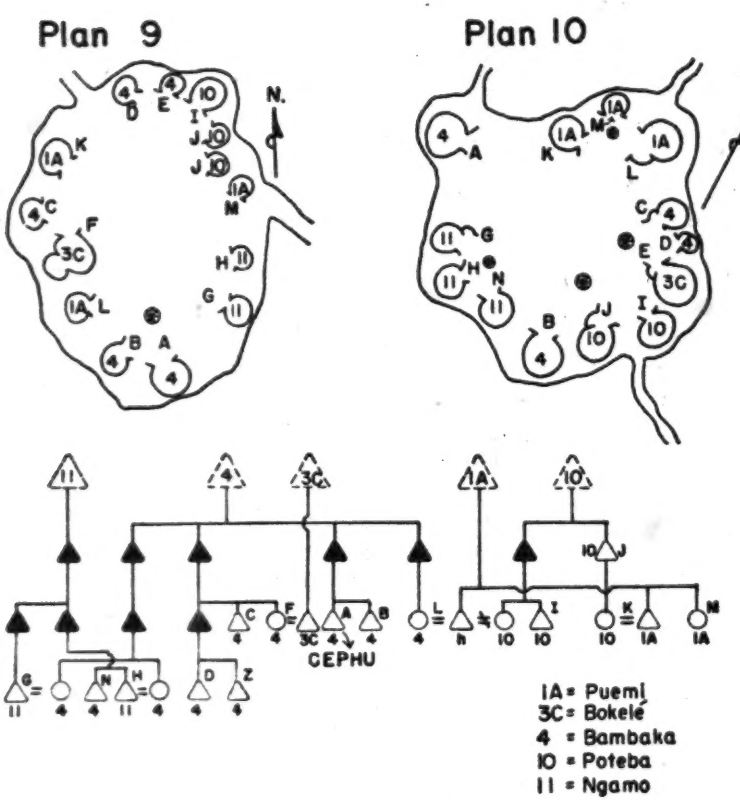

[601]

Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

[P.360 is blank]

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

7

The Play World of the BaMbuti

181 IN THE FOREST life appears to be free and easy, happy-go-lucky, with a certain amount of perpetual disorder as a result. But in fact, beneath all that there *is* order and reason; reaching everywhere is the firm, controlling hand of the forest itself.

861 561 601 If individual responsibility and authority are shunned and dispersed in other aspects of Pygmy life, as in the maintenance of law and order, a similar pattern appears in the upbringing of children. It is no accident that a child calls everyone in the same age group as his parents "father" or "mother"; those still older are called "grandparent." Those of the same age as himself he refers to by a

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere P 583 462 [581] producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies P [601] [561] extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 177 186 C 563 583 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub-[614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 62 certain units are the nuclear family and the • 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [P.160-B]

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toné*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

Z P 179 439 608 P 621 602 [608] [575] [61] P 621 602 114 P [591]

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
• 602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with [613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of them- [614] selves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor names) exist, but these seem to have little [103] social significance. Place names are used fre- [101] quently to differentiate one hunting band from another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached them- selves to a net-hunting band, so completely are [832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246-B]

PLATE 29[1]

361 A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

184 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer
571 camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of
• 602 people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The
887 elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

[1], /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621
• 602
887
142
302

/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P 291-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

use the appropriate kinship terminology and follow the appropriate behavior patterns. It is difficult to see what attracts the Mbuti girl to such a union except the politically advantageous position in which it places her. Unfortunately, little is known of the extent to which she stays in the village, or to which she takes advantage of her ability to slip into the forest unpursued and rejoin her band from time to time.

However, this is considered a selfish and antisocial way of attracting Mbuti adherents, and it is only countenanced by other villagers if it is done because the villager concerned is unable, for one reason or another, to acquire a villager wife. More generally the villagers try to introduce the Mbuti into their own kinship framework by insisting not only on the myth of hereditary ownership, but by positing a parallel relationship, a *kpara* referring to his Mbuti as his "children," but not allowing them sibling status with his real children.

As their "father" he then claims the right to concern himself with all their domestic problems, and most particularly with marriage. For an Mbuti boy to marry an utterly unrelated Mbuti girl owned by his *kpara's* brother, for instance, would be considered by the villagers as incestuous, and prohibited. It could only take place if either the boy or girl changed allegiance. Marriage between the Mbuti, then, becomes a matter of major concern to the villagers, who will not only provide all the necessary ritual for the Mbuti but who will also have to negotiate between themselves, just as if it were a village marriage, the *kpara* of the groom paying appropriate wealth to the *kpara* of the bride. In every respect the *kpara* act as parents, except that it is as if they were considering a less important line of children by some very inferior wife. In 1957–58 the wealth paid by one villager to another for an Mbuti wife for his own Mbuti "child" was about a tenth of what he would have to pay for a villager wife for his real child.

The matter is one of some concern, because a wealthy villager might "own" or claim to own a hundred or more Mbuti, and his only assurance against bankruptcy is an insistence upon his hereditary rights over the offspring of his male Mbuti, and his right to demand wealth from other villagers whose Mbuti married his own Mbuti girls. Considerable conflict arose between villagers as a result, because while the Mbuti accepted the feasting and their share of the wealth, they did not accept any of the obligations, and according to their own custom of betrothal and marriage they did not consider the marriage final until a child had been born. At any time before then, without asking leave of anyone, Mbuti or villager, they were free to sepa-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to village boys. In some cases the Mbuti's *kpara* may choose him as *karé* to his own son, and in other cases he may see some advantage in having his Mbuti form a *karé* pact with another villager, as this forms an economic and political link, then, between the two villagers. It seems that, generally, *karé* brotherhood is formed between Mbuti and their *kpara's* patrikin, however. It is believed that this places the two in an indissoluble politico-economic relationship for the rest of their lives, a relationship of subordination as far as the Mbuti is concerned, and one that will persist into the afterlife of the same individuals.

The villager concepts of afterlife are not clearly defined, but it is accepted without question that individuals continue to exist after death and may, if qualified by initiation and by adherence throughout life to the tribal code of behavior, join the ancestors, who live together much as they did in the present world, and continue to concern themselves with the present world. It is also accepted without question that there must be Mbuti in the afterworld, just as there are in the present. If one asks why must there be Mbuti, the invariable answer is in terms of the economic dependence of the villagers upon the Mbuti in the present world, the assumption being that the same needs will exist in the afterworld. But the economic relationship is the most easily expressed and recognized, however mistakenly, and is not necessarily therefore the most important. The political relationship is also recognized, though not quite so easily expressed because of the greater incompatibility of the systems of the two peoples. But there is also a ritual relationship which is certainly as powerful as the others, if not more so, and it is just as much a part of the *karé* pact as are the economic and political aspects.

Karé partners are expected to trade with each other, though not necessarily exclusively. This allows for the formation of *karé* brotherhood between individuals who are not in a *kpara*/Mbuti relationship, and is an attempt on the part of the villager to regularize the situation should his Mbuti join a band trading with a neighboring village. To have a *kpara* in one village and a *karé* in another, strategically chosen, is considered equally advantageous by Mbuti and villager. As far as the Mbuti is concerned it provides him with two groups of people who feel under some kind of an obligation toward him, and who need him. As far as the *kpara* is concerned it gives him someone he can effectively claim against should his Mbuti decide to trade in that direction. As far as the villager *karé* is concerned it is another Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little
[578] between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

• 602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
611 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[429] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761
602 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
[177] phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the
761 whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so
761 with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
763 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
152 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[887] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 148]

CHAPTER 10

The Economy

THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage
613 context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting
• 602 entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When
439 discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 *seq.*), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri,
439 except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking
261 Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

NET-HUNTERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Epulu	Head	Elders, for wisdom
	Back	Male hunters, for strength
	Private parts	Children, to help them grow
	Shoulder, liver, heart	Owners of net, spear, and others who helped in kill
Wamba	Head	Sister or sister-in-law, or to dog if it helped in kill
	Back and forelegs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Owner of net
	Rear legs, liver, chest	Owner of net and those who helped in kill
	Stomach	Elders
Biasiku	Head	Women, or to owner of dog if it helped in kill
	Back	The woman who carried the animal back to camp
	Private parts	Children (who also get other intestines)
	Forelegs and liver	Net-owner and helpers
	Rear legs	Net-owner and helpers
	Stomach	Women
	Chest	Net-owner

224
184
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ARCHERS

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Kilo	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest, legs, liver, heart	Owner of dog
	Back	Divided among all
	Rump	Elders, particularly to dog-owner's father, who will then further share it
	Stomach	Anyone who might have gone ahead and first put up the game

224 184 561 602 562 422

Area	*Portion of body*	*Given to*
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

224 561 [562] It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

224 602 The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

224 621 626 594 The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are frequently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the *elima* songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the encroaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the encroaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seeking a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge occur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-operation as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
627 and morally, beyond the forest.
[578]
[152]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
• 602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly (*"apa ndaso aké sinana"*). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: *"kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi"*) and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
318 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant. 621 593 578 602

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours. 593 593 516

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal." 593 [564]

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange.

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other.

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible.

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month.

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

[P.268]

CHAPTER 15

Principles of Organization (1)

121 THE FOREST CONTEXT

While reaffirming our introductory belief that this single-band study is the first essential in the wider study of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and that such a study cannot warrant generalizations of wide or final value, some generalization is obviously called for and must now be made to provide a basis for future comparative studies. While we have, in the section on "The Forest World," outlined the nature of Mbuti activity in domestic, economic, political and religious life, insofar as it is lived by the Epulu band of net-hunters, we now have to draw this picture together in an organizational framework. Within this the principles discerned should be specific enough to explain the unity and integrity that plainly persist despite the remarkable degree of flux, and at the same time be general enough to have wider application beyond this specific situation.

121 In the absence of central government it is customary to look for
602 principles of organization in the kinship system of a society, and although the society in question does not conform to the expectations of Steward (1955) or Service (1962), and although its departure from their norm of patrilineality[1] cannot be demonstrably shown to be due to "evolution" or even to changes wrought by the influx of village cultivators, there is still much to be gained from a study of Mbuti attitudes to kinship. Embedded in their terminology, simple as it is, are attitudes expressed in behavior in all realms of their life.

602 We have seen how little emphasis is placed on kinship, except at
601 the level of the nuclear family, where there is a strong affective ele-
593 ment between young children and parents. This is most clearly seen
[561] in the terminology of interpersonal address and reference, which is

[714] [1] Service was more perceptive in shifting the emphasis from lineality to locality, but his generalizations still lack substantiation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the generational type, dividing Mbuti into age levels that cut horizontally across the vertical lines of lineage. This terminology recognizes four age levels, but is misunderstood if thought of as a means of relating one generation to the next. Although *miki* can be correctly translated as "child," *apua'i* as "sibling," *eba* and *ema* as "father" and "mother," and "*tata*" as grandparent, these terms are not obligatory in address, and are used only where convenient in reference, or where it is desired to emphasize the age differential (for instance, in discussing activities specific to one age level or another). To use any one of these terms to address or refer to a person of a different generation, far from stressing kinship bonds, stresses generational separation. Even *eba* or *ema*, outside the affective nuclear-family usage, is generally a way of expressing distance, and may sometimes imply attitudes such as hostility or at least reproof.

Having stated what the terminology is, one has obviously to go further and look more closely into its actual usage, rather than be content with simple translations. In practice, the terms refer not to degrees of kinship at all, but to conditions of life: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Of all the terms, the only one that effectively creates interpersonal bonds that are recognizable in daily life is the term *apua'i*. As with all the other terms, it is classificatory in the widest possible sense, extending even beyond bilateral connections to include equally affines or unrelated friends. Effectively, then, rather than "sibling," it should be translated "age mate." However, the English familial term is more pertinent in that it conveys something of the affection involved in the Mbuti relationship, and the intimate degree of unity.

The term *apua'i*, obviously, is used at each of the four age levels between members of that level. It is used widely, constantly, and always affectively, never with reproof or hostility. To address or refer to someone as *apua'i* is to indicate that all is "quiet" between you. Quietness (*ekimi*) is always associated with *apua'i*, whereas noise (*akami*) is invariably associated by any one age level with any of the others—that is to say, any crossing of the levels is liable to produce *akami*. The ideal state is quiet, or *ekimi*, therefore the ideal relationship is that pertaining between *apua'i*. Interlevel relationships (particularly those between adjacent levels) are spoken of not only as producing *akami* but also as being *mota*—strong, powerful, difficult, inclined to be hot, and therefore dangerous though not necessarily bad.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

602 561 121 If we forget the usual genealogical associations of kinship and think in a strictly classificatory manner, we do have here an institutionalization of a kinship relationship and the beginnings of a kinship system, for we have already seen the vital importance of age in determining one's realm of activity and responsibility among the Mbuti, and how each of the four levels of *apua'i* act together in distinction from the other levels. But there seems little point in persisting any further with the term "kinship system" in this instance unless we define kinship so as to contradict its very fundamental significance in the more highly structured societies. With the Mbuti we are dealing with kith rather than kin, and the terminological division of the society into four age levels is best thought of as completely divorced from kinship except, and it is a vital exception, insofar as the nuclear family, and the ideal relations that should pertain among its members, are taken as the model relationships for the band. With this in mind, let us examine other relationships implicit in the terminology.

601 561 562 It is noticeable that the terminology distinguishes age levels, and only distinguishes between the sexes at the parental level (*ema* and *eba*). Children, siblings and grandparents (in their widest classificatory sense) are considered without emphasizing any male/female polarity. Sex differentiation can be made, and where necessary this is done, but only in the same rather roundabout way in which any genealogical connection can be traced. In order to differentiate an *apua'i* who is merely a friend from one who is a uterine brother, one has to add the expression "from one stomach" to designate the latter. Similarly, one can add the terms designating male or female to any term of address or reference except that of mother or father, where it is not needed.[2]

562 462 This avoidance of sex differentiation is consistent with the interdependence between the sexes that is so characteristic of Mbuti economic life, and with the egalitarianism that exists between them in the realm of government. A woman is in no way the social inferior of a man, and there is little absolute division of labor along sex lines. [224] Among the net-hunters in particular, and among the archers during [222] the *begbe* beat-hunt, cooperation between the sexes during the hunt

[193] [2] I have come across instances where a vowel or consonant change has been said to indicate the sex differential (as happens in some Sudanic Languages), such as *tata* and *tatá* for male and female grandparent, *apua'i* and *amua'i* for male and female sibling, but there was no consistency in the practice. Wherever it was necessary to make the difference, there was need for stress, and this was in any case better achieved by the more dramatic addition of *moko* or *kali*. At the level where this most frequently is done, a male child would thus be distinguished from a female child: *miki a moko*, *miki a kali*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

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601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter 602 621 term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is 561 to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as 121 used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more 602 effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that 121 kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction 582 among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apud'i*, and in- 621 deed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two 602 couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual [561] does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this time with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

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elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship. 58 621 602

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels. 561 621 [571]

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation. 881 885 581 561

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition. 888 561

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual 621 613 561 621 [582] [591] [181]

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Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

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Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus f/s is positive when s is a child.[1] It is negative when s is a youth, becomes less strained when s becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when f becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as f/s are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when s approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

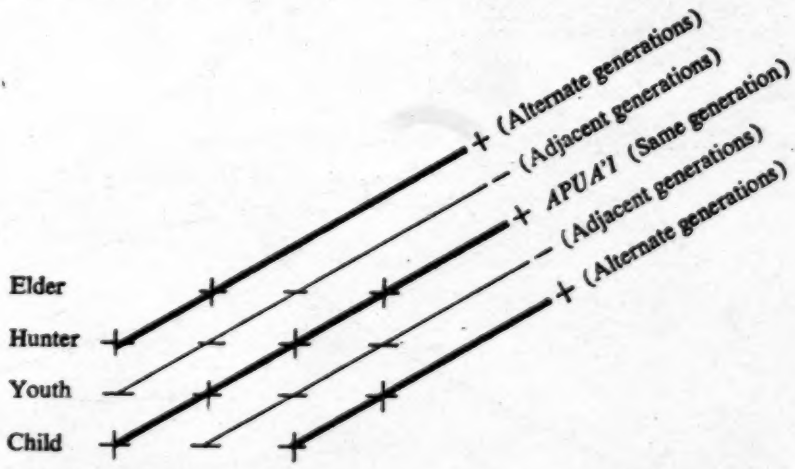
[1] f = father; s = son; m = mother; d = daughter; b = brother; z = sister.

602 would be difficult to notice much difference in this respect between
121 *f/s* and *mb/zs*.
561
571 *b/z* and *h/w* are both positive, though *b/z* swings to negative
593 briefly at the youth's age level, friction being an inevitable potential of the sister-exchange practice, loose as it is. *m/s*, almost as uniformly positive as *h/w* throughout all changes in age level, might be said to reach a double-positive stage when *s* becomes a hunter, and is certainly pronounced during his youth—just at the time, in fact, when his relations with his father are at their worst.

If we consider the age factor we get something like the following (allowing for the fact that there is no very precise way of determining attitudes, particularly among the somewhat volatile Mbuti):

	mb/zs :	*b/z* ::	*f/s* :	*h/w*
When *s* is a child:	+	+	+	+
youth:	−	−	−	+
hunter:	−	+	−	+

602 Or, if set out in a different form, considering only age, the thick
121 lines joining positive relationships, the thin lines joining those points
561 at which the relationships are negative, we see most clearly the cor-
593 respondence of attitudes to age. Only when the sex difference is considered—i.e., allowing for negative *b/z* and positive *m/s*—is the symmetry spoiled.[2]



[2] The system, and the results, might be considerably improved by replacing the inflexible positive and negative signs with a scale analysis.

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Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

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Mbuti

561 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their
88 alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided hori-
561 zontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational
[594] levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by
621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by
131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the
[648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*,
[92] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one
628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs
602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep-
778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

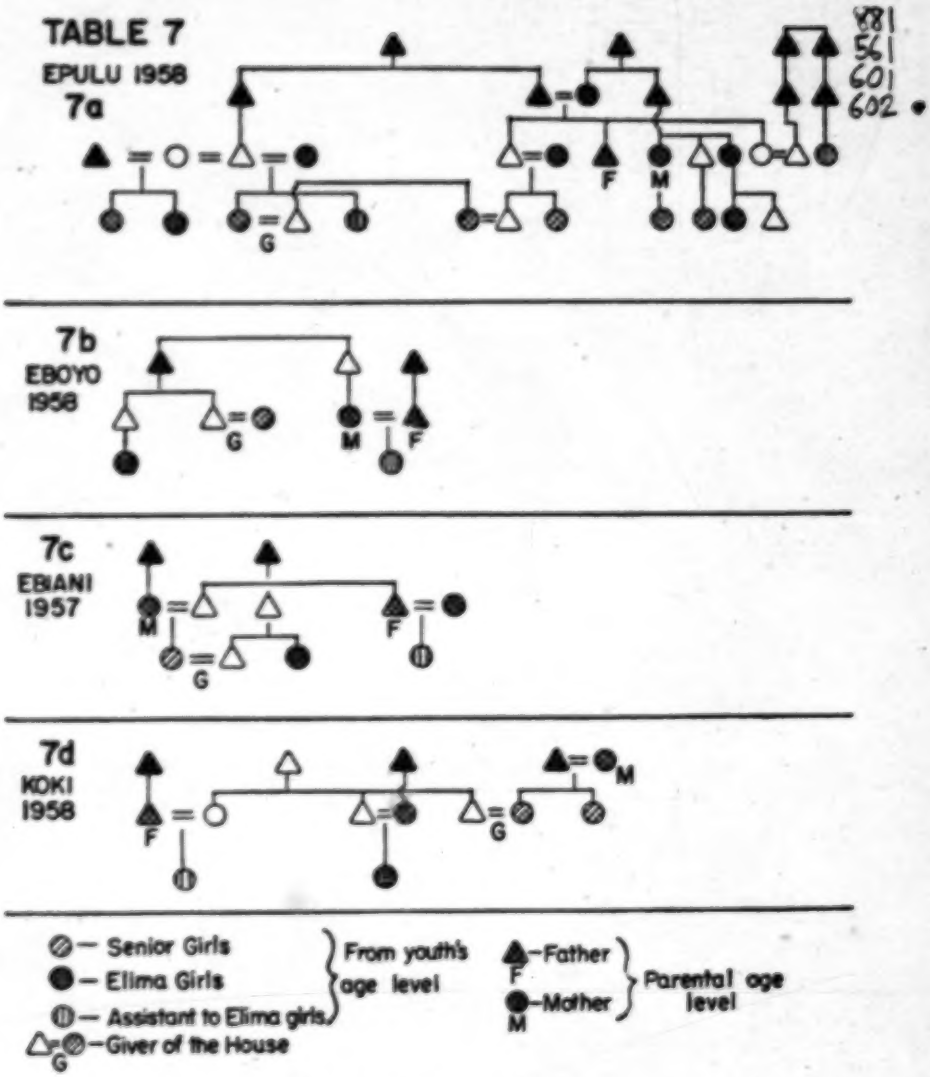


TABLE 7a–d *elima* participation

TABLE 9

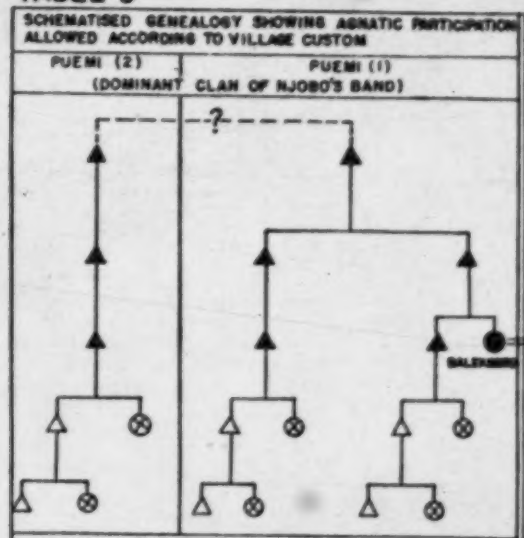
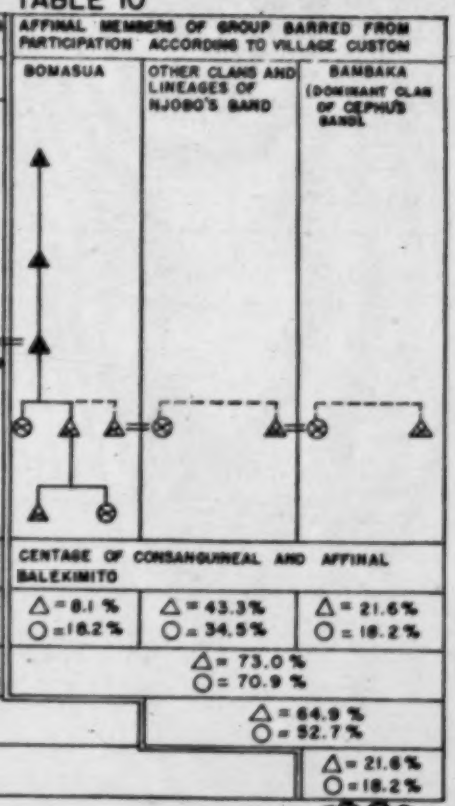


TABLE 10



▲ = DECEASED

△, ⊗ = NON-PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

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602
613
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THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies. 156 621 551 [194]

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest. 156 571 621 [674] [538]

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's 115 602

115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
• 602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

224 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of
765 how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how every-
578 one wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing,
156 lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his
765 business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair
578 incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply.
156 He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help
593 and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense,
• [602] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only
[621] the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the
156 fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill
152 himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat
224 *from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu*
224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu,
578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped
156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857] by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593] burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602 •
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say [593] they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602] the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

585 Pygmy wedding the villagers shrugged their shoulders and forgot to notify Akidinimba. So on the appointed day, when the young bride-to-be had been painted and richly oiled, she set off, weeping hard, to find, when she arrived, no sign of Atete, no indication of any of the promised preparations for a wedding, and nobody who had the least idea when Atete might be back. Akidinimba brightened up at once and suggested returning to Epulu. But having got that far, her relatives decided to stay. Besides, this was Ngoma's village and they could be sure of being fed well.

585 An elderly village woman swept out a dark and dirty two-roomed 591.4 house in the middle of the village, and told the bridal party that they could wait there. She reluctantly went to see that food was cooked for them, and word was sent out to Atete, in the forest, to return quickly before the bridal party ate up the entire village. By nightfall there was no word, but the Pygmies decided that since they were being fed so well they would stay over and see what happened the next day. They sang for a while, but things had fallen rather flat and the singing did not last long. When the others went to sleep Akidinimba was crying once again.

The next day dragged its hot and dusty way along, and still there was no sign of the groom. The bridal party began to get as restive as the villagers, but still they decided to stay. Mulanga arrived to [593] try and persuade his young wife to return with him, but she refused, saying she was not going to miss her brother's wedding for any husband. He retorted that it looked as though there was not going to be any wedding, to which she replied, "In that case you will have no bride." This is one of the difficulties of sister-exchange marriage, [583] [586] for if one marriage breaks up and the woman returns to her home, the corresponding marriage also breaks up. Mulanga, alarmed at the 585 • 602 prospect, set about beating his sister, asking the unfortunate Akidi- 593 nimba why Atete did not come, as though it were her fault. He even went so far as to say that it was no wonder nobody wanted to

marry her, the way she flirted. In other circumstances Akidinimba would have attacked her brother, for she was twice his size, but she had lost all her bounce and was so miserable by this time that she just burst into tears once more, rolling over and over on the dirty floor. The second day ended more unhappily than the first, with still no news from Atete. The messenger that had been sent out had himself not returned.

Early next morning, however, the messenger came back with several leaf bundles full of honey, and announced that Atete was on his way and would be arriving soon. Villagers and Pygmies alike began making preparations feverishly, but by the time Atete arrived it was too late to do more than have a dance, and the actual wedding was postponed for yet another day. By this time the villagers were thoroughly tired of having to feed a large wedding party for so long, and they went through the ritual just as fast as they could. The wedding began in the morning, and Akidinimba cheered up immensely when someone pointed out to her that it is better to be married than to be jilted, particularly when you are all dressed for the wedding. She laughed and giggled all the time an old village woman was telling her, as custom demands, how to behave toward her husband, what a serious business this was, and how she would be struck dead if she did not adhere to the rules. Finally the old woman gave up and just pushed her into the bridal house, where Atete was waiting, and slammed the door on them. Shortly afterward a rather subdued Akidinimba emerged, and began cooking her husband's supper.

There was a great deal of speculation among the Pygmies as to whether or not this union would last, but it was settled when one day Atete arrived and presented his in-laws with a fine sondu antelope. He said that he was very content with his wife, and he had not found it necessary to beat her at all often.

Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the [821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey.

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One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

621 joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as every-
5/8 one would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet
224 later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters
628 to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

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628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

[P. 336-B]

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection, the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of 583 trouble. However, if the family group 591 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 584 he may, in desperation, appeal to his mother's family group to provide one. • 602 If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

[P. 337-A]

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

[P. 337-8]

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512

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157 particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no in-
[595] terest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*).
554 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his
156 penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and
593 was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He
554 had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember
555 him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was
157 among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed,
[224] four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the
[648] hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However,
156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or
152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him
554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 *Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of*
• 604 children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the
596 same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

When Njobo was away from the band for a 156
number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Nor- 604
mally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but 592
also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would [554]
have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, [571]
but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not [561]
belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not 156
leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, tell- 152
ing everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he 578
told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's 554
camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's 156
net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt 554
and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when 422
his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want 578
to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This tem- 156
porarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the 554
senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his 558
arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave 627
indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and 201
talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

554 627 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[578] and morally, beyond the forest.
[156]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
• 604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

[ARCHERS]

593 861 Both parents have an equal responsibility in the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

• 606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively, 514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from 264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimination takes place close by, two factors favoring 361 the frequent moving of camp.

[P 177-B]

593 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout,
595 with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping
598 daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga
• 606 were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and
607 three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau
887 hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of
626 Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack
578 of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can
181 expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leader-
626 ship appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involv-
578 ing the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

This incident shows as well as any how a tiny, and often imagined, insult can be magnified out of all proportion until it becomes a serious issue, threatening the peace of the camp. In any small, closed community, there are hidden tensions everlastingly at play. They are capricious, they are fluctuating and vapid, but every one of them is potentially explosive. 593 578

Of the two brothers Aberi was the elder. He was aggressive and ugly, and he considered himself the head of the family. The oldest brother, Kelemoke's father, had died. But Kelemoke had been brought up by Masalito rather than Aberi because everyone agreed that Masalito, if younger, had much more sense. He was also a better hunter, a better singer, a better dancer, and considerably better-looking. He had a prettier wife too; Aberi's wife had lost half her face, which had been eaten away by yaws. So between these two brothers there were always strained feelings. Open conflict was avoided because Masalito usually lived with the main group, of which his wife was a member, while Aberi always hunted with Cephu, his cousin. 593 578 554 157 [164]

But Masalito was kindly and liked peace and quiet, so when Cephu joined the main group at Apa Lelo he often used to visit his brother in Cephu's camp. Aberi's wife was a hard-working woman, and although it was difficult to look at her without flinching, she was loved by everyone. One afternoon, on a rainy day, Masalito wandered over to visit his brother. Rainy days are not happy days in a hunting camp; they are often oppressive, and of course hunting is impossible. People are couped up in their tiny leaf huts, thinking of all the game that is going uncaught. Aberi was sleeping, so Masalito sat down beside his sister-in-law, Tamasa, and asked her for a smoke. She passed him the clay pipe bowl and a little tobacco, and a long stem cut freshly from the center of a plantain leaf. She had recently come back from a visit to a Negro village and had brought several of these stems with her, as they give by far the best smoke. 578 607 276 576

Masalito smoked a few puffs, then passed the pipe to Tamasa. But

578 instead of accepting it she abruptly turned it upside down and
607 knocked the remaining tobacco out into the dirt. This was not only
276 wasteful, but a deliberate insult. Masalito did not want to take
576 offense, so he gave Tamasa the chance to re-establish good relations. He asked her to give him one of the new pipestems to take back to his hut for himself and his wife to enjoy. To refuse her husband's brother would be an open act of aggression quite uncalled for, and if she made the gift she would automatically cancel the previous insult. Masalito thought that he had not only maneuvered the political situation to his advantage but also won for himself and his wife a new pipestem. Unfortunately he had chosen a bad day.

[422] Tamasa felt that Masalito was trying to get the better of her, and to get her to give away her husband's property while he was asleep, without asking him. She said, "Certainly I will give you a pipestem." Then she went behind the hut, where all the rubbish was thrown, and came back with a withered and smelly stump of a pipe. It had been pared away so often between smokes, to keep the mouthpiece fresh, that it was now only two feet long instead of six or seven. And instead of being fresh and green and juicy it was stale and brown and dry, reeking of old tobacco and spittle. This she presented to
[152] Masalito, who was so upset that he cried with rage, and asked why she and Aberi always treated him so badly. Tamasa promptly retorted that it was not bad treatment to feed him and give him tobacco every time he came over from his camp. Didn't his wife look after him, that he had to come and scrounge from his brother?

[152] This was too much for Masalito, who had wanted only to be on good terms with everyone. He called Tamasa a name that one should never use to one's brother's wife, and Tamasa started crying. This
593 578 awakened Aberi, who came out of his hut sleepily, looking uglier
276 than ever. Without trying to explain, Masalito, still sobbing tear-
152 lessly with rage, hit his brother over the head with the withered pipestem Tamasa had given him. Brandishing the offending article above

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apu Lelo, but at a later camp, Apu Kadikeru. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

Tunbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

607 593 595 853 978 [852] the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time, and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 595 411 978 607 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end, Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 595 978 607 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that. 593 595 598 607

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake. [253]

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

593 595 598 606 607 887 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *karé* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *seghe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *karé* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

Z P 881 177 608 •

Z P 534 202

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nèumòi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *karé* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

Z P 881 177 608 534

[P. 179-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P, 180-A]

society. Schebesta also mentions other instruments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and the secret society) among the south Lese, namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asaragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager element of initiation associated with circumcision and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element of initiation into the men's secret society (*tore*).

Marriage

Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult to determine which is the stronger, the interests of the hunting band or the interests and mutual affection of the two individuals concerned.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Mombu FO31
Lese

182 (D)

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[3]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *karé* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

[3] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P. 182-D]

183 (A)

[ARCHERS]

[P·183-A]

P M 764 177 nent among the many archers who had hastened to attend the funeral took charge. He measured the corpse with his stick and drew the outline of the grave on the ground. His son, assisted by others, opened a grave, using pointed sticks, a hatchet, and a bush knife, and cleared the loosened earth with their hands. The crying P [152] of the women became louder, calling "*Afae!*" (father). A few women sat nearby, singing dirges. Not only the relatives mourned, but all present. With the help of the Lese *kari*, the P M floor of the grave was covered with sticks, then • [608] leaves. The womenfolk hurried to the edge of the grave as the corpse, decorated only with an arm ring, was brought through a hole in the side of the hut and placed in the grave. The wailing P [152] reached its climax; the wife, children, and even the eldest grown son, threw themselves on the ground as the men began to fill in the grave. One man had to hold the eldest daughter to prevent her from throwing herself into the grave. The earth was stamped down, and the mourners moved away, women and children and some of the young men crying. One daughter remained near the grave as the house was pulled down to cover it (after the household goods had been removed).

Shortly after the burial some men went off hunting. By three o'clock the entire camp was deserted, and a new one had been built by evening.

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] P M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *kare* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 .608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

kari relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *tori*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

Z P 177 439 608 • P 621 602 [608] [575] [61] P 621 602 114 P [591]

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors. P Z 439 179 571 [114] P Z [881] [608] •

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé*-
[784] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[262] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[753] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[761] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[779] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

Magic

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[P. 192-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.217-A]

881 taught to the *elima* initiates. In one such dance
[535] witnessed by Mrs. Putnam, the girls held arrows and cut one another, and the women struck them with whips.

There is no information from the Putnam material as to any particular ceremony to mark the end of the *elima* (but see Turnbull, 1960a, 198 ff.).

Initiation: *nkumbi*

Putnam's notes on the initiation of boys concern a net-hunting band and are particularly interesting, as they describe an initiation that occurred in the Bira village of Kokonvange in 1935, 14 years before Schebesta witnessed an initiation among the same group. It is significant that Putnam makes no mention of *karé*
881 608 brotherhood between Pygmy and village boys.

For male initiation among the particular Epulu net hunters we are dealing with, I have only my own field notes,[1] and here again there is no mention of *karé* brotherhood (Turnbull, 1957). The full details of the ceremony do not concern us, as they vary from one village to another. It is important, however, to compare
[184] the relationship between the net-hunting Mbuti and the Bira villagers with that between the archers and the Lese, with regard to initiation.

[NET HUNTERS]

The first *nkumbi* of which I saw something was in 1951 at the village of Effundi Somali. I saw only a part and the final closing ceremony. Although I may well have missed much detail, it is unlikely that I would have missed anything of the nature of a *kare* relationship had one existed. There was certainly no sign of it. The next *nkumbi*, which took place in 1954 at Camp Putnam, was exceptional in that no village boys of the right age were available, so only Mbuti boys were initiated. Thus, there was no question of *kare* relationship between them and villagers, but also, during the entire course of the *nkumbi*, I heard no mention of it. This, together with Putnam's own silence on the subject, would seem to indicate that this relationship is either not so widespread or not so important as Schebesta assumes.

The peculiar circumstances of the 1954 *nkumbi* are given briefly here. Though exceptional, they contain some interesting points for

[1] These covered my visits to the Ituri in 1951 and 1954–1955 only.

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved. 621 582 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor. 621 58 [391]

[P 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumói*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumói* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *tord* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

[P 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initia- 177
tion of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between
Pygmy and villager initiates among the net
hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers,
probably because of his insistence (1952, 281)
on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an ini-
tiation into the religious association of *karé* for
both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is con-
tradicted by my own experience among the net
hunters. In any case, if there is a difference be-
tween the two groups over the significance of
nkumbi initiation (and it may well be only a dif-
ference of interpretation rather than of fact), it
does not seem directly related to any difference
in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 996
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more
directly with prevailing differences in villager
custom rather than with any inherent differ-
ences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the
nature and function of the closed associations,
are more properly the subject of discussion of
the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the
difference between net hunters and archers,
which is our main concern here.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 881 575 Z 563 881 575

of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [114] [608]

Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tions, even in the strictest village context, but it is outweighed by what at first seems little more than a lively desire to have all the advantages of village life with none of the disadvantages. Again, it is only through an examination of the interrelationship of the institutions adopted by the Mbuti, and their relationship with the indigenous Mbuti social system, that we can arrive at any true understanding of the apparent process of acculturation.

The attempt by the villagers to assert supernatural control is structurally the most significant, for it involves elements with which the Mbuti have no institutionalized means of dealing. Political pressure the Mbuti can counter by changing allegiance; economic pressure can also be countered, by reverting to the always available pure hunting and gathering economy; as we shall see in the next section, pressure through absorption into the village kinship system is repelled quite simply by the maintenance of an opposed kinship system. However, the Mbuti have no magic with which to counter magic, no witchcraft or sorcery with which to counter witchcraft and sorcery. They do have belief with which to counter belief, but it is part of the belief of both Mbuti and villagers that in a war between the gods, no man can safely predict the outcome. It is in this situation that the villagers do manage to effect some extent of control, but it is also in this context that they come up against the ultimate bedrock of opposition.

Let us look at the various ways in which the magico-religious life of the villagers impinges upon that of the Mbuti, and the extent to which it exerts some measure of control over the hunters and gatherers. Fully recognizing that a clear division of the subject matter is difficult, if not impossible, to make, we nonetheless have to attempt such a division for the purposes of discussion. There is a great deal of overlapping, but nonetheless at the extremes, in this case, the division used here between magic and religion is legitimate.

By *magic* I refer to activities involving, on the part of the African, villager or Mbuti, a conviction in the pragmatic relationship between a cause and an effect which, in terms of Western science, is not demonstrable. The term in its usual sense has meaning only as far as we are concerned, for as far as the Africans here are concerned, magical activities are as scientifically valid as any other. They may not always be able to explain the exact way in which the effect is related to the cause, any more than everyone who drives a motorcar can explain the mechanism. Indeed, the corresponding term "medicine"

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.63]

CHAPTER 6

Village Religion

NKUMBI

Both villagers and Mbuti have notions concerning spirits and spiritual intervention, and associated religious systems. Once again, however, even where the facts coincide, the systems do not. One of the major differences is the lack of ritual ceremony among the Mbuti and the importance of it among the villagers. Thus, though manhood is every bit as important to the Mbuti as to the villagers, there is no formal Mbuti initiation ritual. And although marriage is considered just as sacred, and is recognized by the Mbuti as having profound social implications, it takes place in the forest in an apparently utterly casual manner without any ceremony or ritual joining of the boy and girl or of their families. The ritual attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward death again is totally different. P C 771 776

But in the lack of ceremony the villagers once again see a chance for acting as intermediaries, as though this made them indispensable. The Mbuti are continually being subjected to one or another ritual ceremony at the hands of the villagers, even when the affair is entirely domestic and apparently does not in any way directly concern the villagers. C 776 P 796 177*

According to the notion of hereditary ownership, of course, the villagers also have a responsibility, and by virtually assimilating or, better, adopting the Mbuti into the villager tribe they are obliged to adopt them also into the religious system. The parallel kinship system, while never opening the way to complete integration, nonetheless demands an extension of the parallelism in all directions. The villagers have no qualms about this, and it is certainly no indication of friendly intimacy, for in this way they hope to secure the inferior status of the Mbuti not only in the present but also in the afterlife. At the same time the villagers believe they have found another source of control over their wayward servants. C 608 563 P 608 C [626]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Of all the various *rites de passage* practiced by the villagers, and to which they are forced to introduce the Mbuti, none probably is so important as the *nkumbi* initiation of the boys into manhood. Among the Bantu tribes this is practiced with circumcision, among the Sudanic it is without circumcision, though there is a tendency among some Sudanic tribes situated close to the Bantu, such as the Lesé bordering on the Bira, to adopt the custom, one village at a time.

The major purpose of the *nkumbi*, as stated by the tribes that practice it (I refer mainly to the Forest Bira here), is to fit the youths as men, to make them men in the eyes of the ancestors. A boy who does not undergo the *nkumbi* is denied access to the ancestors after death, and during his life has the status of a child. Boys between the ages of eight and twelve, generally between nine and eleven, are eligible for the ceremony, which now takes place once every three years and lasts for two or more months. The traditional time element has been completely upset by the administration, which, together with the missionaries, has tried to discourage the whole institution. But the *nkumbi* initiation has remained as the only way to achieve adult status within the tribe. I have seen an entire *nkumbi* ceremony, including circumcision, held for a boy who died just prior to being initiated.

Effectively the *nkumbi* also unites a few neighboring villages as a single political unit, and affords an opportunity though the system of *kuvi* blood brotherhood, of cementing specific political bonds. It also effectively unites those tribes who practice circumcision in opposition to those who do not practice it, and it determines certain lines of marriage prohibition.

One such line, of course, divides the circumcised from the uncircumcised, and theoretically marriage between a Bira and a Lesé would be unthinkable. The only cases known to me allegedly happened during war, captive women being taken as wives. But equally theoretically these prohibitions should apply to the Mbuti who, according to the practice of their *kpara*, not having any of their own, either do or do not suffer circumcision at village hands. As we shall see, however, forest territorial organization is no respecter of village tribalism, and band composition is fluid, to say the least. Consequently, in any one band one can by no means be sure that all the men are circumcised, and the question is never raised. Further than that, there is no objection to marriage, among the Mbuti, between a family whose *kpara* circumcises and one whose *kpara* does not. Such marriages would cer-

Tn Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in so way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to village boys. In some cases the Mbuti's *kpara* may choose him as *karé* to his own son, and in other cases he may see some advantage in having his Mbuti form a *karé* pact with another villager, as this forms an economic and political link, then, between the two villagers. It seems that, generally, *karé* brotherhood is formed between Mbuti and their *kpara's* patrikin, however. It is believed that this places the two in an indissoluble politico-economic relationship for the rest of their lives, a relationship of subordination as far as the Mbuti is concerned, and one that will persist into the afterlife of the same individuals.

The villager concepts of afterlife are not clearly defined, but it is accepted without question that individuals continue to exist after death and may, if qualified by initiation and by adherence throughout life to the tribal code of behavior, join the ancestors, who live together much as they did in the present world, and continue to concern themselves with the present world. It is also accepted without question that there must be Mbuti in the afterworld, just as there are in the present. If one asks why must there be Mbuti, the invariable answer is in terms of the economic dependence of the villagers upon the Mbuti in the present world, the assumption being that the same needs will exist in the afterworld. But the economic relationship is the most easily expressed and recognized, however mistakenly, and is not necessarily therefore the most important. The political relationship is also recognized, though not quite so easily expressed because of the greater incompatibility of the systems of the two peoples. But there is also a ritual relationship which is certainly as powerful as the others, if not more so, and it is just as much a part of the *karé* pact as are the economic and political aspects.

Karé partners are expected to trade with each other, though not necessarily exclusively. This allows for the formation of *karé* brotherhood between individuals who are not in a *kpara*/Mbuti relationship, and is an attempt on the part of the villager to regularize the situation should his Mbuti join a band trading with a neighboring village. To have a *kpara* in one village and a *karé* in another, strategically chosen, is considered equally advantageous by Mbuti and villager. As far as the Mbuti is concerned it provides him with two groups of people who feel under some kind of an obligation toward him, and who need him. As far as the *kpara* is concerned it gives him someone he can effectively claim against should his Mbuti decide to trade in that direction. As far as the villager *karé* is concerned it is another Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

to his credit, increasing his prestige and also somewhat increasing his trading opportunities. The trade is mainly thought of in terms of meat and labor on the side of the Mbuti, village foods, clothes and tobacco on the side of the villager. A fairly friendly relationship does sometimes develop between two *karé*, who, regardless of the status differentiation, undergo the whole *nkumbi* together, suffering the same ordeals side by side, and are perhaps more united by age than they are separated by the status differentiation.

The political aspects of *karé* brotherhood reinforce the economics, not only serving as a basis for compensation against a migrant Mbuti, but also for extending the *karé* relationship to link the Mbuti's *kpara* with the village boy's father. The relationship is primarily between individuals, but it nonetheless creates felt obligations between the families involved, and one family of villagers may invoke the help of another family in a dispute, through an Mbuti *karé* link. The kinship ramifications of *karé* brotherhood are still far from clear from the village point of view, and it seems that the introduction of the Mbuti to the system may have somewhat disorganized the traditional system. For the Mbuti there is no connection between *karé* and kinship, and effectively there can be none among the villagers. If there were, then the formation of a *karé* tie between *kpara* and their own Mbuti would be incestuous, and the formation of such ties with unrelated families, conceived of as a sibling relationship, would effectively prohibit marriage in that direction and create an impossibly confused dual kinship system. Yet *karé* do refer to each other sometimes as "brother," and take advantage of their thus extended kinship relations.

The religious aspects of *karé* brotherhood are far less easy to define, and far less easy for the investigator to determine because they are seldom, if ever, discussed. I have never heard such a discussion, unless I instigated it, except on the occasion of the death of a villager. On the death of an Mbuti it is generally only the other aspects of the *karé* relationship that are discussed, involving liability for funerary expenses, compensation for outstanding obligations, divination of the cause of death. But when a villager dies the Mbuti *karé* is introduced into the heart of the funerary ritual, having to perform divers functions such as beating the villager's wives, leading an attack upon all close kin of the deceased, conveniently clustered together for the purpose, "to drive away evil," as the villagers explained it among themselves and to me. The Mbuti *karé* is also made responsible for providing certain foods for the deceased and, I believe, certain herbs

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

with which the body of the villager is treated before burial. Owing to my somewhat peripheral relationship with the villagers I was not allowed to witness the more intimate rituals when the *karé* Mbuti was closeted with the deceased on one occasion for about three hours, on another occasion for one hour. Nor was I able to elicit much from the Mbuti, who said that they knew nothing about it, and only did what they were told to do by the villagers. When asked what that was, they repeated the above information, which was as much as I had gathered from the villagers, and no more except a few colorful and imaginative details about the appearance and odor of the corpse. This being clearly something better investigated from the villager side, I did not press the matter. It seems sufficiently well established, however, that the ritual connection between *karé* is considerable as seen by the villagers, and this was borne out on one occasion when an important Bira noble died and the entire funeral ceremony, including the burial, was held up for a day and a half because of the non-appearance of the dead man's Mbuti *karé*. On this occasion the Mbuti eventually arrived on the run carrying a spear, loudly shouting his complaints at being brought from the forest for such stupidity (again the term *mbufu*). There were several hundred villagers assembled, and the Mbuti ran through them to the compound of the deceased. He evidently knew in advance what was expected, and broke his way in to the closed hut where the widows were wailing. There was great concern among the villagers because he took his spear with him, and they said he might kill the women, but they did nothing to prevent him. Happily there was a full complement of widows at the subsequent burial.

The villagers recognize that they cannot force the Mbuti *karé* to fulfill their obligations by political or economic pressure, but they now have another weapon. By the act of ritual circumcision, according to tribal lore, the Mbuti are placed in a direct relationship with the tribal village ancestors, and by the *karé* bond each Mbuti is placed in a direct relationship with the protective spirits that look after the welfare of their respective individual villager partners. Every step of the *nkumbi* reinforces the authority of the tribal ancestors, through the supernatural powers at their disposal, over the Mbuti as well as over the villager initiates. Failure to fulfill "kinship" or *karé* obligations on the part of the Mbuti cannot be dealt with by the legal mechanisms available to the villagers, but it can now be countered by supernatural sanctions. Villager lore defines the Mbuti responsibili-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *barara*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 581 789 P 581 177 [789] craft or to a breach of marital taboos, as indeed are any disasters, natural or unnatural, that befall the couple. The Mbuti, not having any traditional means of divination, are considered by the villagers to be dependent on them for help, though a few Mbuti have learned the art and become quite highly respected by the villagers. Sometimes if villagers come to hear of a marital dispute within a band, they will try to settle it by reference to divination, and if so the Mbuti appear to accept the settlement without question, in the village, but in no way allow it to impinge upon the reality of the situation in the forest. So once again the only dependency that exists is in the minds of the villagers.

DEATH

C 761 764 764 P 761 177 [608] Even when it comes to the greatest crisis of all, death, the Mbuti seem to accept all the externals of village ritual but none of the implications. The invariable accusation of witchcraft and the equally invariable mention of supernatural sanctions as an alternative cause of death are made to remind the Mbuti not to falter in fulfilling their obligations to their *kpara*. Village insistence upon the unnatural causes of death serves to sow enough seeds of doubt in the mind of the Mbuti to cause at least momentary fear.

C 764 761 [608] P 764 761 #177 The actual ritual of burial is conducted under strict village supervision, the necessary payments being made by the *kpara*. The *kpara* and his family, as well as many other villagers, attend personally in the procession to the grave, and the *kpara* is almost certain to take a prominent part in the subsequent discussion as to the cause of the death and be present at the divination, if one is held. But whereas the Mbuti generally subject themselves to village ritual with the best of grace, they become quickly impatient following the burial of the dead and sometimes simply walk out of the *baraza* where the cause of death is being determined, leaving it entirely to the villagers to decide whatever pleases them. The village preoccupation with death and its unnatural causes disquiets the Mbuti, and when an Mbuti dies in a village there is frequently voiced suspicion that somehow the village is responsible; maybe one of the old curses is at work, perhaps a neglected *kpara* is employing a sorcerer to seek revenge, or, more likely, it is impersonally simply the village itself that caused the death.

P 761 764 Among themselves the Mbuti do not bother to settle the question, if they ask it, but if they feel that the village is to blame in some un-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 *
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[8] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[8] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
627 and morally, beyond the forest.
[578]
[156]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with
[152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [421] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly [156] the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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Mbuti
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C 563 571 177 P 571 *177 As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial, and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

C 621 613 571 P 621 613 571 Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going elsewhere to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage relationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

Karé/Karé

C 608 628 571 88 177 P • 608 571 *177 88 Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individuals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initiations which take place periodically (every three years for the past twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

C 608 571 177 P 608 571 *177 It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initiation camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, although any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed. They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

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Mbuti
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throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

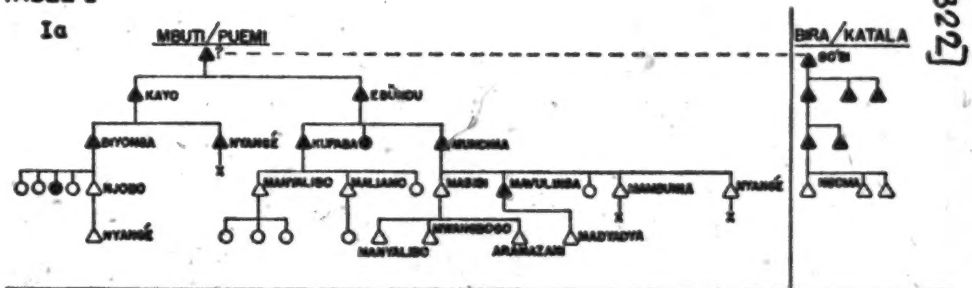
There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

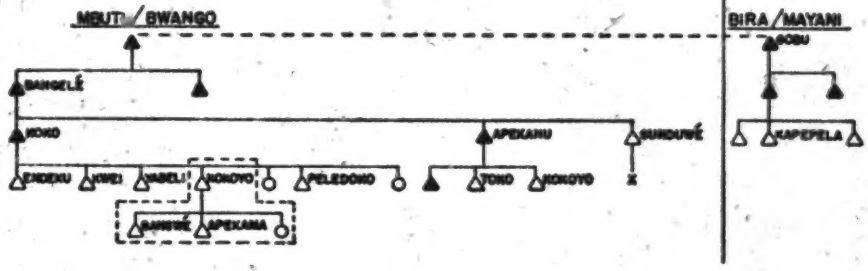
[P. 322]

TABLE I

Ia



Ib



Both Ngoma and Kapapela are renowned for their affection for "their" Mbuti.

TABLE 1a
Mbuti/Puemi: *All living members make regular prestations to Ngoma, their hereditary* kpara, *though he is permanently absent from the area. Njobo and Ngoma independently declared that Kayo's father allied with Ngoma's great-grandfather, Bo'bi. His offspring have been inherited by the senior member of Bo'bi's lineage since, and still recognize reciprocal obligations.*

TABLE 1b
Mbuti/Bwango: *All but Kokoyo and family, who hunt with the Epulu band, still hunt in the territory around Kapapela's village, moving, when he does, as a unit. They all claim to have been inherited from Gobu.*

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

any culture of their own. If the facts were what they seem to be these observations might hold water, but the real facts are very different.

During my visit to Epulu in 1954, I had the good fortune to stumble quite accidentally upon fresh information, which almost completely reverses the picture. At that time I was present at an nkumbi, which I have already mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, but which merits more detailed description.

Three years had then elapsed since the previous nkumbi, in 1951, and it was time for another. The purpose of the ceremony is not only to fit village boys for adult life, making them full members of the tribe, but also to ensure the continuity between the past, present and future life of the tribe; between the living and the dead. To the villagers the dead, the ancestors, are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so; and only those who are initiated will join the ancestors when they die. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. The dead are, in fact, living—but in another world. Regular initiations are essential to ensure the continued growth of that far-off tribe of ancestors. I have even seen a young boy who had been due to enter the nkumbi but who died just before it took place, circumcised and accorded full initiation rites before burial, just as though he were alive. In this way he was able to go to join his fathers.

In 1954 there was a unique situation. There was only one village boy of the right age for initiation (usually between the ages of eight and twelve in this area), and his father was a Christian who refused to allow the boy to participate. Every pressure was brought on the family, but to no avail. There were eight Pygmy boys of suitable age, and normally there would have been at least as many villagers. They would all have been initiated together but in such a way as to make clear the inferior status of the Pygmies. One of the initial acts is the circumcision of the boys, and a Pygmy boy is sent first "to clean the knife."

the knife." Then follows a village boy, and these two are bound together by an indissoluble bond, the bond of *kare* blood-brotherhood. They are mutually obligated to help and care for each other for the rest of their lives. This of course helps to reinforce practical and economic links between the two people, as a Pygmy theoretically would be unable to refuse meat to his kare and the kare could not refuse any demand for plantains, manioc or rice.

But this year the villagers were faced with the alternative of having no initiation at all, or having one for Pygmy boys alone. As the initiation of a Pygmy gives him only partial rights, since he is not a full member of the tribe, a Pygmy initiate can never take a leading part in the nkumbi; all the cutting and all the formal teaching, and certainly all the ritual acts, can be performed only by a qualified villager. So it meant that the villagers would have to go through all the work and expense purely for the Pygmies. There could be no question of not holding the nkumbi, as this would offend the ancestors. And in any case the villagers decided it was worth while as it helped to assert their authority over the Pygmies. I heard speculative talk more than once about how an initiated Pygmy, when he dies, goes to serve the tribal ancestors just as he served the villagers during his life.

The *makata* sticks were cut and brought out. These are a series of sticks used only at the time of the nkumbi; each one is cut to a different length and tuned to a definite pitch. Some eight or nine men, each with a stick under his left arm, tapping it with a shorter stick held in the right hand, dance around the village playing a complicated but tuneful rhythm, the different notes overlapping and combining. Villagers from the surrounding area congregated at Epulu, some of them from as far as fifty miles away, and dancing and feasting went on for over a week. During that time the boys were collected together, and last-minute appeals were made for young Yusefu, the Christian boy, to be allowed to join. His father settled

133 rolling hills are separated by perennial streams never more than a few miles apart. A pygmy can find water almost anywhere within a hundred yards.
[312]

Negro-pygmy Relations

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This forest is inhabited by two kinds of people, Negroes and pygmies, who maintain an almost symbiotic relationship, based on trade. A Negro village may own approximately 100 square miles of forest territory. In this territory are the Negro village and the pygmy village. The former is permanent, in a clearing; the latter is temporary, under the forest trees. In maintaining their relationship, it is the pygmies' job to take in honey and meat, while the Negroes' obligation is to give them plantains. In addition, the pygmies may bring in a certain amount of wild baselli fruit in season, or roofing leaves, or rattan and fibers for net making; in return they may acquire ax blades, knives, and arrowheads from the Negroes.

There is no strict process of barter involved, and no accounting kept, other than through general observation. If the pygmies are stingy, their Negroes will hold back their bananas. If the Negroes are stingy, the pygmies will leave the territory and go to live with other pygmies serving other Negro hosts.

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This relationship is interfamilial, between a pygmy family and a Negro family. It is a matter of close personal relations, inherited, on both sides, from father to son. These alliances may change from time to time, but when they do there are usually hard feelings; if a man's pygmy leaves him to serve another host it is a kind of divorce. In the old days, a frequent cause of intervillage warfare among the Negroes was the luring away of each other's pygmies.

[P 323-A]

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each woman regards this part of the camp as her property. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women may all be strangers to one another. In some cases most of the women come from the same neighboring band, so their communal interest is greater, but generally they come from widely dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict between the hunting band and individual family, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

592 [462] 621 628 609 582 591 [613] [594] [578]

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
individual family and only indirectly with that
592 of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[354] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
the father may eat apart with his sons. The
264 separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Z 585 628 563 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and P 177 585 Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). Further, P [533] [535] even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P It is unlikely that the bride will be a com- • 609 plete stranger to the band, but even if so, she 571 will be immediately befriended and will have 585 willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P 221-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-C]

married life free from the normal household chores. 669 57 585

Unlike Schebesta's description of passionate lovers who, as married couples, in no way exhibit their affection in public, both premarital and postmarital sexual relations among the net hunters seem equally open, if not quite equally free. Flirtations among unmarried boys and girls of the same band, providing again they do not openly flout exogamic convention and do not result in childbirth, arouse no interest among the adults other than casual gossip. Married women, while as incorrigibly flirtatious as ever, are not expected to have sexual intercourse with any but their husbands. On the other hand, no social convention prevents the husband from having sexual intercourse with unmarried girls, though he does so with care to avoid unpleasantness with his wife. 836 837

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

net-hunters for a variety of reasons, their central location (see Map 2) being only one. 121

There were several more immediate reasons, which I give now, as the choice may be a point of some criticism: 121 123

1) I had already been among this band on two prior occasions, and had established with them a most friendly relationship that I knew would guarantee me immediate access to their forest hunting camps. Although I was known among other bands, there did not exist the same degree of intimacy and trust, and the Mbuti are by nature reserved and suspicious when faced with the prospect of having a stranger in their forest camps. [609]

2) I was also well known to the Epulu villagers, and could anticipate the need for understanding and tolerance from this direction.

3) Father Schebesta (1957) had previously attacked my discussion of the significance of the music and ceremonial (Turnbull, 1955, 1957[1]) by saying that this same band was particularly acculturated and therefore not representative.[1] As the whole point of my argument was the superficiality of the acculturation, and granting that this band had all the appearances of gross acculturation, this seemed like an excellent opportunity for testing a hypothesis that I felt to be valid, and that I also suspected to have far deeper significance in the total Mbuti social structure than I at present recognized. 114 121

4) In selecting a net-hunting band I would at least be adding to Schebesta's general ethnographic description, which was mostly concerned with the archers, rather than be duplicating it.

5) Because of its central location I would be able to move relatively rapidly to other areas in the forest if the occasion demanded, and when in other areas I would still be able to stay within a few days' reach of the Epulu band, in case I needed to return. Also because of its central location, there seemed to be some possibility of establishing contact not only with other net-hunting bands, but also possibly with archer bands, in the normal course of the year's migrations. 101 114 131

6) The continued existence of Camp Putnam, on the Epulu River, offered me a base where I could keep essential supplies in safety, and where I would not alienate myself from the villagers with whom I would eventually have to work by having to stay at a government rest-house or with other Europeans. 114 13 122

[1] For a further clarification of Schebesta's attitude, see my article on the *nkumbi* initiation (Turnbull, 1957), his rejoinder and subsequent recantation (Schebesta, 1958, 1963).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far into the forest. The old man said that they did, but not very often. They came to dig traps or set up spear-falls for elephant. They both laughed at the strange hunting methods of the villagers. The digging of a trap was a long and arduous task, as was the setting up of a spear-fall. The latter method is particularly difficult. A stout spear blade is hafted into a heavy tree trunk which then has to be hauled up high above the ground. A vine is stretched underneath and acts as the trigger to release it. But the animals soon come to recognize any kind of trap and simply avoid it. We passed several, and sure enough we could see the tracks going right up to the edge, then carefully circling around in safety.

Kenge could not get over the notion of hiding from an elephant among the roots of a tree instead of going out and spearing it as any Pygmy would. For the rest of the day, whenever we passed an elephant tree he would dodge in among the roots, while the old guide pranced around outside pretending that he was the elephant, stooping down and swinging one arm loosely in front of him as though it were an elephant's trunk.

This slowed our progress, and in the late afternoon our guide suddenly put on pace. It was nearly dark when we climbed up a high ridge and followed it for a mile or two. At the end, before descending, we stopped and listened, and from down below, to the left, we heard the unmistakable sounds of a Pygmy camp—chattering, laughing; children playing and babies crying; and here and there someone singing. It was like being home again, and Kenge was all for going straight down. But our guide made us wait while he went ahead and warned of our approach. It would have been perfectly possible for the camp to have been deserted by the time we reached it, if the Pygmies had thought that we were in any way undesirable company. As it was, when we finally appeared they all stood around in a silent and curious circle to welcome us, each family outside its hut, uncertain and shy.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

FOREST HORIZONS

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on 114
from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the 484
neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted 609
wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been ex- 484
tremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me 609
so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which 123
they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from 186
behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard 826
joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it [825]
lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and 609
taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience 177
beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups [114]
of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, moviemakers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 609 177 P [822] it had a railway, which aroused his deepest curiosity. He could not think why the trains were limited in their movement by the iron rails, and could not turn wherever they wanted to. There was something about this restriction of freedom that bothered him. I took him to see a football match between the workers of a local brewery and those of a large combine store. Just before the match we had been drinking palm wine in a small African bar, and found it much stronger than the wine made in the forest. So Kenge rooted happily for what he called "Men of the Beer," but why people should spend the afternoon kicking a ball back and forth was as puzzling to him as were the captive trains.

C 609 648 574 [754] P 177 648 We spent only a few days in Paulis, branching out from there along the northern limits of the forest. Then we turned eastward and made our way across and down into Lese country. The BaLese are considered to be arch-sorcerers and witches, and it was with great reluctance that Kenge agreed to stay in the village of Chief Lupao, near Nduye. It was several miles off the road, and by accident or design it was empty when we got there. Fires were still smoldering and smoking, but there was no other sign of life. The chief's baraza, a huge edifice with a thatched roof, stood open in front of his house; the fire had been recently made up, but nobody came out to greet us.

Kenge was getting more and more nervous, and I was on the point of giving in to his repeated requests to leave and find a more hospitable place to stay, when a young man appeared and wandered idly toward us. He stopped some way off and stood there looking at us. This was a completely new situation to me, as in every other C [184] village, even where we had been total strangers, we had been almost embarrassed by the hospitality of the people. I waited to see if the man's curiosity would get the better of him, but after a while I gave up and went over to talk to him. Kenge refused to move from the safety of the car, and stood there with his hand on the door, ready to lock himself inside at a moment's notice. For him this was a

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

Z P 117 439 608 P 621 602 [608] [575] [61] P 621 602 114 P [591]

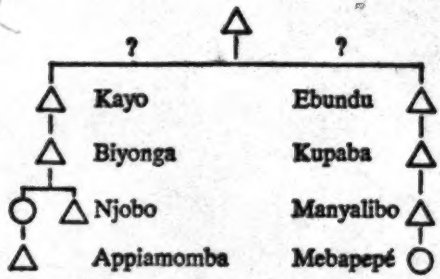
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

836
578 upset her father so much as all the accompanying noise. In particular he was irate when waked up by a suitor crawling over him in the middle of the night to get at his daughter. In this instance he gave chase, and woke the whole camp up with a harangue from midcamp. The accused's reply was effective—that if he had made noise and wakened Manyalibo, it was not as bad as Manyalibo's noise, which had awakened the whole camp for nothing.

16. By and large all that the parents can complain about in the sexual life of their children is the noise. If the noise becomes too much, however, it then becomes a matter for the band.

836 Such a matter became the affair between Appiamomba, nephew
578 of Njobo, and Mebapepé, Manyalibo's flighty daughter. The situation
835 was aggravated by the relationship between the two lovers, Appia-
61 momba's mother being descended in the male line from the allegedly same great-grandfather as Manyalibo. When accused of being of the same clan (using the village term) as Mebapepé, Appiamomba denied it and said they shared different hearths. He was then asked, "You cannot deny your mother was a Mupuemi; then so are you."[8] However, his argument about being of a different hearth carried weight, the more so as Njobo was not at this time in the same section of the camp as Manyalibo, and had not been for nearly a year.

One night Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya, chased Appiamomba away and called on the other youths to beat the offender. The others demanded what offense had been committed; there had been no noise. This was the beginning of a major argument which quickly spread all over the camp. Manyalibo went to the midcamp site and said, "Appiamomba is my child and he does not listen to me. Mebapepé is my child and she does not listen. My children are sleeping together and this is bad, for they are making noise all the



[8] An example of a common confusion concerning lineal descent among the Mbuti.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 836

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582]
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. [829]
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not totally ineffective. Mbuti genealogical perspective is limited, to say the least, and from their point of view any allegiances formed by a deceased grandfather are of minimal significance, if indeed they are even remembered. In terms of kinship, neither man nor woman will be able to name their great-grandparents, nor may they even be able to name any brothers or sisters of their grandparents unless they have a vivid personal recollection of them. The only occasion on which it would be of any significance for them to know such details would be marriage, and there the parents of the youths concerned will have the necessary access to the (for them) parental, genealogical level by which the permissibility or otherwise of marriage is determined.

Thus the Mbuti can accept with perfect ease, and even with conviction, the villager notion of hereditary ownership. That is not to say that they acknowledge the obligations claimed by the villagers, but only that they recognize kinship as being the basis by which the villagers determine the relationship. An Mbuti who has only temporarily changed allegiance (and at this point I should make it clear that permanent changes are by no means taking place every day) may continue to respect his permanent allegiance, even to the point of sending his hereditary *kpara* occasional gifts of meat or honey. If he changes his allegiance permanently, however, it will be because of some major disagreement, rather than simply because of a temporary shift of residence on either side, and in that case all previous bonds are broken and the Mbuti will leave it up to the villagers to settle the matter between them.

In the belief that kinship is of as vital concern to the Mbuti as it is to themselves, and carries the same indissoluble obligations and rights, the villagers seek to reinforce their relationship with the Mbuti by bringing them as closely into the village kinship system as possible. This is sometimes done by direct intermarriage, a male villager taking an Mbuti wife, but never the reverse. In this case the offspring are considered in every respect as villagers, by both Mbuti and the villagers themselves, but the wife is still Mbuti, with relatives in the forest, and therefore in a good position to attract meat and honey. But it can be seen that it may also cause a further conflict of interest, as it will attract to the villager's household a number of Mbuti relatives who technically may owe allegiance to other villagers, yet who cannot be debarred from showing concern for their sister. In such a case the Mbuti relatives are entitled, and indeed expected, to

621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always pat-
[611] rilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band com-
613 position be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is com-
184 parable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
[224] groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
621 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
613 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
174 attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
621 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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181 the economic and political life, and even in the religious life of the
611 Mbuti, who are supremely concerned with the present.

P 601 The effective kinship terminology at once reflects the situation, which only becomes confused when any attempt is made to relate the terms to their usage in village society. It distinguishes generations rather than kin, and cuts indiscriminately across actual kinship boundaries. Through its effective organization of the band into age groups, it emphasizes the economic basis of band unity rather than any kinship bonds. The only terms in general usage in the Epulu region, and among the Mbuti bands to the east-west extremes of the Bira-speaking net-hunting territory, are as follows:

P [561]

Grandparent:	*tata*	for address and reference
Father:	*epa*	for address and reference
Mother:	*ema*	for address and reference
Sibling:	*apua'i* or *moko*	for address and reference

(*apua'i* is used rather than *moko*, though its connotation is one of close friendship)

Child:	*miki*	for address or reference

Except at the parental level, there is generally no sex differentiation. At times it seems that *taté* is used for grandmother, *tata* for grandfather. Similarly, *amua'i* is a possible variant to denote a female sibling. But as frequently, if not more so, and more consistently, I found *tata* and *apua'i* used for either sex. Differentiation is also made, if necessary, by adding the terms used for boy or girl—*moko* or *kali*, respectively. Thus *miki a moko* is a boy child; *miki a kali* is a girl child. There is also a way of distinguishing the younger from the older: *vomia* is older, *motoa* is younger, but the Mbuti generally only couple these designations to kinship terms in direct imitation of the village usage and only in village contexts.

K 601 Bira terminology, with minor dialectal variations, is similar to the above, but with the addition of terms such as *noko* for mother's brother; *kola* for father's sister; *om-epa* and *mot-epa* for the older and younger brother of the father; and *om-ema* and *mot-ema* for the older and younger sister of the mother. The Bira call an older brother *homioné*, an older sister *alwané*, and a younger brother or sister P 601 simply *moto*. The Mbuti normally refer to their father's sister simply as *ema* ("mother"), but if trying to refer to her for the benefit of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little
[578] between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[1755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

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Mbuti

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [588]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 considered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[182] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

621 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[429] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[182] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611 •
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost ex- [829]
clusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

224 796 everyone has had a taste of the raw skin.

Then a small male child, squalling and screaming, is thrust on the elephant's side; he is told to bite, which he does, and the balloon bursts.

This ceremony is repugnant to the pygmies, as they do not like raw meat; it is especially repugnant to the child, who does not enjoy having the whole rotten insides of the elephant burst in his face.

[611] The child is the youngest son of the man who killed the elephant. If the man has no suitable son, it may be his nephew; or, if he has several young sons and the youngest is too small, either to understand the order or to bite, it will be the next older son.

224 Now that the elephant has burst, the ceremony is over, and a free-for-all takes place; the men cut the sides open, pull out the entrails, and climb inside to hack away at the meat. Other men rush to the head and chop away the tusks. The women take the pieces of meat which their men hand to them, and boil them. As soon as they have cooked one chunk, they will start to [251] boil another. Everyone eats as much of the boiled meat as he is able, and they spread out the rest on drying racks; when it has dried they will take it into the village to the Negroes, who keep it and eat it gradually, for the combination of boiling and drying serves as a means of preserving it, the only food preservation the pygmies practice, and then not for themselves. The tusks go to the special patron of the elephant hunter, and the patron sells them to the Greek or Hindu trader; the patron gives the pygmy a small share of what he receives.

Division of meat.—The need of giving some of the meat to their Negro hosts, and the knowledge that no one will starve as long as they can get bananas, makes the problem of meat di-

[P. 332-A]

Z 101 the basis of the relationship is the fact that
104 these tribes are village cultivators and not for-
128 est hunters.

Z P 104 LINEAGE: We adhere to the definition and usage suggested in "Notes and Queries on An-
128 thropology" (1954, 88–89). The definition is
121 given as follows: "A lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person
• 613 through a determinate number of generations."

Z P 121 CLAN: Similarly, we use this term as suggested in "Notes and Queries" (1954, 89–90)
128 whereby clan members may trace their unilineal relationship through one line or the other, i.e.,
104 we do not use it in the sense of a matriclan as
614 opposed to a gens. Further, we here regard the
[613] lineage as a subdivision of the clan, lineage members being able to trace their membership to a known ancestor. A number of such lineages hold themselves to be related by the common descent of the lineage ancestors from a remote, possibly fictional or totemic ancestor.

000 GROUP: Whereas I have in the original sur-

[P. 148-A]

THE ARCHERS (AFTER SCHEBESTA)

[P.167-A] THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL UNIT is formed by the economic association of individual families as hunting bands (*Lokalgruppen;* Schebesta, 1948, 304 ff.; 1952, 210) which vary in size. Schebesta (1952, 208) gives the range as between two and 12 huts, averaging six huts per
621 band. They are said, in effect, to be patrilineages, but Schebesta stresses the importance of
• 613 the economic rather than the lineal ties; in his German publications he uses the term "*Sippe,*" in French "*Parentele.*" In German, he distinguishes the *Sippe* from the *Grossfamilie,* the latter being more properly the lineage regarded in its kinship context. The elder, who occupies
621 considerable prestige and has considerable per-
613 sonal authority over the *Grossfamilie,* is only
888 *primus inter pares* for the *Sippe* (Schebesta, 1948, 290). The prerogative of the elder depends on age, and these *avi-tiri,* or old ones, according to Schebesta, are endowed with the authority and dignity of the ancestors. Their power is limited by custom and tradition.

[ARCHERS]

613 614 619 A number of lineages are associated into clans, but these are widely dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance. Tribal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 342 [462] [341] The huts are built in a circle around a clearing by the womenfolk of the individual families. Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the trading is carried out. He says that there is,
• [613] however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is
prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the
hut entrance; the children play near the hut;
the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs,
guarding the food in his wife's absence, or help-
ing her in some way or another. Visitors do not
enter the hut but wait outside where they meet
any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely
dispersed bands and are more interested in their [594]
own marital families than they are in their new
band as a whole. The men, however, are bound
by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual
interest in the band, as such, and in the particu-
lar territory within which it moves. Conflict
between the hunting band and individual fam- [578]
ily, then, is generally a conflict between men
and women, and, by enlargement, between two
or more bands—the band of the men and those
of the women involved.

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
592 individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[B54] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
590 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
62 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [836] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [684] [177] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180-B]

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band. 000 582 621

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of 583 [191] [439]

[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage. [613]

[P. 180-D]

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] P M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

[ARCHERS]

[P.186-A]

622 leadership among the Mbuti except very rarely. He himself discusses the lineage elders ("*Sippenältesten*," Schebesta, 1948, 332, 559) and states that lineage authority lies with these elders alone. Under villager influence these elders may assume the characteristics of a chief (cf. the "Sultani" of the Pygmies, mentioned by Geil, 1905). Encouraged in this by the villagers, who see a way of extending their authority, the lineage elders may appear to become headmen or chieftains of Mbuti bands, representing the band to the village chief.

622 613 888 648

As mentioned above, the authority of the elder derives from his age, by virtue of which he represents the lineage ancestors. Any offense against the elder is an offense against the lineage. He takes precedence in all matters: the best part of the game is his, whether or not he took part in the hunt; he presides at various ritual offerings; he is responsible for settling disputes with other bands or with villagers; he leads at the head of the dance. Succession by age is strictly observed. This much Schebesta (1952, 221–223) reports, but without citing examples in sufficient detail to enable us to make a valid comparison between different groups or bands.

622 613 888 [769]

[ARCHERS]

622 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
624 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages. Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in [171] any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and con- [114] fusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship constitution of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and as descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[P. 185-B]

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 627 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against 613 •
antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards 689
find that they receive no share when game from 626
the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does
not share any of her gathering products with
others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and [685]
above all those suspected of sorcery, who are [754]
considered the worst types of antisocials, are
punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp,
and left to die if they are not executed by some
means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta [114]
cites neither examples in detail nor enough
cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He
seems, however, to be generally in accord with
what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, ex-
cept with regard to the position and authority
of the elder and the alleged "system" of law
and punishment.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge 802

There is little information on division of time
and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives
the result of his work among five Mamvu-
[P. 186 - D]

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

[R 191-D]

[ARCHERS]

[p. 192-A]

613 hunting band, or, if the latter becomes too
614 large, both clan and band may split into two or more bands. The relationship of several bands or lineages as members of the same clan is generally designated by the use of a common name,
[621] ancestor, and totem. One band is distinguished from another, regardless of relationship, by individual territorial names, but apart from identity of ancestor and totem there is no effective structure binding together the clan, if dispersed. There is no clan chief, and no clan territory (except for a very small clan that happens also to be a hunting band). Even clan exogamy cannot be said to be rigidly enforced; the invariable rule, rather, is exogamy of the local lineage or hunting bands.

Totems are generally animals, rarely plants, never natural phenomena. Schebesta cites the
[825] leopard and the chimpanzee as being the commonest totems. A man and wife observe each other's totemic restrictions in each other's presence or when with each other's group; simi-

[ARCHERS]

613 614 larly a child, who is said always to respect his patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem when living with her group. A man also observes the totemic restrictions of his *kare*-brother. The totem is always taboo for the Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is believed to involve serious illness or death.

[608] [784] [262] [753] [761]

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[775] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

[761] [778]

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

Magic

761 778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious [P. 192-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C]
sundown they return to their hut, which they 881
enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533]
taught to the new initiates by the old woman in
charge. The women of the camp sit outside and
also sing, having armed themselves with whips
made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to
her lover, who may be of the same band but [613]
must be of a different lineage. He must fight his
way into the hut, through the women armed
with whips and against the shower of missiles
hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the
old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be
serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881
young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836
had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering
his maiden. He remained with her all night. The
next day he was bound with vine and kept a
prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was
then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed
to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [831]
(i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [813]
try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [831]
of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

P
B
881
532

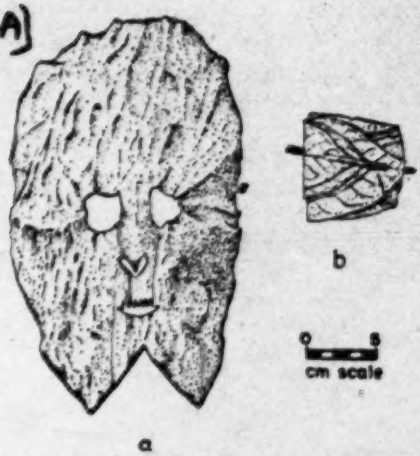

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

P
58
621

fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

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628
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000

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

P 621 571 [613]. P [594] P 571 177 166 Z 563 571 177

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

P 621 581 582

[P. 220- D]

[p. 228-c] [NET HUNTERS]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [57]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628
between different bands of net hunters. Infor- 574
mal relationships are created through inter-
band visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These vis- [584]
its are important with respect to the practice of [613]
exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which [184]
may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families.

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628
form a single hunting unit. Under these circum- 476
stances each sets up separate but adjoining 361
camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a [578]
gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [621]

[P. 228-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.231-A]

627 to sleep and how he was to rebuild his house.
684 His wife, who would normally have undertaken this task, was sick. He was offered hospitality for the remainder of the night by other relatives, and early in the morning the offended family were themselves assisting him to rebuild his hut. During this dispute no mention was made of the fate of the transgressor.

621 This particular band was composed of two
627 major segments. The dispute was confined to
684 one segment and almost exclusively, though not quite, to the two families concerned. Other
[613] members of that lineage came forward only to appease and compromise.

The other segment, separated by a few hundred feet (the band was in the process of fission), listened eagerly to the dispute, making comments among themselves, mainly to the effect that the boy was a fool to have allowed himself to be found out and deserved to be beaten. When the pursuit of the boy led through their part of the camp, they hid. The older men carefully shut themselves up and refused to take any part in the proceeding.

[p. 245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with the same meaning. The occasional use of a [613] grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor [614] names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used fre- [103] quently to differentiate one hunting band from [101] another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication [832] would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246-B]

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(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)

Chart of Positions of End Plate 2 (Table 4).
[facing End Chart 2]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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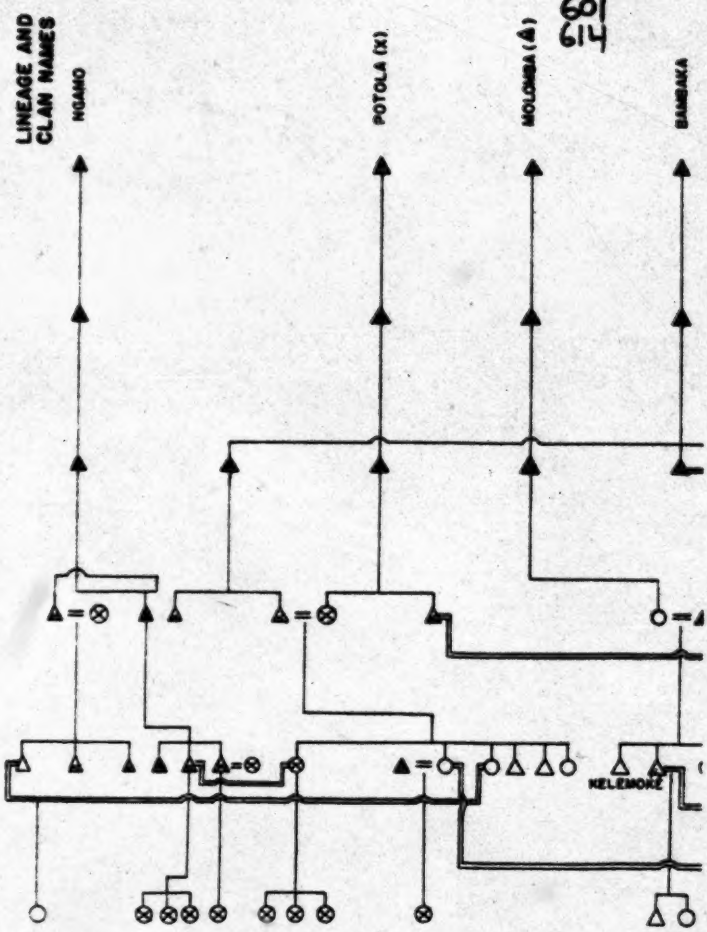
TABLE 4



[Ex. Chart 2, (A)]

LINEAGE AND CLAN NAMES:

PUEMI (1):(2): Indicates different totemic branches of the same clan

▲; ⊗: Living members of other hunting bands not present at the molimo

△—○: An extended form of the conventional marriage symbol (=)

△—○: is used when for convenience the eldest sibling has had to be placed on the right

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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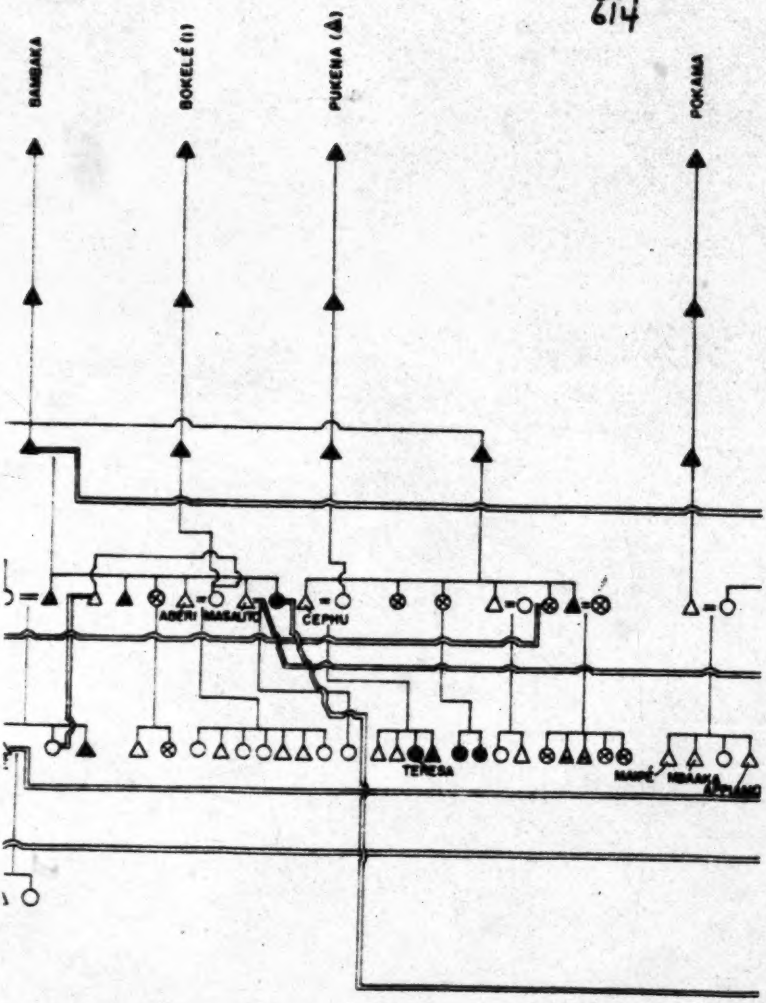
601
614



[End Chart 2, (B)]

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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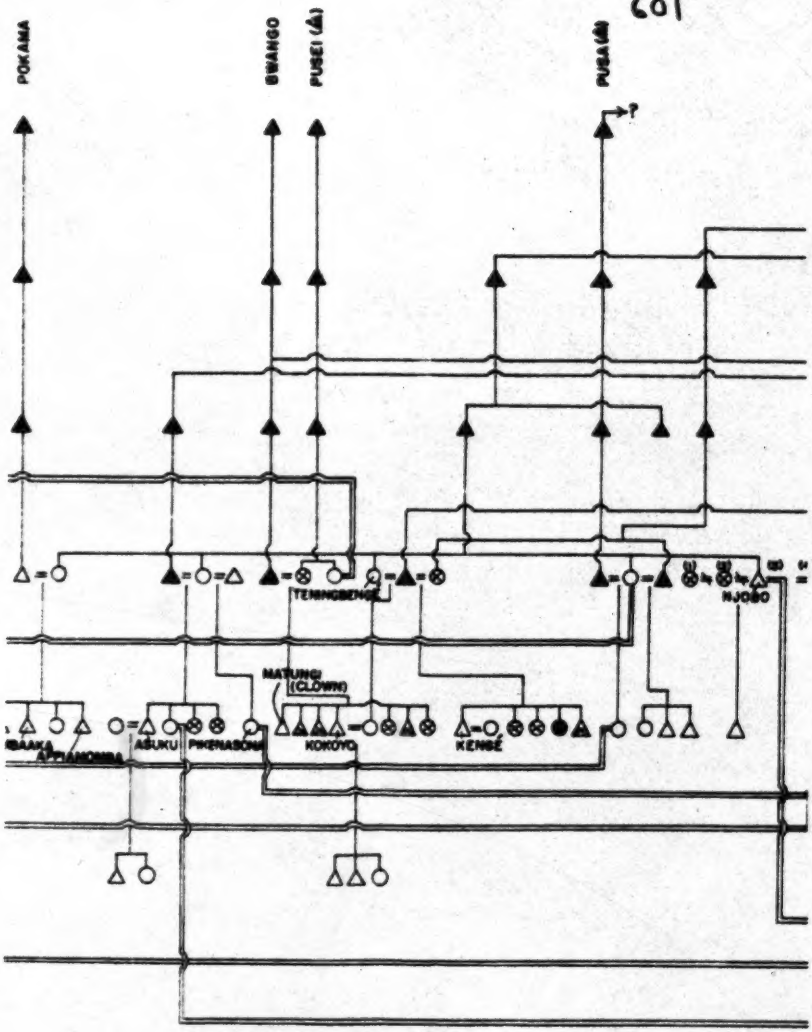

[End Chart 2.(C)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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614
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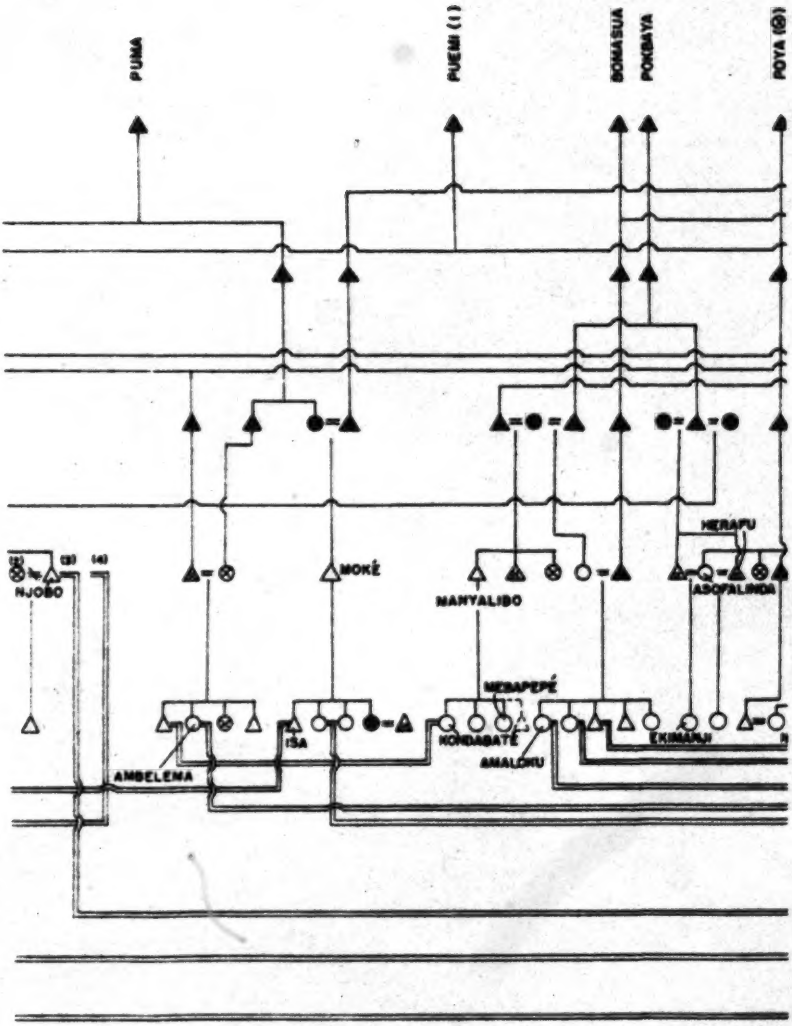

Composition of Epulu Net-Hunting Mbuti

[End Chart 2, (D)]

OCT.–DEC. 1957

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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614
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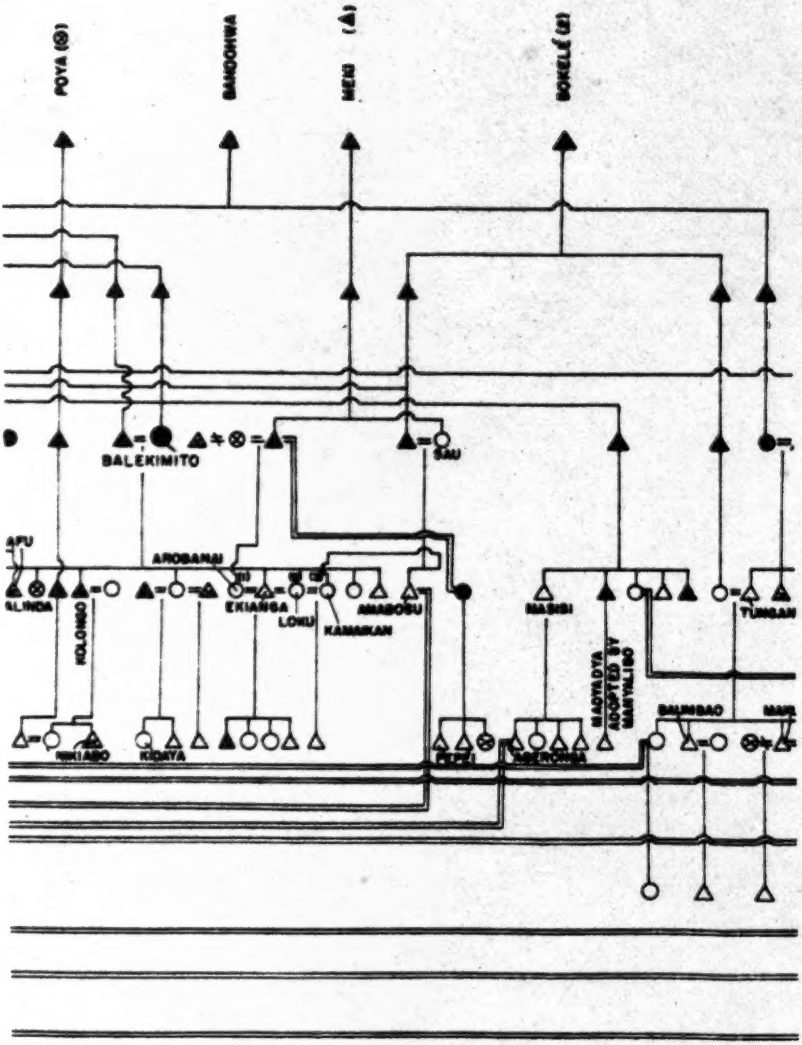

[End Chart 2, (E)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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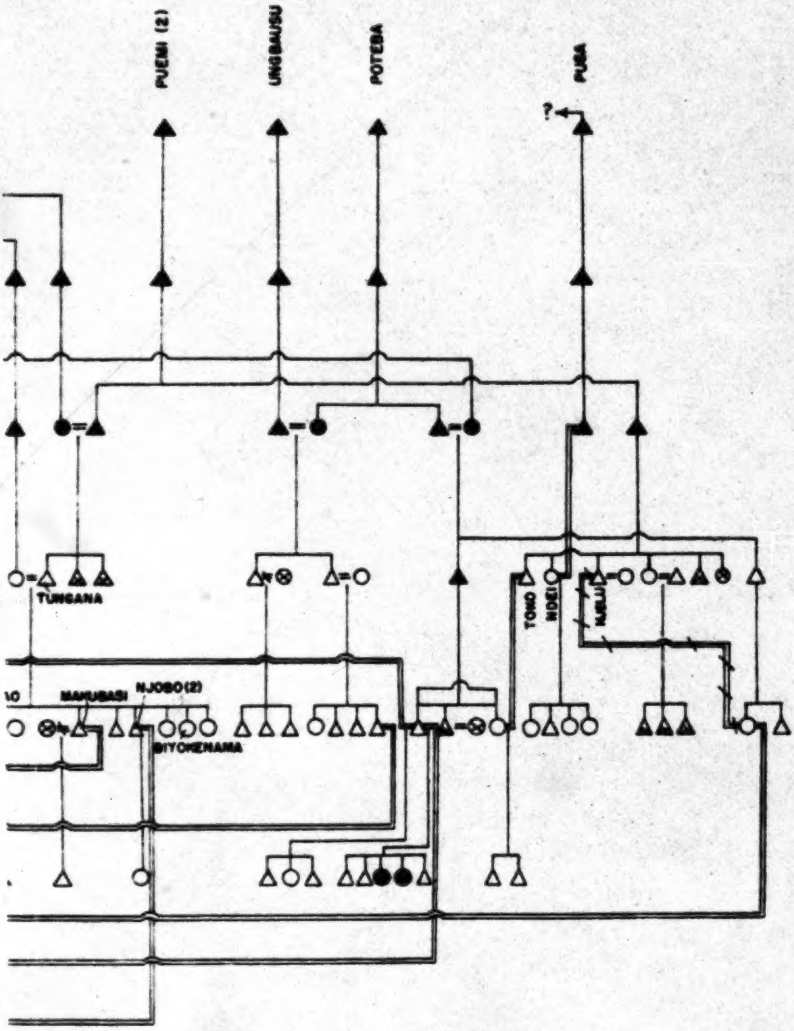

[End Chart 2, (F)]

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assumption that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to express and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[3]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[3] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (MORE likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents ar economic unit owning no more than one net.

			Male Members		Female Members	
621 614 613	Camp 3a – in 26 huts, there were		13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
	3b –	22	10	5	10	6
	3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

		Male Members		Female Members	
Camp 3d – in 9 huts, there were		5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
3e –	9	5	3	6	3
3f –	6	4	4	4	3
3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 613 361 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)[A] indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m). 621 114 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe- [614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

[A] [see pages 340-345 -- Analyz]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	Members Male	Members Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] [361] [84]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Analyze]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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621 this in mind we shall go on to discover the nature and extent of lin-
613 eage participation in band activity, but the nonlineal nature of the corporate unit—i.e., the band or sub-band—has first to be examined in another context.

FRAGMENTATION, FISSION AND FUSION

We have already mentioned that the band may be large or small, that it may be established in a single large camp or in a number of smaller camps. In examining the process of fission and fusion, it is plain that lineage considerations are by no means paramount, but that, if anything, there is some effort to maintain nonlineal composition even in the smaller camps. That is to say, there is at least a consciousness of lineage and an apparently felt need to maintain some kind of balance between lineages. Whereas the process of fission and
621 fusion—the division of the band into small segments, each with its
361 own hunting camp within the hunting territory, and the eventual realignment of the band as a single unit—is systematic, it is not without an element of the less systematic process of fragmentation that takes place within any single camp, large or small, and which starts the day the camp is first established.

The whole shifting complex is best understood by looking at the camp plans at the end of the book. As each hut represents a married
[613] couple with or without unmarried children, Plans 5 and 6,[1] respectively, show the lineage groupings according to male and female membership for the camp named *apa* Lelo. *Apa* Lelo was one of the larger camps and is as typical as any. Plan 7[2] shows the significant changes made in the direction in which the huts faced as the camp took shape, day by day.

On looking at Plans 5 and 6 it is evident that not only does the shape of the natural clearing lend itself to the division of the camp into sections, but that these sections show as much consideration for affinal as for consanguineal ties. Plan 7 shows how the natural divisions offered by the clearing were made plainer by the addition of screens to hut entrances, or by rebuilding huts so as to face them in different directions. The fallen tree trunk and a clump of undergrowth are also utilized, and in other camps such undergrowth was eventually cleared if the reason for making use of it disappeared.

When we examine the camp, section by section, it will be seen
[613] again that lineage is only one of many factors in determining the social groupings within the camp.

1, 2 [see pages 255-257 respectively -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[572] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty. 361 621 613 593 595 [881]

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp. 361 157 554 578 621 [122]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure
121 of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot
621 even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side
613 for practical purposes.[6] Lineages are known, and these are always pat-
[611] rilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

621 Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band com-
613 position be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is com-
184 parable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these
[224] groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or
[174] the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting
621 those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology,
613 it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the
174 attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is
[182] that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental
621 conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[6] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent *system* or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 148]

CHAPTER 10

The Economy

THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage
• 613 context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting
602 entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When
439 discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 *seq.*), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri,
439 except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking
261 Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo - Kinshasa Fol

sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial, and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going elsewhere to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage relationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

Karé/Karé

Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individuals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initiations which take place periodically (every three years for the past twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initiation camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, although any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed. They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Betubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su peti mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

P 621 sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti 561 life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to • 613 the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which P the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it 621 means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be 613 related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary * 177 ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti 57 group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among E them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes 563 over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided 613 hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The 177 only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

P 3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, 621 is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any mea- * 177 sure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers E in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be 563 dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to 177 look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some P extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves [186] to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

P 186 4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with 577 death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

P are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of na- 621 tional unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, 561 because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, 613 such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 5

•613 LINEAGES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPOSITION OF
621 THE EPULU NET-HUNTING BAND DURING 1957–1958, NOT
162 INCLUDING VISITORS STAYING LESS THAN THE DURATION OF ONE CAMP

	married		*unmarried*
Bambaka	14	13	15
Bandohwa	1	—	3
Bi	—	2	4
Bokele (1)	2	3	4
(2)	9	5	11
(3)	—	1	—
Bolima	2	—	—
Bomasua	3	8	8
Bongwana	2	5	5
Buela	1	1	—
Bwango	2	1	3
Meki	—	2	2
Molomba	—	2	1
Ngamo	5	—	7
Pasama	—	1	—
Pokama	1	—	4
Pokbaya	2	2	5
Poté	—	1	—
Poteba	3	2	5
Potola	1	2	—
Poya	2	—	5
Puemi (1)	5	4	7
(2)	6	3	12
Pukena	—	2	2
Puma	1	2	4
Pumasa	—	1	—
Pusa	—	2	5
Pusei	—	1	1
Tisi	—	—	1
Ungbausu	3	—	7
Totals:	65	66	121

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Individual members mentioned in text by name are indicated on Table 4. 613 621 162

To get some idea of the extent of mobility from band to band, the figures in Table 5 (total) should be compared with figures that could be reasonably expected to apply to an average-sized camp of this band; i.e., of 17 huts, each containing a married couple and three or four unmarried children.

Any one such "average" camp would be composed of little more than a quarter of all those who, at one time or another during the year, would be band members.

TABLE 9

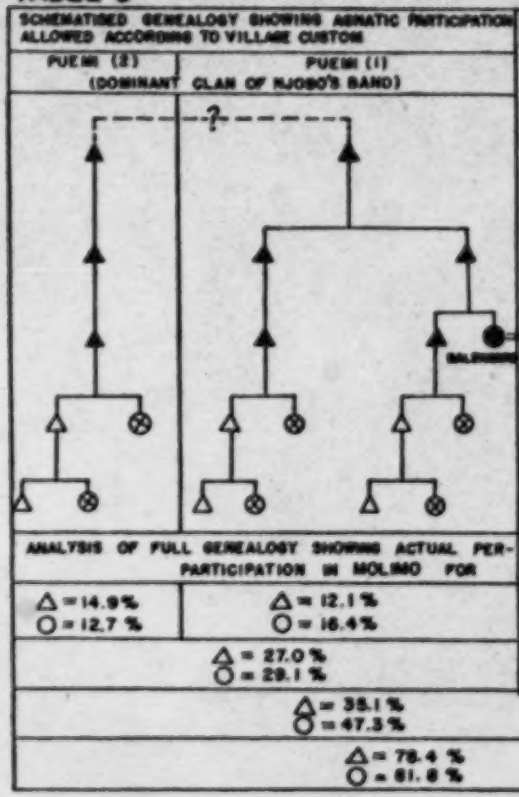
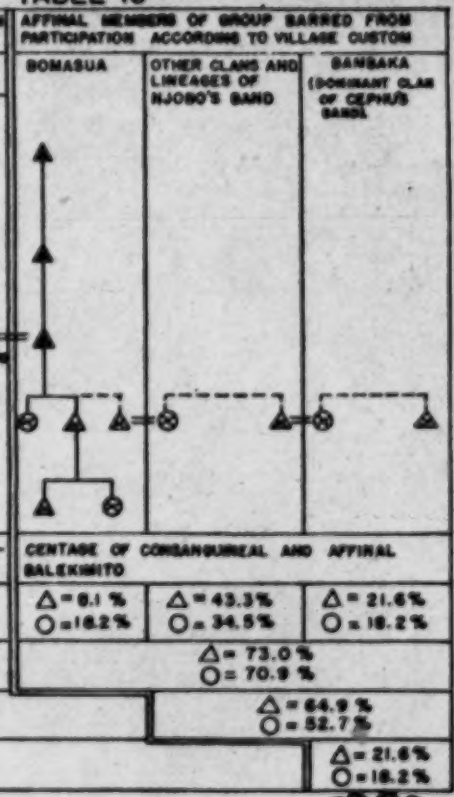


TABLE 10



179*
601
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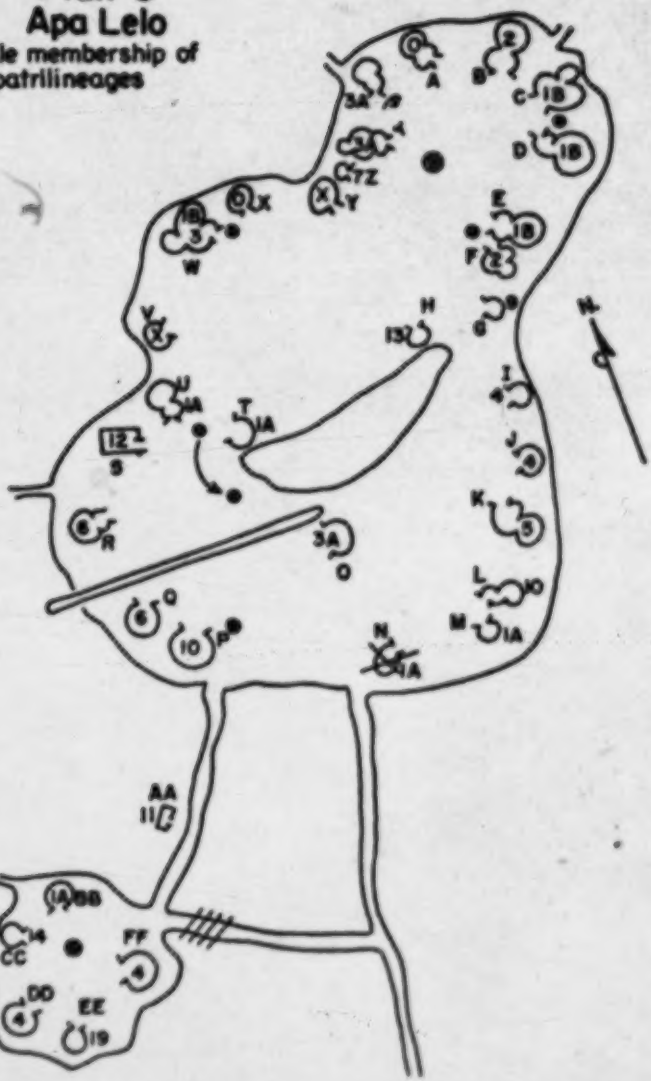
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
613

Plan 5
Apa Lelo
Male membership of patrilineages



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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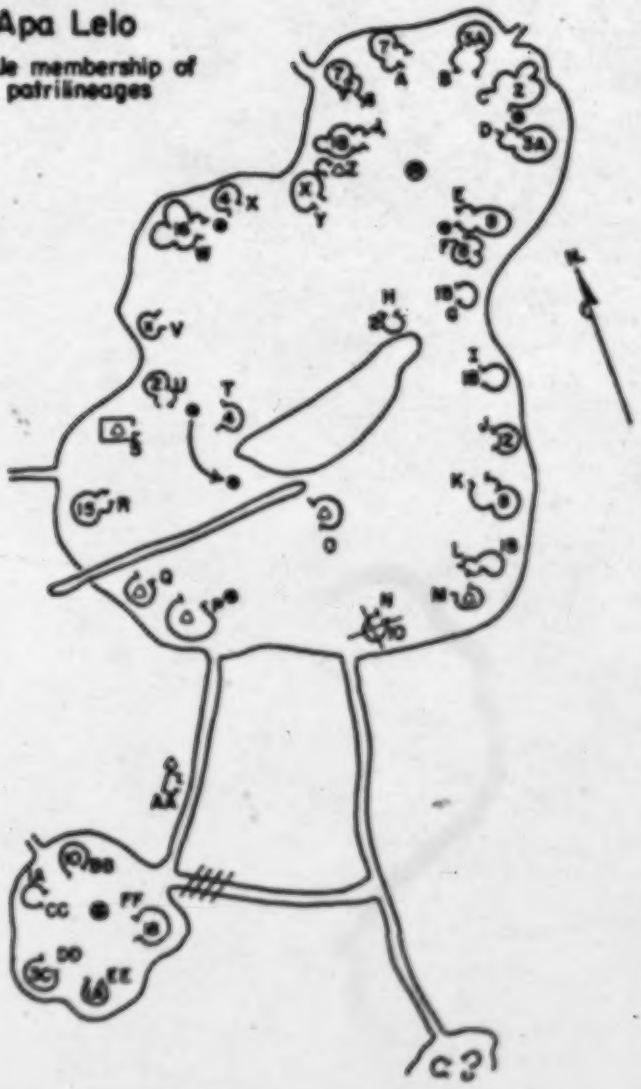
• 613

Plan 6
Apa Lelo

Female membership of patrilineages



Z 101 104 128 the basis of the relationship is the fact that these tribes are village cultivators and not forest hunters.

Z P 104 128 121 613 LINEAGE: We adhere to the definition and usage suggested in "Notes and Queries on Anthropology" (1954, 88–89). The definition is given as follows: "A lineage consists of all the descendants in one line of a particular person through a determinate number of generations."

Z P 121 128 104 614 [613] CLAN: Similarly, we use this term as suggested in "Notes and Queries" (1954, 89–90) whereby clan members may trace their unilineal relationship through one line or the other, i.e., we do not use it in the sense of a matriclan as opposed to a gens. Further, we here regard the lineage as a subdivision of the clan, lineage members being able to trace their membership to a known ancestor. A number of such lineages hold themselves to be related by the common descent of the lineage ancestors from a remote, possibly fictional or totemic ancestor.

000 GROUP: Whereas I have in the original sur-

[P. 148-A]

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [p.160-B]

[ARCHERS]

613 A number of lineages are associated into
• 614 clans, but these are widely dispersed and have
neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to
the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 The huts are built in a circle around a clear-
342 ing by the womenfolk of the individual families.
[462] Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to
[341] form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614 •

[P 191-D]

[ARCHERS]

[p. 192-A]

613 hunting band, or, if the latter becomes too
614 large, both clan and band may split into two or more bands. The relationship of several bands or lineages as members of the same clan is generally designated by the use of a common name,
[621] ancestor, and totem. One band is distinguished from another, regardless of relationship, by individual territorial names, but apart from identity of ancestor and totem there is no effective structure binding together the clan, if dispersed. There is no clan chief, and no clan territory (except for a very small clan that happens also to be a hunting band). Even clan exogamy cannot be said to be rigidly enforced; the invariable rule, rather, is exogamy of the local lineage or hunting bands.

Totems are generally animals, rarely plants, never natural phenomena. Schebesta cites the
[825] leopard and the chimpanzee as being the commonest totems. A man and wife observe each other's totemic restrictions in each other's presence or when with each other's group; simi-

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé-*
[784] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[262] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[953] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[961] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[775] To this belief that the clan ancestor de-
cended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

Magic

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[P. 192-B]

THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

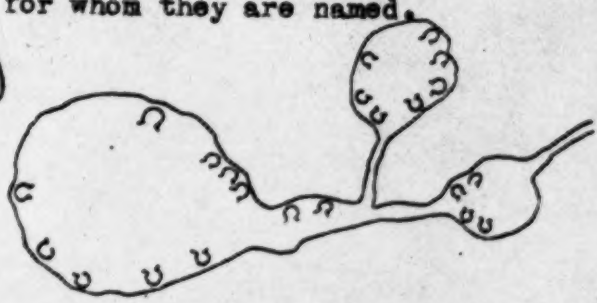


FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patrician, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 211 - A]

276 lagers, but the net hunters also make a pipe by twisting a bark strip into a cone, lining the end with fire-resistant leaves (Fig. 31b).

Food Restrictions

262 614 [84] Putnam's information on food restrictions differs from that given for the archers. While there are clan names and clan totems,[1] opinion among the net hunters themselves seems vague as to the exact extent of the restrictions arising from these totems. Probably, if the occasion arose (though the commonest totem animals in this particular group are the leopard and the chimpanzee, not important features of the local diet), a hungry Pygmy would turn a blind eye to the rules of totemism. Putnam says that these rules call for avoidance not only of the animal as well as of its flesh, but also of its favorite food. The animals are not regarded as representing the ancestors themselves but are associated with them in some myth.

[p. 228-C] [NET HUNTERS]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [59]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-A]

821 flames will not be seen, then the lightning will
372 pass. Mrs. Putnam reports that on one occasion a particularly large and bright fire was built during the night because, according to the Mbuti, a Lese woman who had died recently was "tapping in the trees." Fire is reported to be extinguished in one of the *molimo* dances, among the net hunters as well as among the archers.

Totem and Taboo

614 Putnam distinguishes four kinds of taboo for
825 the net hunters. The first is related to what he calls the clan totem. Each clan, he says, has its own private totemic animal. This is believed to be not the clan ancestor but, rather, connected with that ancestor in mythology, as having rescued him from danger or helped him in some enterprise. Putnam mentions seven species of antelope and 12 species of monkey that appear as totemic animals among the Mbuti bands in his area. Other animals, not important as food to the Pygmy, are also totemic animals but, according to Putnam, less frequently. Slow game and vegetables, that is, food collected by women, are never used as totems.

[NET HUNTERS]

• 614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 562 [262] The second kind of taboo mentioned by Putnam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this [825] [823] difference is probably connected with the association between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patriclan or gens.

[P. 239-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with the same meaning. The occasional use of a [613] grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor [614] names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used fre- [103] quently to differentiate one hunting band from [101] another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are [832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P 246-B]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

* 614
613
601

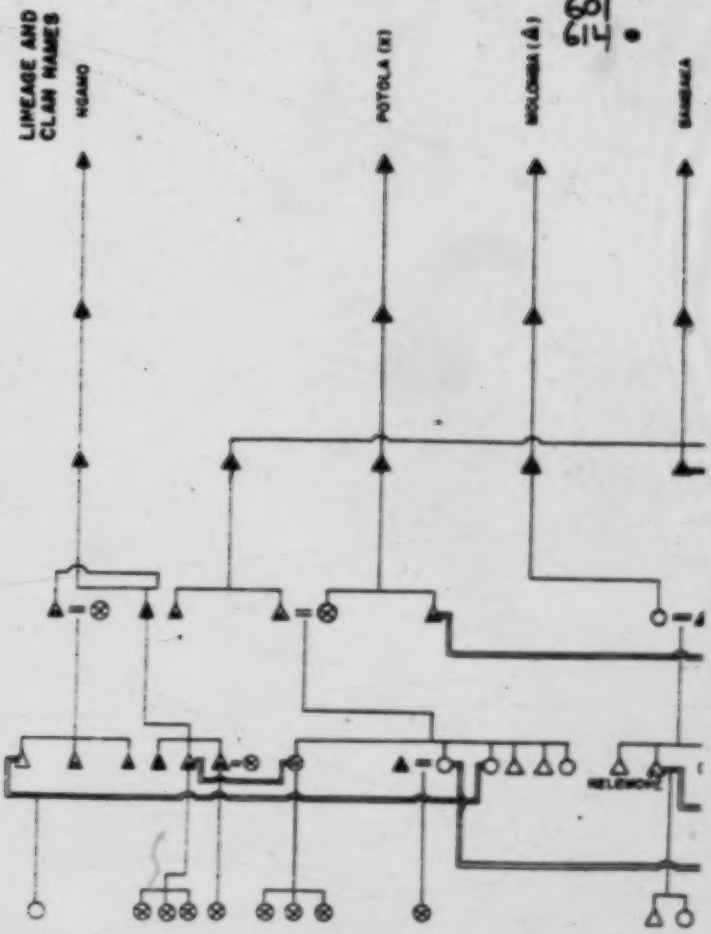
(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)	(F)

Chart of Positions of End Plate 2 (Table 4).
[facing End Chart 2]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

613
601
614

TABLE 4



[Fr. Chart 2, (A)]

LINEAGE AND CLAN NAMES:

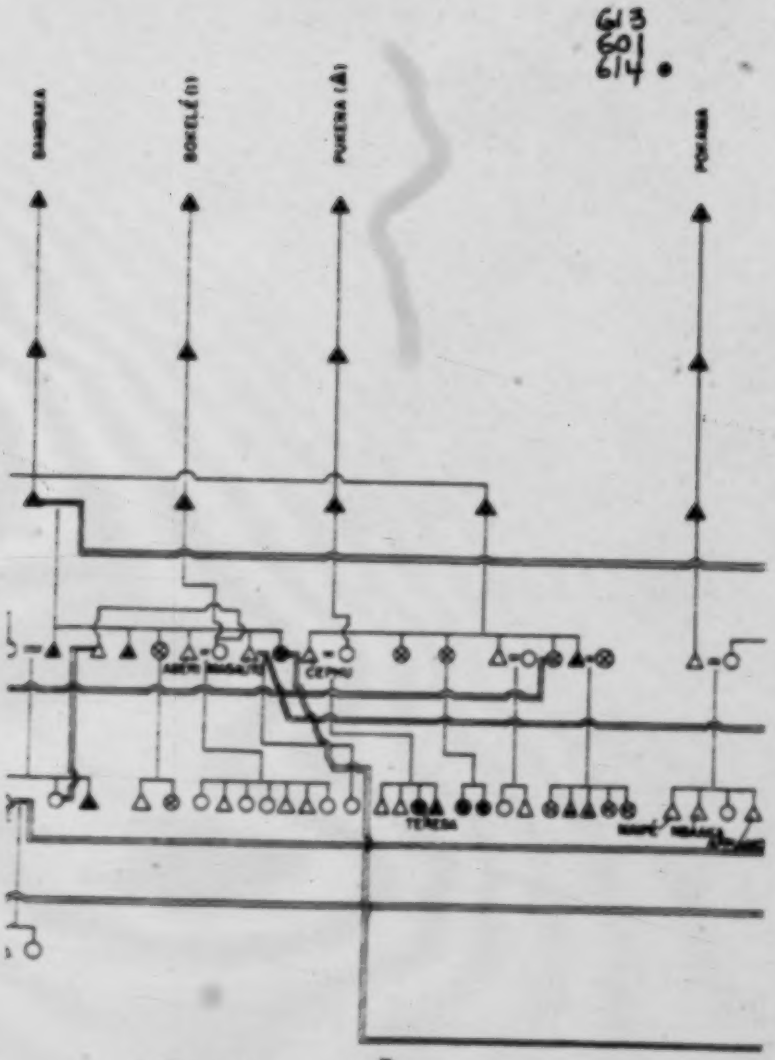
PUEMI (1):(2): indicates different totemic branches of the same clan

▲ ; ⊗ : Living members of other hunting bands not present at the meeting

△ ; ○ : An extended form of the conventional marriage symbol (=)

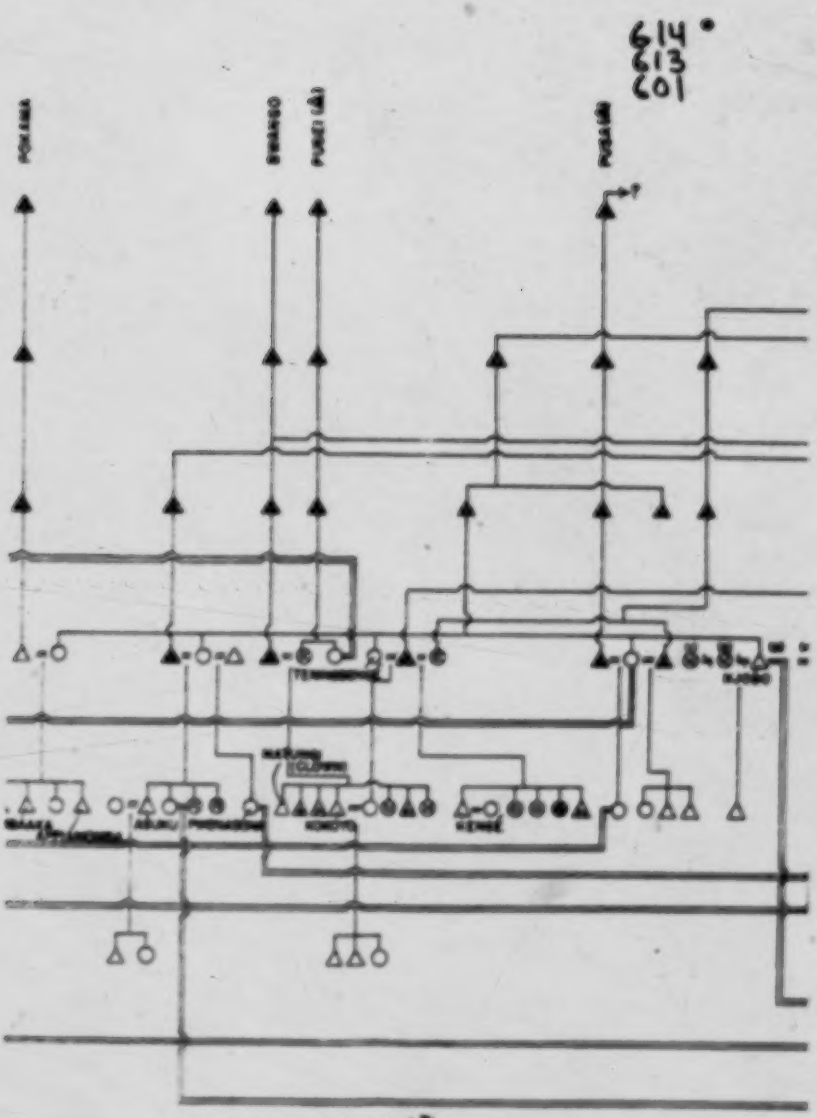
: is used when for convenience the oldest sibling has had to be placed on the right

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 2.(B)]

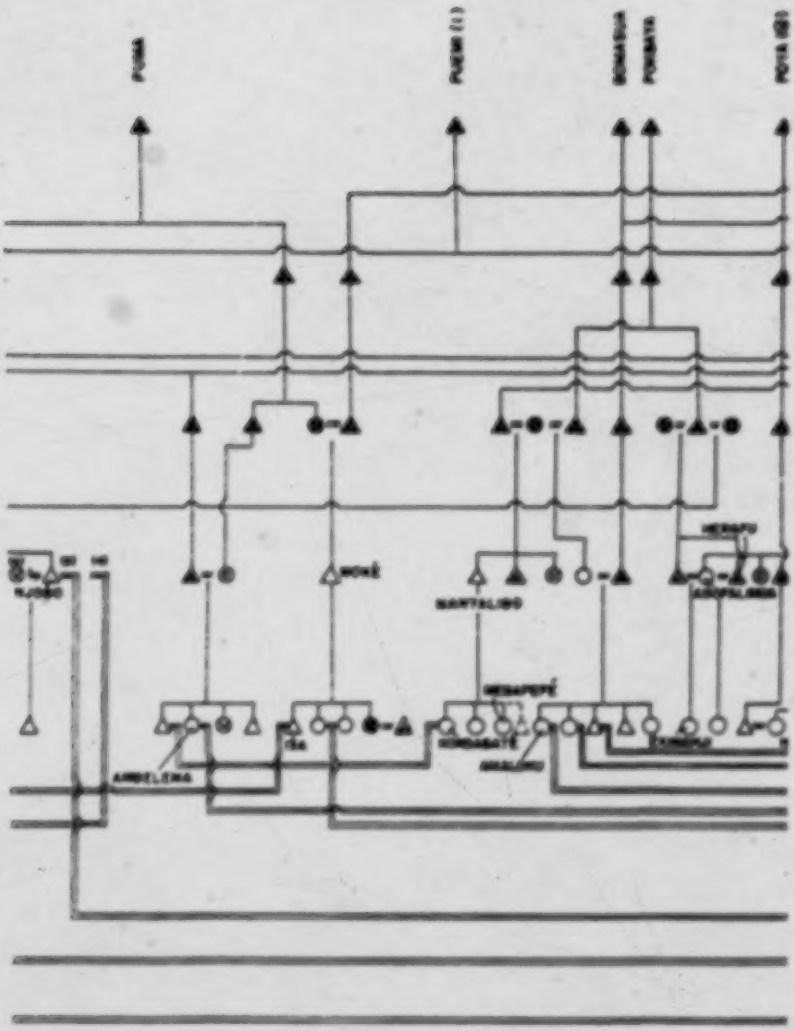
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[Ens Chart 2. (C)]

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

613
614
601



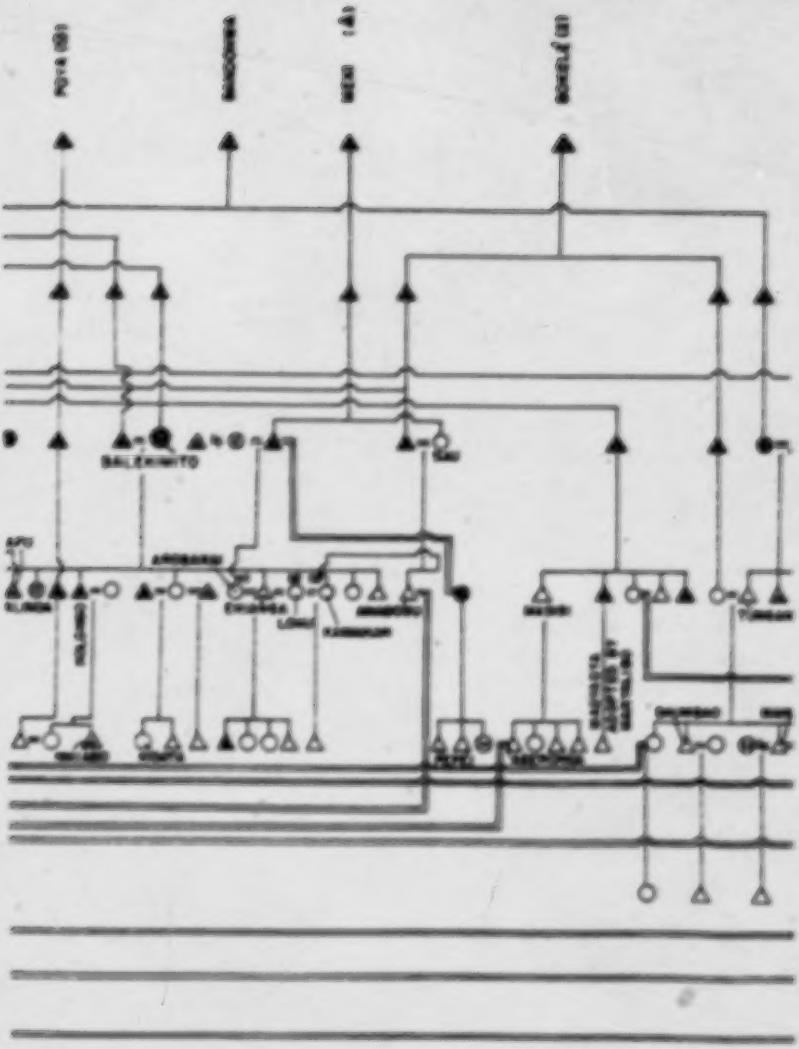
Composition of Epulu Net-Hunting Mbuti

[End Chart 2, (D)]

OCT.-DEC. 1957

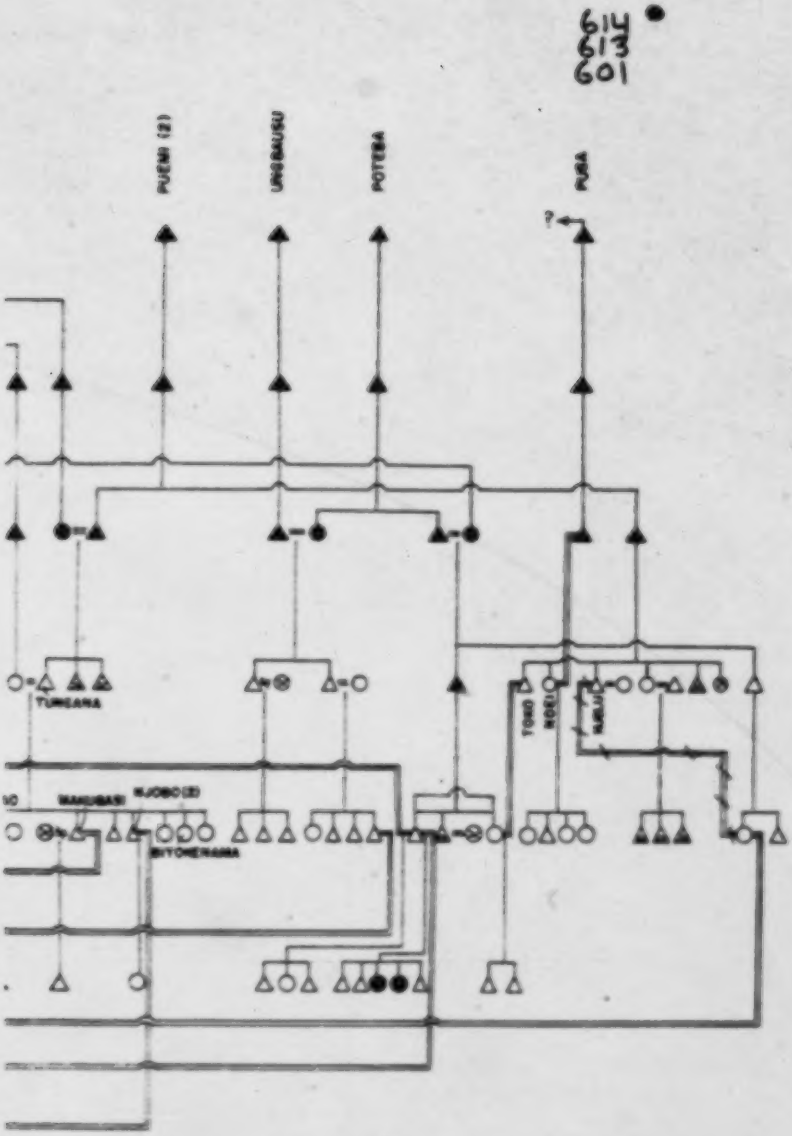
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

613
614
601



[End Chart 2, (E)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 2, (F)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]

Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends. They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans. It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups. In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

still Ngoma's Mbuti. Ngoma himself said he had no objections to the Puemi, or any other of his Mbuti, hunting for other villagers while he was away, so long as they still acknowledged him as their *kpara*, or owner. He was wealthy enough to have no economic need of the Mbuti, but he was greatly concerned with his status, which was, he said, determined largely by the number of Mbuti who called him *kpara*. Certainly status was an important consideration for the villagers, and ownership, effective or otherwise, of a large number of Mbuti would add to it, but there were few who could afford to ignore the economic aspect of the relationship as could Ngoma.

The situation then becomes seriously complicated for the field worker who is trying to disentangle the system of ownership. Any villager will claim hereditary rights over even the most recent newcomer. But he will also claim rights over the Mbuti who have left him, and in some instances over those that he would have inherited from his father had they not left his father. As hereditary ownership can be transferred by adoption with compensation (a sum in cash or goats, and a promise of a share of any meat that falls into the net of the Mbuti transferred, or of that of his senior male descendants) and as the "clan" names also sometimes become adopted in this way, any attempt to discover a system of hereditary ownership becomes doubly hazardous, if indeed such a system exists except in theory.

The Epulu situation is perhaps more complicated than others because most of the Mbuti in that band are claimed by Bira villagers, whereas the band itself is in Ndaka territory and has formed effective links with both Ndaka and Bira villagers, offering forest foodstuffs to the local villagers, who are mostly Ndaka, and performing some service for their more remote Bira owners. In this way, of course, they maintain two sources of supply of village goods. But the actual distribution of the clans that contributed to the composition of the Epulu band, as shown in Table 2,[1] indicates how ineffective the principle of hereditary ownership is, in fact. The same kind of picture can be drawn for most net-hunting bands, and when we come to consider the forest world, among both net-hunters and archers we shall find a situation that militates against any effective stable and durable exchange relationships between Mbuti and villagers, particularly if based on the principle of unilineal descent.

The myth of hereditary ownership, then, does not seem to provide a much more effective means of control for the villagers than does the creation of mythical but comparable political systems. But it is not totally ineffective.

[1] [see page 323 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assumption that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to express and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[8]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[8] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net.

			Male Members		Female Members	
621	Camp 3a – in 26 huts, there were		13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
• 614	3b –	22	10	5	10	6
613	3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

			Male Members		Female Members	
	Camp 3d – in 9 huts, there were		5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
	3e –	9	5	3	6	3
	3f –	6	4	4	4	3
	3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)A indicate the extent to which the
613 lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If
361 we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is
[578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m).
621 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly
114 verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe-
[614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

A [see pages 340-345 -- Analyz]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[8]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[8] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[672] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[514] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
573 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apu* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo - Kinshasa F01

P 224 628 825 [554] sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

P [221] P [621]

P 224 613 614 Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

C [613] [614] [439]

P 224 613 614 262 825 Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 262 825 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Certainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[614] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 262 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 262 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are considered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] [462] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and although primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

554 621 [578] [152] sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically and morally, beyond the forest.

602 604 554 In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid village argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké [621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 602 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any- [608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names [614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be- [621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*). [354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

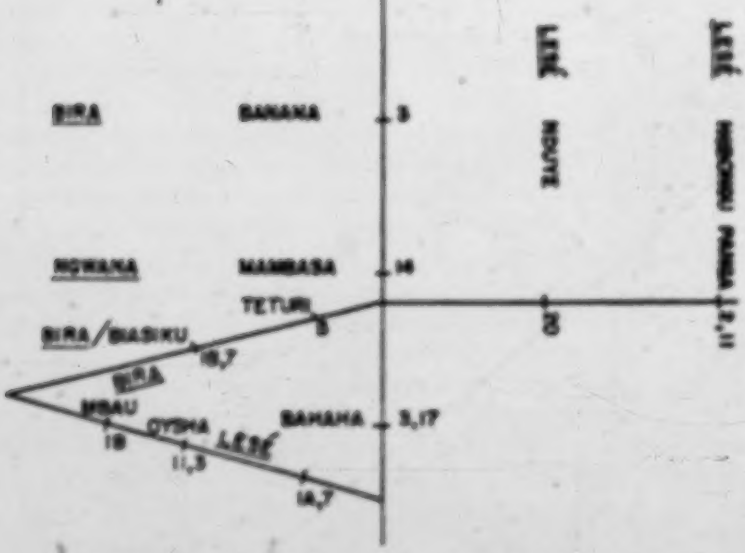
602 621 [354] Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was, 621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would 578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man 626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with [152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 2

1977*
614 •

TRIBE	VILLAGE	Scatter of Mbuti clans found in Epulu band
NDAKA	EBIANI	5,19
LESE	ZOZO	11,16
NGWANA	DAR ES SALAAM	16
NDAKA	EPULU	1–20
BIRA	EBOYO	2,11,20
NGWANA	EFFUNDI-SOMALI	3,16
BIRA	KOPU	13,19
	NYASI	14
	KATALA	1A,1B,7,8,10,12
	MAYANI	5
	NERAFU	7,8,13
	BABAMA	4,6,15
	BIANZE	3
	KOKI	20
	ALIMAA	1B,5,9
BIRA	BANANA	3
NGWANA	MAMBASA	14
BIRA/BIASIKU	TETURI	3
BIRA		1B,7
MBAU		19
OYSHA		11,3
LESE	BAHAMA	3,17
		1A,7



Distribution of Mbuti "clans" found in the Epulu band.

TABLE 9

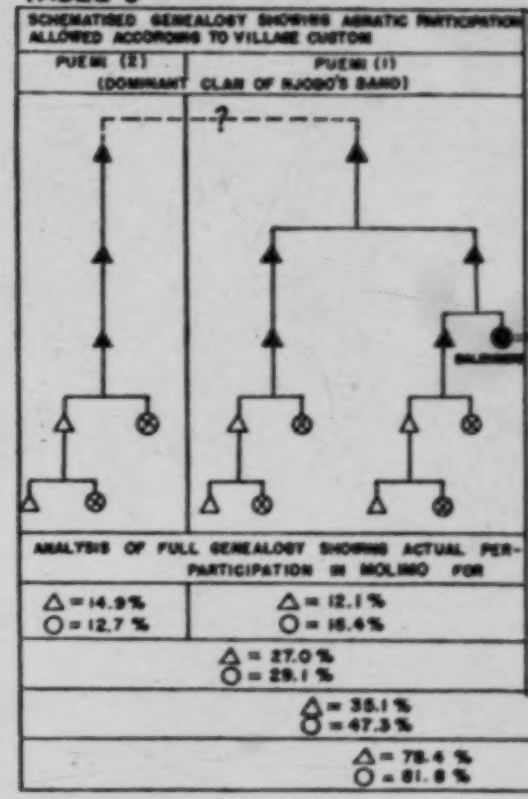
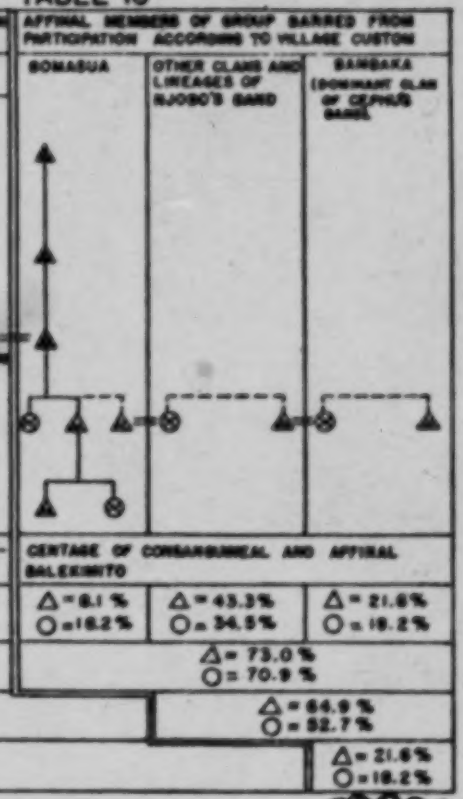


TABLE 10



179*
601
R-E-32
25

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

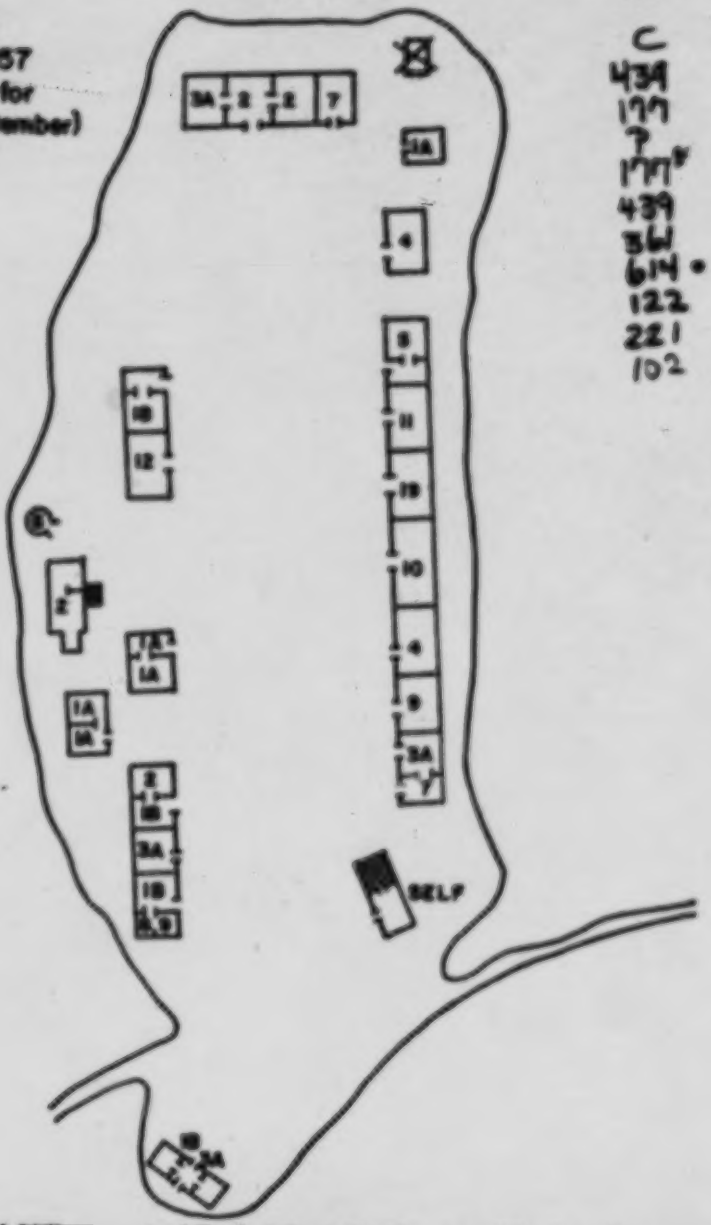
.C
459
177
P
#177
459
361
64
122
221
102

Plan Ib

EPULU VILLAGE

Camp of Pygmies
(About twice scale of Plan Ia)

C
439
177
7
177
439
36
614
122
221
102



PLAN 2a-d *Village camp of Epulu Mbuti*, October 1957–March 1958.

R. Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1955) 1955 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

C
439
177
P
177
439
361
614
122
221
102

Plan 2b
DECEMBER 1957

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Plan 2c
FEBRUARY 1958

C
434
177
P
177
439
361
614
122
221
102

Sr. Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C
439
177
P
*177
439
361
614
122
221
102

WAYWARD SERVANTS

Plan 2d
MARCH 1958

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
614
592
122

Plan 3a-g · KEY

= Baraza (meeting veranda)

C, D = Hut

= Abandoned hut

= Living but not in camp

= Hearth, used by more than one nuclear family

= Brush and tree trunks that effectively divide a camp

	CLAN	TOTEM		CLAN	TOTEM
1A,1B	PUEMI	2	11	NGAMO	1
2	BOMASUA	1	12	BANDOHWA	2
3A,B,C	BOKELÉ	3,1,6	13	POYA	4
4	BAMBAKA	6	14	MOLOMBA	4
5	BWANGO	1	15	POTOLA	1
6	UNGBAUSU	2	16	PASAMA	5
7	MEKI	4	17	PONGWANA	2
8	POKBAYA	1	18	PUKENA	1
9	POKAMA	6	19	PUSA	7
10	POTEBA	1	20	PUMA	4

TOTEMS: 1 LEOPARD
2 CHIMPANZEE
3 BUFFALO
4 SNAKE
5, 6, 7 — Different kinds of rare antelope

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

PLAN 3a-g *Composition of hunting camps cited p. 98 for large and small camps of Epulu band.*

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3b

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3c

36
614
592

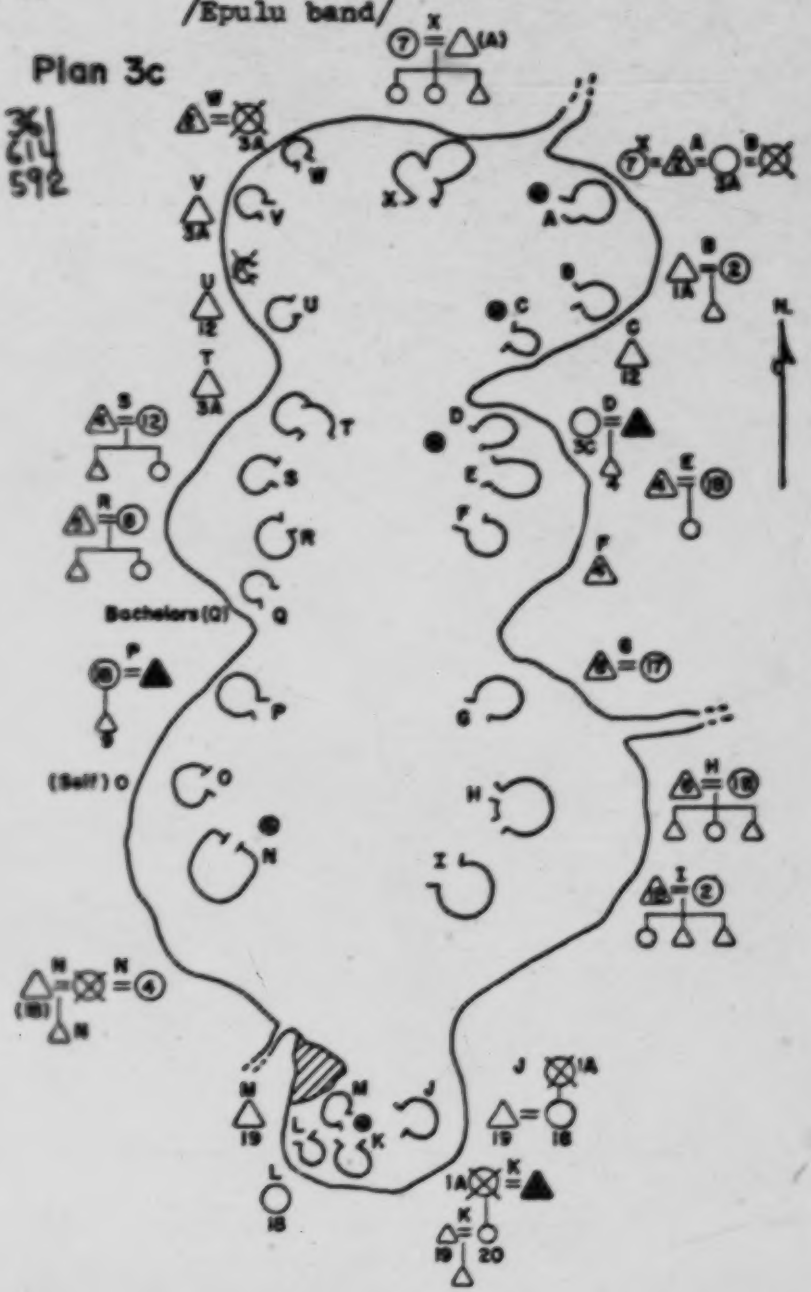


Figure 3. Tamboli B-5 (1961-1969) 1969 POA Pyramids POA Level

Apsu band/

[P 343]

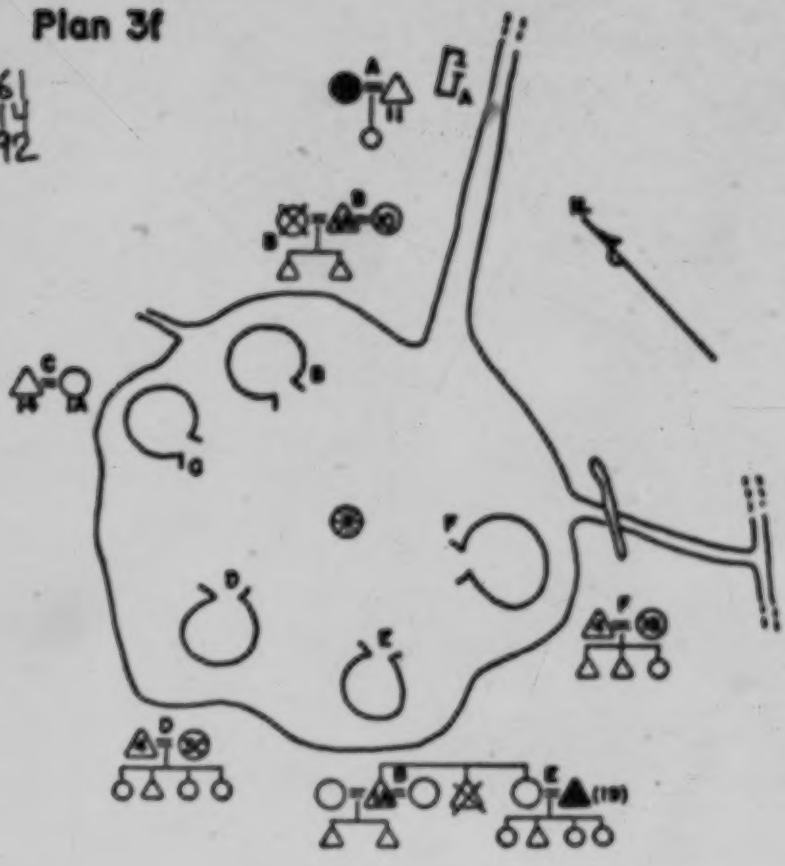
[P 342]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3f

361
614
592

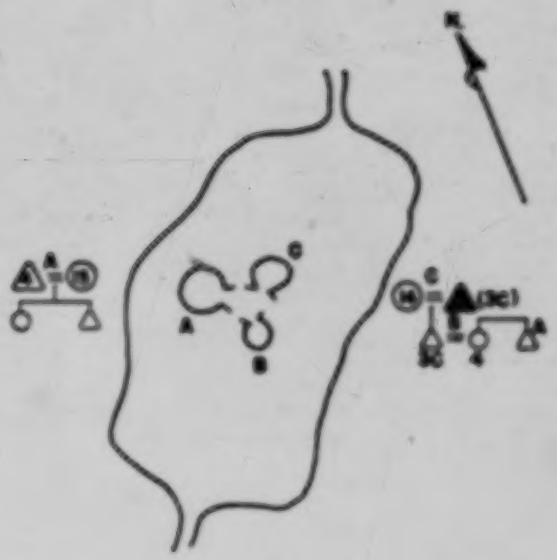


3: Turnbull R-S (1961-1968) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

/Epulu band/

Plan 3g

361
614
592



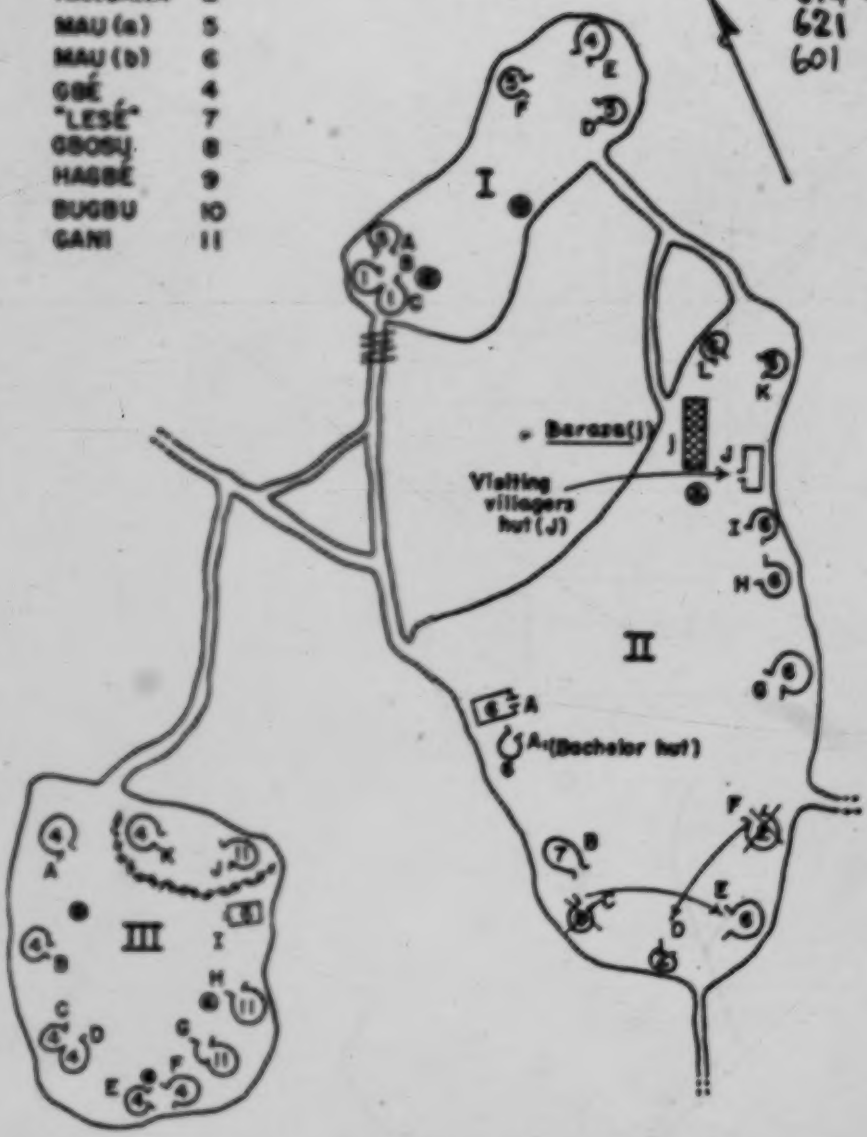
2: Turnbull . 2-6 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P346]

Plan 4a

G'BAO	1
RANGANA	2
MAU (a)	5
MAU (b)	6
GBÉ	4
"LESÉ"	7
GBOSU	8
HAGBÉ	9
BUGBU	10
GANI	11

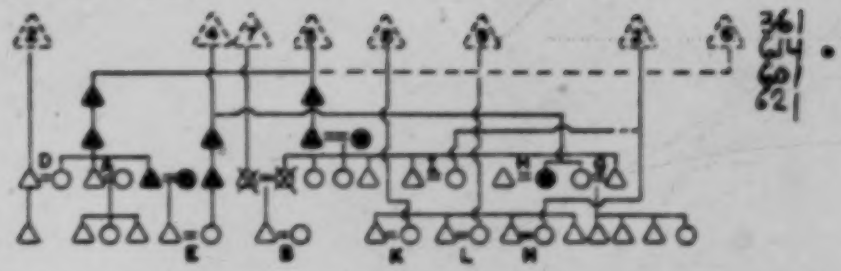
361
614
621
601



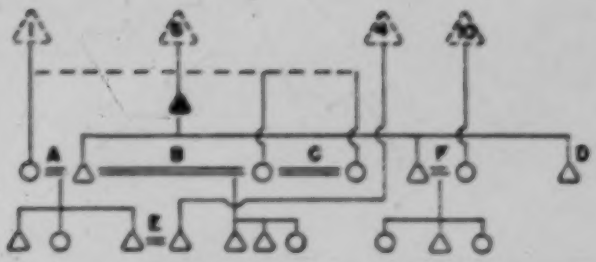
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 347]

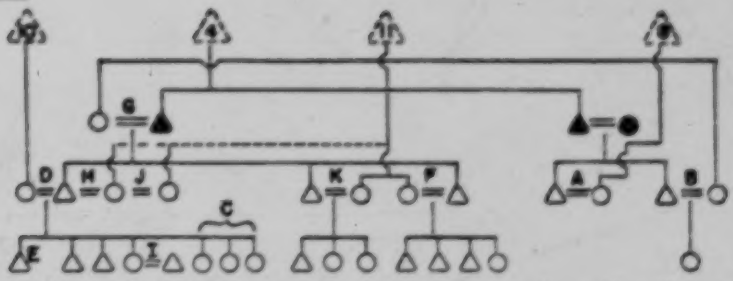
I



II



III

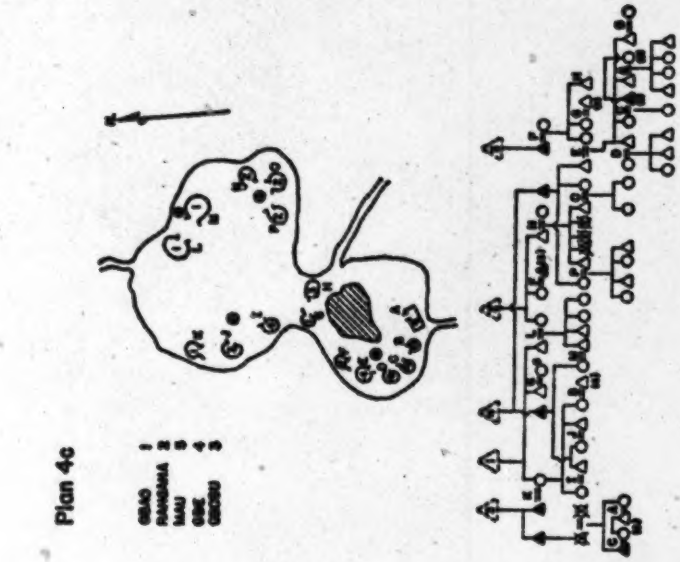


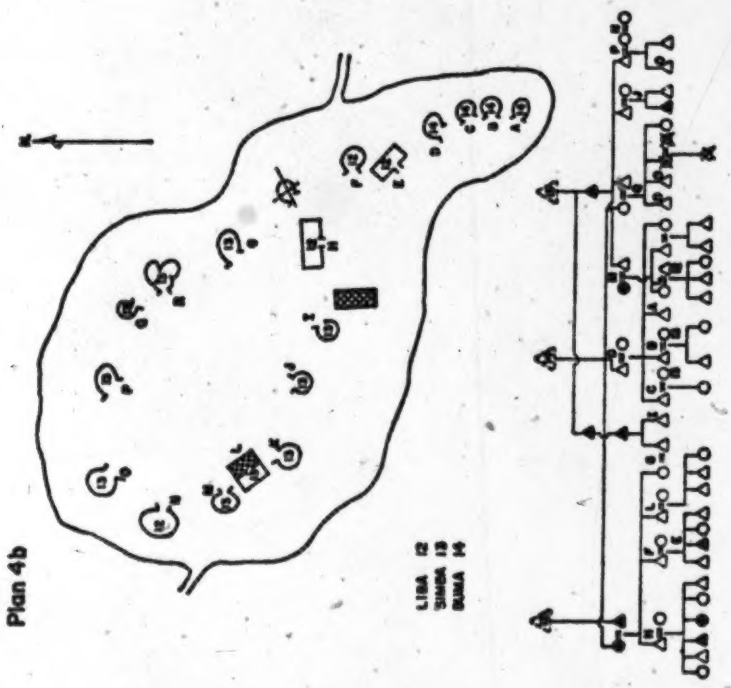
PLAN 42-III *Hunting camps of net-hunters and archers other than at Epulu, showing composition.*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.348]

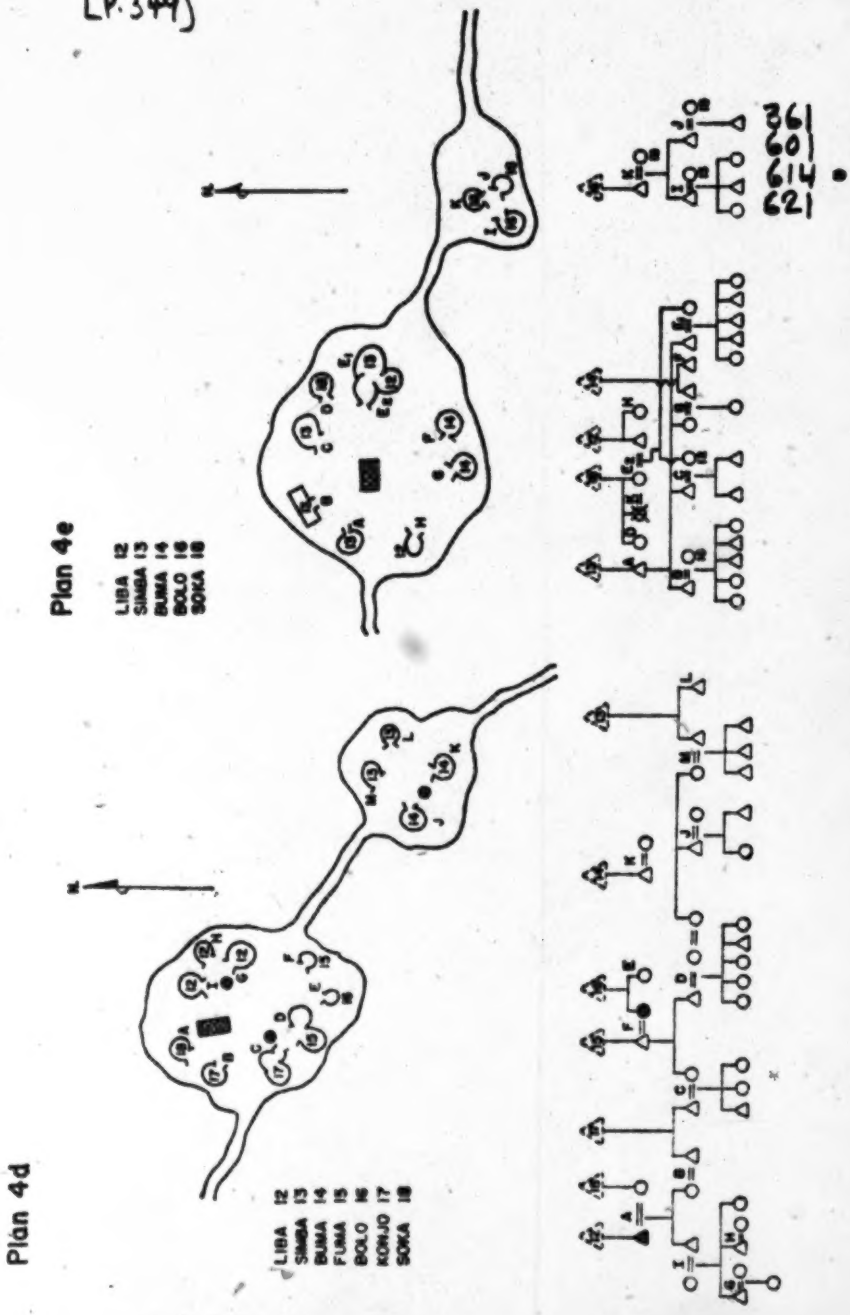
36
60
614
62





2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.349]



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4f

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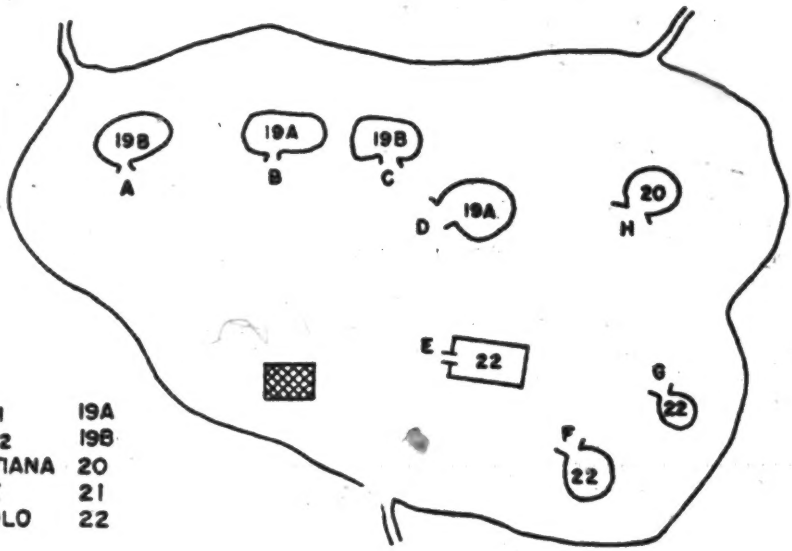
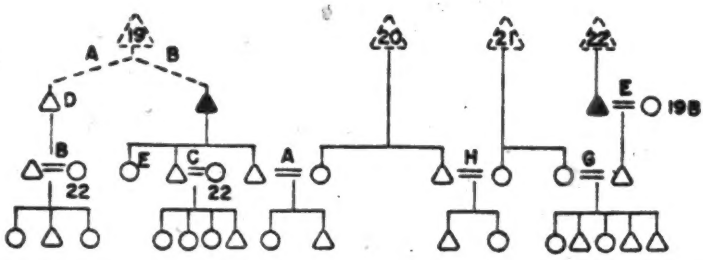


KIMA1 19A
KIMA2 19B
PIPUTIANA 20
DOLÉ 21
TOBOLO 22



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4g

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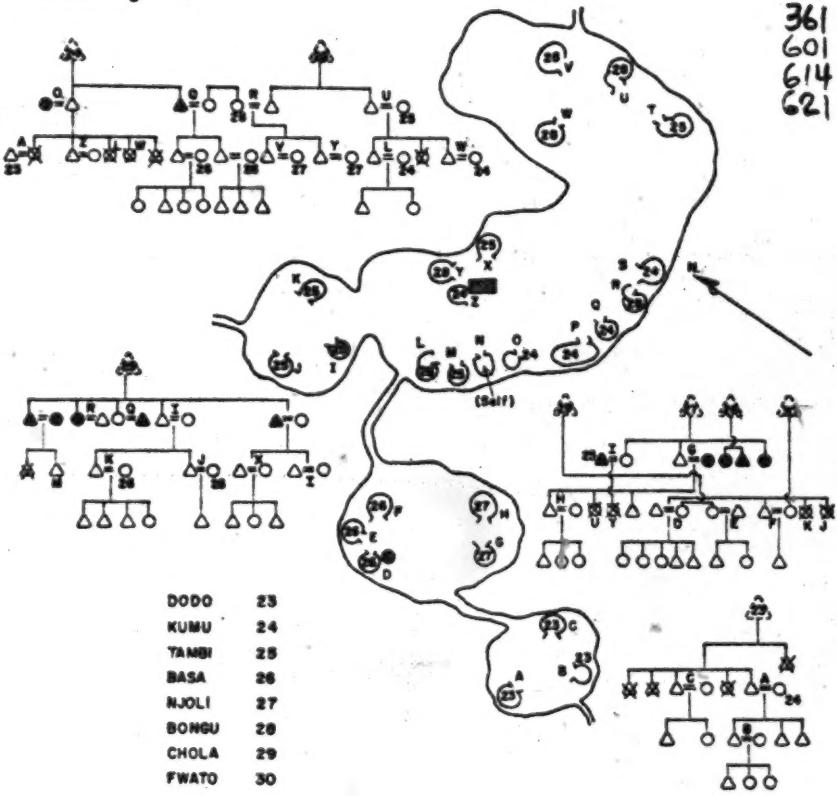

DODO	23
KUMU	24
TANBI	25
BASA	26
NJOLI	27
BONGU	28
CHOLA	29
FWATO	30

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.352]

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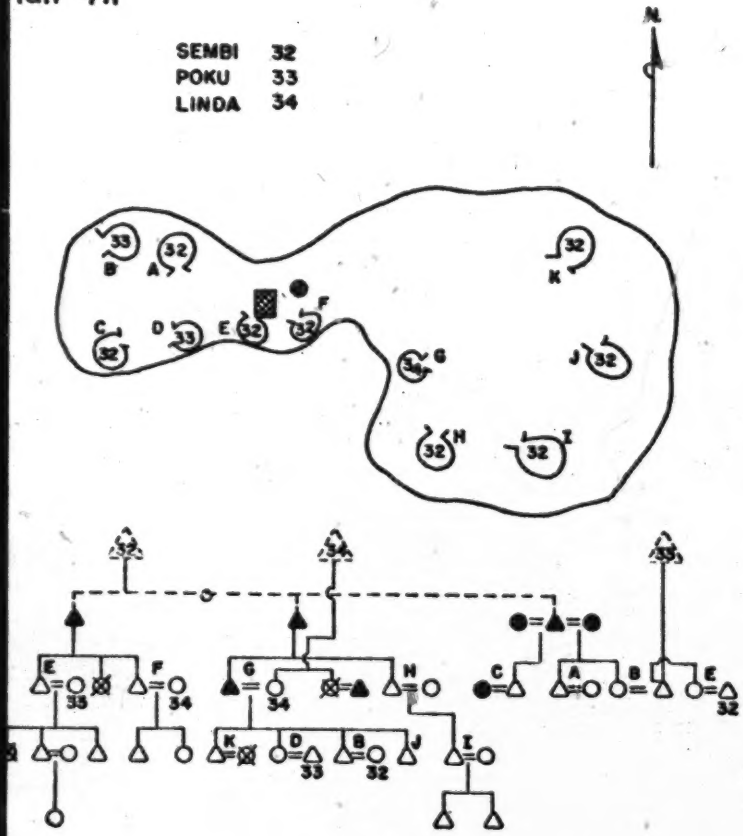
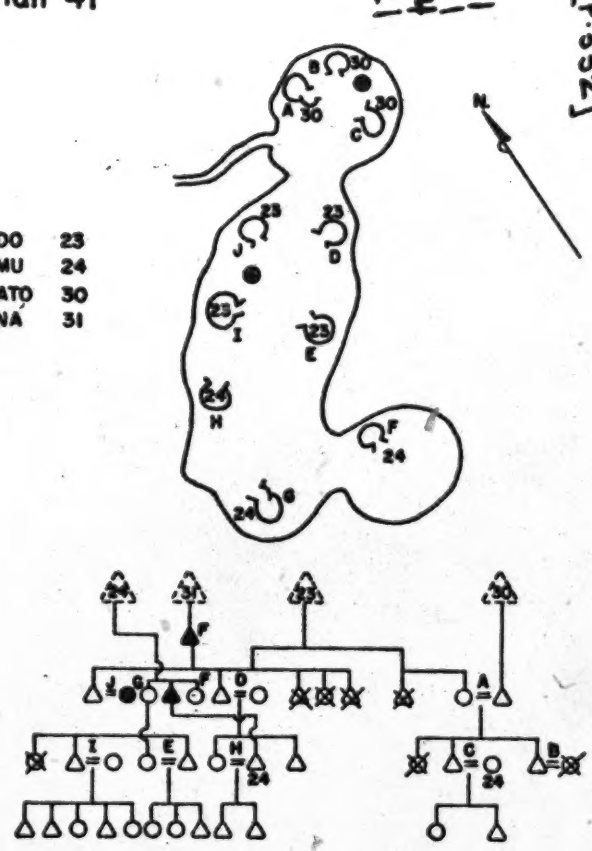
Plan 4h

SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34



Plan 4i

DODO 23
KUMU 24
FWATO 30
DENA 31



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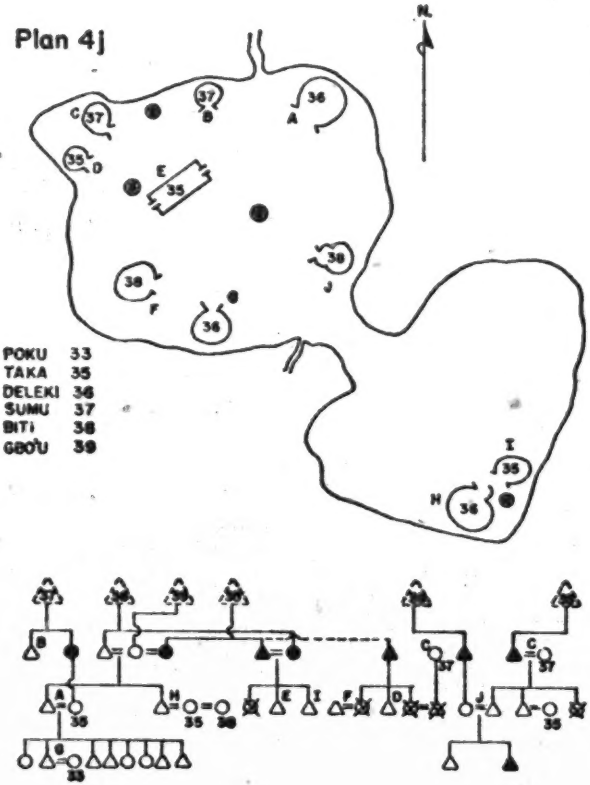
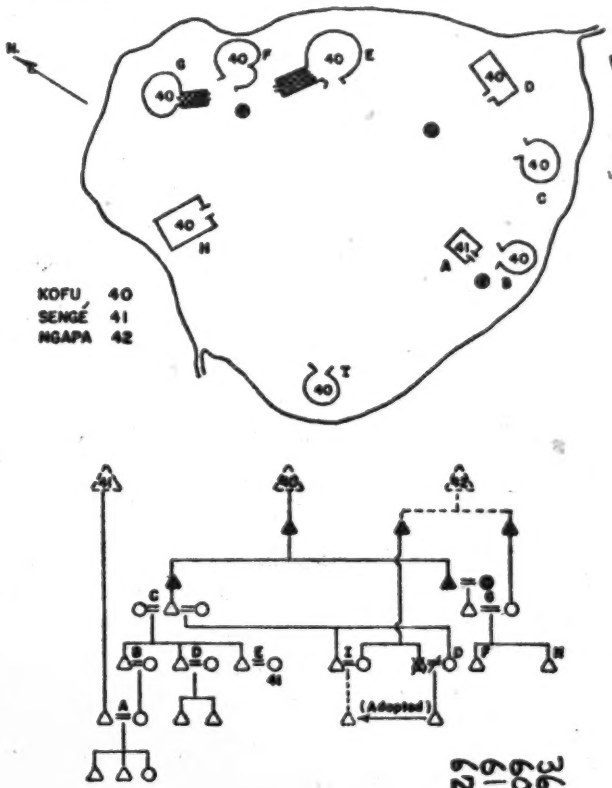
Plan 4j



Plan 4k



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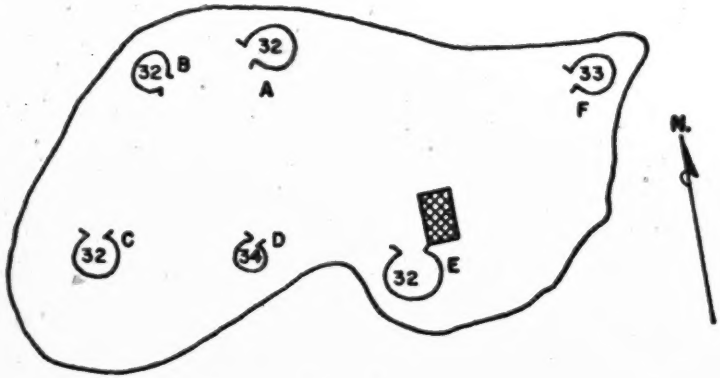
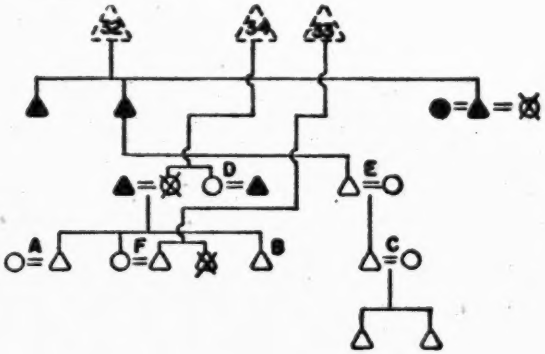
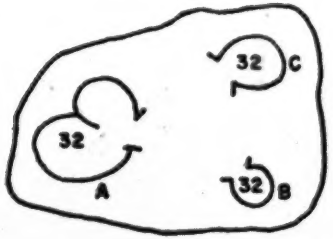
Plan 4L



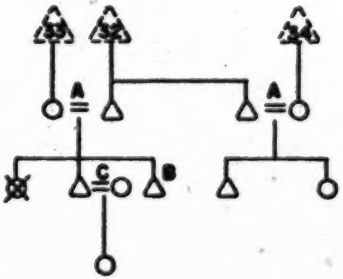


SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34

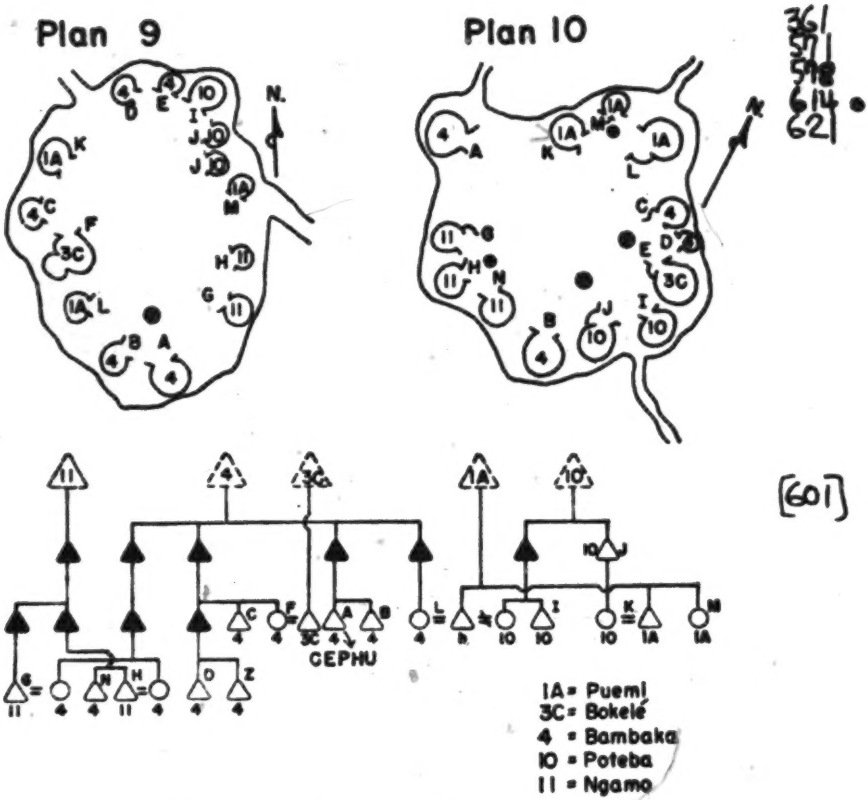
Plan 4m



SEMBI 32



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

[P.360 is blank]

594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

[p. 335-A]

4: Putnam E-5 (no date) 1948 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

[P. 337-8]

825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation. 262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain

[P. 338-A]

[P. 159-C]

forest to the east. Their southern limit is 131
bounded by a line from the Ruwenzori, through Beni to Bafwasende. The western boundary runs north from Bafwasende to Panga and to the confluence of the Bomokandi and Uele. (See Fig. 3.) Apart from the Lindi and Ituri rivers, Schebesta says that Pygmies also inhabit the areas near the Epulu, Ngayu, Nepoko, and Poko rivers. Putnam makes no attempt to delimit Mbuti territory, but his notes show that he traveled throughout the area described by Schebesta, with the possible exception of the extreme south, and found Mbuti everywhere, away from the major rivers as well as along their banks.

Schebesta makes the threefold division al- 197
ready mentioned, of Twa, Tswa, and Mbuti, 101
and further subdivides the Ituri Mbuti into [619]
three major groups: the Aka to the north; Sua to the south; and Efe to the east (Fig. 3). These are linguistic groups, speaking dialects of Mangbetu, Bira, and Lese, respectively.

betu, Bira, and Lese, respectively. Schebesta 197
believes the Efe dialect to be the remnant of the 101
original Pygmy language, and for this reason he 114
considers the Efe archers to be culturally the purest of the three Mbuti groups. Costermans (1937) disagrees as to both the originality of the Efe language and the purity of Schebesta's particular Efe Mbuti. He asserts that among the Watsa-Gombari Efe, who according to Schebesta were not "true Pygmies," he found hundreds living in exactly the same manner as Schebesta's "true Pygmies."

Jadin (1936) considers that of Schebesta's 101
three groups the Efe and the Sua have remained 144
most faithful to their old way of life and finds 184
that, on grounds of blood groups, the purest Pygmies are those who live farthest from their village neighbors, from whom they are clearly distinguishable by their biochemical index.

The Aka live mostly to the north of the 101
Nepoko River, along the length of the Ituri as 131
far east as Gombari. Thence southward, to the 619 •
east of the Nduye, the Efe archers are found. The Sua roam from the Nepoko to the south side of the Ituri River, from Bomili in the west, almost to Mambasa in the east. Detailed information on the Aka is not available, though they seem to make more use of the spear than the other groups. [P. 159-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe*." He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie*," the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [P.160-B]

[ARCHERS]

613 A number of lineages are associated into
614 clans, but these are widely dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance. Tri-
• 619 bal sense, says Schebesta, is entirely foreign to the Mbuti.

361 The bands are generally found on the edges of small villages, but still in the shade of the forest, according to Schebesta. Jadin (1936) says that only some Efe archers make their camp near the villages. Schebesta (1941, 132–133) finds that the exact location of the camps depends on the food quest, and that the presence of water and shade is a major consideration.

HABITATIONS

361 The huts are built in a circle around a clear-
342 ing by the womenfolk of the individual families.
[462] Saplings are cut, bent, and twisted together to
[341] form a beehive-shaped frame, which is covered with large phrynium leaves. This is the kind of hut described by most sources. Schebesta also describes tunnel-shaped huts.

FURNITURE

352 The furniture of an archer hut is limited to a crude bed of sticks and lianas, raised from the

[P. 167-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

621 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.118]

CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

621 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of
626 the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which ac-
594 tivities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on
62 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal in-
183 stitution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream should wash himself, or at least a part of himself, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

62 571 561 [888] **Government.**—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 888 [626] A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888] Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] [562] In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 Pygmy Social Organization

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological [P. 334-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tic or racial differential. It might be well to define how certain other terms are used.

CAMP: This term distinguishes the settlement of the Mbuti from that of the villagers. There may be hunting camps, those situated in the forest and from which hunting is conducted, or village camps, those occupied by the Mbuti when they are visiting their villager neighbors.

BAND: This refers to the total Mbuti hunting population, regardless of kinship, that recognizes and utilizes a common hunting territory. The band may occupy a single camp or split into several camps within the same territory.

VILLAGE: The settlement of the Bantu and Sudanic cultivators who have pressed into the forest. Such a village is likely to have a much more clear-cut kinship composition and political identity than an Mbuti band.

VILLAGER: This term, unless otherwise stated, may be taken to refer to any of the cultivators in the Ituri Forest, Bantu or Sudanic, with whom the Mbuti have contact. The use of the different tribal names, such as Bira, Ndaka, Lese, and so forth, would not only be unnecessarily cumbersome but suggest that the relationship varied significantly according to the structure of each individual villager tribe, whereas it seems, for the moment at least, that

[P. 147-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

GROUP: Whereas I have in the original survey, and elsewhere, used the term "group" as I now use the term "band," particularly when translating from the German (*Lokalgruppe*), I now use the term "band" as above, and use "group" only generally to distinguish, say, archers from net hunters, or Mbuti from villagers.

P 121 128 104 621

THE BANTU PREFIX: This has been dropped throughout whenever I refer to persons or objects. Thus we talk of the Bira, Ndaka, and Mbuti rather than the BaBira, BaNdaka, or BaMbuti. This change is in consonance with the current practice of the International African Institute. However, we retain the "Ki" prefix to indicate language—KiBira, KiNdaka, KiMbuti.

P Z 101 104 128 193

Indigenous terms, except for place, proper, or personal names, are italicized.

P Z 128

Illustrations have been added. These do not set out to represent the total material culture of the Mbuti, but were drawn from the collections of the American Museum by Mr. Nicholas Amorosi.

[P. 148-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 the *molimo*.[1] I was particularly fortunate in ob-
128 taining the material I did, and I include it because it helps to fill out the most detailed body of facts available on any single Pygmy hunting band. The fact that all this material does deal with a single band (or is used only in so far as it does) perhaps excuses the somewhat haphazard way in which it has been amassed. Obviously a single field study by one trained anthropologist would be preferable, but it is not available. Inclusion here of the notes on my 1957–1958 field trip would create an imbalance. As it is, the material is used only in the presentation of facts, and there is no reason to doubt their authenticity. If there is any fault in this joint source on the Epulu Mbuti, it is this possible fault of omission rather than any of commission.

101 The area that this band of Pygmies hunts
131 lies to the north of the Epulu River and west of
• 621

[1] Much confusion arises through common and loose usage
[192] of the term *lusumba* among all villagers of the area. The *lusumba*, also *esumba*, seems to originate as an Ngwana magical ceremony. This is distinct from both the Bira *molimo* and the *molimo* of the Mbuti, although the terms are often used interchangeably by villagers.

[P. 158-B]

[P. 158-C]

the River Nduye (Fig. 3). The band is a relatively large one and shows some interesting tendencies toward fission. It did not always move as a single hunting unit. Sometimes a part of the band would be several days' journey off in the forest, while the rest remained at the village named Camp Putnam. Mrs. Putnam frequently visited the hunting band at its various camps, when of latter years Patrick Putnam was more or less entirely confined by his illness to the village.

Linguistically the band falls into Schebesta's Sua category, using KiBira for the most part as their camp language. They also use a great many KiLese words, however, and the local Bira affirm that they frequently cannot understand what they call "KiMbuti," though they recognize it to be basically KiBira. Like the Bira villagers, these Pygmies also speak some KiNgwana, the *lingua franca* of the territory.

101 The term "Bambuti" was first applied by Schebesta (1933) to the Sua net hunters only, but after his second visit to the Ituri he widened his usage to include all the Ituri Pygmies (Schebesta, 1937). This is the sense in which it seems to be used by the Pygmies themselves and in which we use the term in this [197] study. The threefold linguistic subdivision of the Mbuti is the only attempt that has yet been made to divide the Mbuti into separate groups, but it is not yet certain how far this division has any anthropological validity. It is [619] impossible to speak of Mbuti tribes or sub- [614] tribes, and, although a number of clan names are known, no material available enables us to trace any semblance of a clan system. The only • 621 certain units are the nuclear family and the 602 economic association of a number of such [594] families that form a hunting band. Schebesta (1948, 288 ff.) makes this point, using the terms "*Familie*" and "*Sippe.*" He distinguishes "*Sippe*" from "*Grossfamilie,*" the former being primarily an economic association of incidentally related families and the second laying the emphasis on common descent. The coalescence [614] of several "*Grossfamilie*" into a clan is a concept of little significance to the Pygmy, and the clan, Schebesta writes, is in any case widely dispersed.

621 The size of these hunting bands varies,
162 [P.160-B]

[P.160-C]

among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps. 6210 162 621 628

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided. 621 224 423

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

Schebesta (1934) estimates the total population of the Ituri Mbuti to be more than 35,000, 161 in an area of approximately 100,000 kilometers; Putnam's estimate was 40,000 within the same area. Lloyd (1899) gives the Pygmy population as fewer than 10,000, using information given to him by a Pygmy in the Central Ituri. According to this information the Pygmies inhabited the forest for a distance of seven days' [621] • march from east to west, and six days from north to south; and that there were 40 chiefs, each with from 40 to 200 followers, a few with as many as 500. There is no official count that can be drawn on, but Schebesta and Putnam both traveled extensively through the entire Ituri area, and the closeness of their estimates favors the acceptance of their figures as fair approximations. Lloyd's reference is interesting in that it gives some indication of what an individual Pygmy considers to be the extent of the Mbuti and their territory.

Reviewing his interpretation of demographic 163 data collected on his first two visits to the 165 Congo, as set out in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," Schebesta (1952, 50–53) later says that among the Efe archers the average number of children born to each woman is three, of which two survive. He also finds that there is a 162

[1] Each hut represents a nuclear family—man, wife, and unmarried children.

[P.160-D]

THE ARCHERS (AFTER SCHEBESTA)

[P.167-A] THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL UNIT is formed by the economic association of individual families as hunting bands (*Lokalgruppen;* Schebesta, 1948, 304 ff.; 1952, 210) which vary in size. Schebesta (1952, 208) gives the range as between two and 12 huts, averaging six huts per band. They are said, in effect, to be patrilineages, but Schebesta stresses the importance of the economic rather than the lineal ties; in his German publications he uses the term "*Sippe,*" in French "*Parentele.*" In German, he distinguishes the *Sippe* from the *Grossfamilie*, the latter being more properly the lineage regarded in its kinship context. The elder, who occupies considerable prestige and has considerable personal authority over the *Grossfamilie*, is only *primus inter pares* for the *Sippe* (Schebesta, 1948, 290). The prerogative of the elder depends on age, and these *avi-tiri*, or old ones, according to Schebesta, are endowed with the authority and dignity of the ancestors. Their power is limited by custom and tradition.

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621
613
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[ARCHERS]

439 This trade relationship has been noticed by
177 many of the earlier travelers, some of whom referred to it as "silent trade" (notably Burrows, 1898), while others found it to be quite
[114] open (Lloyd, 1899). But Schebesta (1941) is inconsistent in attributing it to the inadequacy of the environment, which, in the same work, he claims is responsible, through its very abundance, for the lack of advance in Pygmy culture. Nor does he indicate precisely how the
[613] trading is carried out. He says that there is, however, a definite hereditary relationship between Efe archer and Lese villager lineages.

SOCIAL LIFE

594

Family Organization

[342] Individual families each have their own beehive- or tunnel-shaped hut, a stick frame hung with phrynium leaves (p. 167). Schebesta (1933, 219–220; 1952, 154) reports once having seen a gigantic windscreen housing several families in an otherwise normal camp. Although each
[621] family emphasizes its individuality by separate residence, as a social unit it is far less significant
[613] than the band (a patrilineage, according to Schebesta) of which it is a part and outside which it could not exist.

[P. 176-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the hut entrance; the children play near the hut; the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs, guarding the food in his wife's absence, or helping her in some way or another. Visitors do not enter the hut but wait outside where they meet any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] the married women 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 581
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [613]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their own marital families than they are in their new band as a whole. The men, however, are bound by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual interest in the band, as such, and in the particular territory within which it moves. Conflict
between the hunting band and individual fam- [578]
ily, then, is generally a conflict between men and women, and, by enlargement, between two or more bands—the band of the men and those of the women involved.

[ARCHERS]

The woman becomes interested in her husband's band or lineage and becomes a part of it only to the extent by which she enriches it with children. The more children she gives to the band the greater her interest in it, and reciprocally the greater the band's interest in her. The greater her authority and that of her natal family and band, the greater the parity between man and wife in the individual family. But at all times the husband's lineage is responsible for her welfare and answerable to her own lineage in default. 602 562 621 [593] [613]

A hunting band may, under certain circumstances, welcome male outsiders (*Sippenfremd*) into the community; as, for example, when a wife cannot integrate herself into her new home and returns to her own band, her husband deciding to go with her. Children may in some cases be brought up in their mother's band. These outsiders occupy a position similar to that occupied by married women in their husbands' bands; they remain members of their 621 609 [613]

[1] In my own experience, among both archers and net hunters, patrilineal descent systems and patrilocality are no more than trends, most bands being effectively cognatic territorial units. [184]

[P. 176-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
592 individual family and only indirectly with that of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[B54] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
621 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, 512
with the exception of termite hunting which is 222
conducted at whatever time of the day or night
termites are found to be swarming.

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninter- 844
rupted throughout the year, except when camp [512]
is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant
on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these
occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account
that birth arouses the least public interest. The 844
band welcomes each birth gladly but at the 621.
same time accepts it as no more than its due.
The wives of its menfolk are expected to pro- [562]
duce children; it is their primary function in the
eyes of both the band and their husbands, and
even in their own eyes.

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual 842
blood is an important factor in conception 833
(Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the [841]
connection between coition and conception
(1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hear-
ing the opinion expressed that repeated coition
would hasten the hour of birth.

[P. 177-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

P [P, 180-A]
Z society. Schebesta also mentions other instru-
881 ments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and
177 the secret society) among the south Lese,
608 namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or
534 *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot
(*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asa-*
Z *ragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part
[563] in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the
villagers seek to maintain and extend their
control over the Pygmies.

Z Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish
P two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager ele-
881 ment of initiation associated with circumcision
177 and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element
P of initiation into the men's secret society (*toré*).
[576]

Marriage

P Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult
581 to determine which is the stronger, the interests
584 of the hunting band or the interests and mutual
621 affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads [836] watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For [684] the Efe, he records what appears to be a bor- [177] rowed custom of making payments to the father of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180 - B]

[ARCHERS]

Philters are also used by Mbuti girls. One further possible obstacle to marriage, outside normal rules of exogamy, exists among the archers: marriage is prohibited between two bands associated by common marriage ties with a third band. Thus if Bands A and B habitually marry with Band C, then intermarriage between Bands A and B is forbidden.[2] Restrictions on marrying into one's matrilineage apply only to the first generation; a child may not marry into its mother's band. 000 582 621

A number of early sources mention marriage by purchase (Casati, 1891; Stuhlman, 1894; Burrows, 1898). Czekanowski (1924), relying on information from neighboring villager tribes, writes of marriage both by purchase and by service and apparently learned nothing of marriage by exchange among the Mbuti. Schebesta (1948, 366) writes that, while marriage by purchase is the custom among the village tribes of the Ituri, Mbuti marriage is distinguished by being essentially by sister exchange. Otherwise the man may offer a quiver of arrows, five chickens, and 10 hoes (cited for *Eba-eba* camp); and among the southern archers chickens, hoes, spears, and arrows are used—all obtained from the villagers by begging or by trade, never money. The archers of Banyari, on the edge of 583 [191] [439]

[2] It should be remembered that all the time Schebesta is thinking of the *Lokalgruppe*, or band, primarily as a patrilineage. [613]

[P. 180-D]

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

[ARCHERS]

[P. 183-C]

karé relationship, and the practice of joint initiation and circumcision.

Among themselves the archers also practice a form of blood brotherhood, but the two major bonds are membership in the same economic local band and membership (with much wider extension) in the same secret society which the archers call *toré*. Schebesta (1948, 290) points out that a sense of tribal identity is totally lacking, that "clans" are dispersed and have neither political nor economic significance, and that even lineages, which in effect are the local hunting bands, are usually most properly viewed as economic entities. He gives neither genealogies nor any indication of any complex system of kinship terminology, nor any other evidence that kinship ties might be of extensive importance. There is even little evidence to support his allegation that the hunting band is a lineal entity. It appears throughout that the major unifying factor is one of common residence.

Z P 179 439 608 P 621 602 [608] [575] [61] P 621 602 114 P [591]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors. P 2 439 177 571 [114] P 2 [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]
000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

Legal System

671 421 There is virtually no evidence from which any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 •621 628 The district hunted by the band, together with all the vegetable and animal food contained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is [224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 621 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

[ARCHERS]

[p. 192-A]

613 hunting band, or, if the latter becomes too
614 large, both clan and band may split into two or more bands. The relationship of several bands or lineages as members of the same clan is generally designated by the use of a common name,
[621] ancestor, and totem. One band is distinguished from another, regardless of relationship, by individual territorial names, but apart from identity of ancestor and totem there is no effective structure binding together the clan, if dispersed. There is no clan chief, and no clan territory (except for a very small clan that happens also to be a hunting band). Even clan exogamy cannot be said to be rigidly enforced; the invariable rule, rather, is exogamy of the local lineage or hunting bands.

Totems are generally animals, rarely plants, never natural phenomena. Schebesta cites the
[825] leopard and the chimpanzee as being the commonest totems. A man and wife observe each other's totemic restrictions in each other's presence or when with each other's group; simi-

THE NET HUNTERS (AFTER PUTNAM)

[P.194-A]

THE SOCIAL UNIT

62 [114] PATRICK PUTNAM'S (1948) DESCRIPTION of the net-hunting Pygmy band corresponds in essence to that given by Schebesta; the most noticeable difference is in the matter of size. [614] [594] The composition described is the same, i.e., a number of nuclear families tracing descent through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named.

[361]

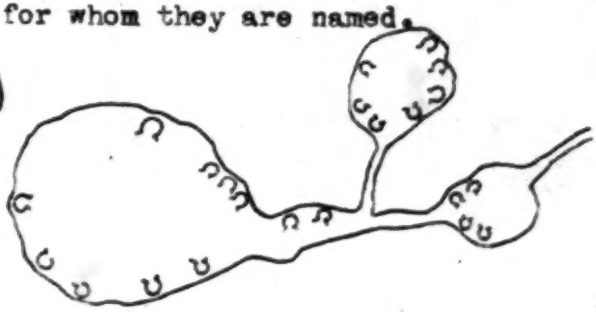

FIG. 16. Plan of net-hunters' camp (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[614] for whom they are named. The patrician, however, is generally scattered and is certainly not synonymous with the band. The size of the band is determined at each extreme by the hunting and gathering needs of a cohabitive group.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 group. Fifty huts is the maximum given by
361 Putnam, with 25 the average and between 20
and 40 the optimum. Each hut houses a man,
[592] his wife or wives, and a few children, so the
[162] total number of Pygmies to an average camp is

FIG. 17. Plan of net-hunters' polygynous or extended family dwellings (after Anne Putnam), Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[p. 194-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.194-C]

about 150, with from 20 to 40 active adult males.

Anne Putnam, whose experience was confined more to the net hunters of the Epulu region, mentions 17 huts as constituting a large camp (Fig. 16), some of the huts, however, possibly being in the form of double huts (Fig. 17). Huts are continually being enlarged or re-

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 195-A]

[NET HUNTERS] **The relation of the huts to one another in the** circle is dictated, as much as anything, by the friendship of the women. (Their gathering activities do not demand cooperation, but Putnam says that they help one another for company, forming work groups of two or more adult women.) 361 621 [571]

There are frequent visitors to these camps, including villagers who come to claim, trade, or buy meat from the Pygmies. If a villager chief comes, a special hut is built for him. 574 439

FURNITURE

352

The furnishings of a hut are similar to those described by Schebesta, and, like the archers, these net hunters keep their possessions to the minimum (Figs. 18–20). Leaves are used as furniture more frequently than either beds or stick chairs. The Pygmy will not sit on bare ground, and if a log is not available he will use a piece of bark or a leaf. [184] [516]

UTENSILS

412

Also as with the archers, utensils are largely borrowed or stolen from the villagers who make them (Fig. 21). The net hunters do not imitate their neighbors, however, to the extent of making mortars for themselves. If they possess mortars, they are extremely small, unlike the large ones described by Schebesta, which could not easily be carried from camp to camp by a 439 [177]

[P. 195-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 197-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 184 The Pygmy has no use for traps or pits. These require too much work and are, by his standards, inefficient. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti can be classified as net hunters or non-net hunters or, conversely, as archers or non-archers. Putnam states that this adherence to either hunting technique depends on the prevailing villager custom, as the villagers supply the Pygmies with both nets and arrowheads. Later, he modified this view because the Pygmies are, in fact, making nets all the time by adding to and subtracting from their existing nets, as mentioned above. [Schebesta (1933) refers to the Pygmies as making their own nets.] This division into archers and net hunters is also [621] [476] significant with regard to social organization, says Putnam (1948, 328), since "The degree to which co-operation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band."

[P. 202-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 621 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

[NET HUNTERS]

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[p. 211 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

184 [P.212-A]
621 in a band of archers. Women are vital to the
476 hunt and have their own part to play in it. In
562 addition, they must undertake all the duties
[462] and responsibilities described by Schebesta: the building and care of the home, gathering vegetable food, and, above all, the raising of a fam-
621 ily. Putnam's notes do not give much infor-
562 mation on the status of women, but it would
184 seem to be fully as high as that of women among the archers, according to Schebesta, and also proportional, to a certain extent, to their fertility. The net-hunter band has the same responsibilities to its men's womenfolk as does the archer band.

593 The man, however, spends relatively more
[184] time with his wife and family than can an archer. When the band is large enough, several families may stay behind while the others go
[512] hunting. On such occasions the womenfolk may go gathering, at which time the men attend to their various chores such as the manufacture of barkcloth, repair of hunting nets, and other specifically male duties, or else the women may find work to do in the camp, in which they are aided by their husbands. The men are good fathers and, contrary to Schebesta's assertion for the archers, take pleasure in looking after their children, playing with them, and amusing them with stories and mime.

[NET HUNTERS]

594 The wives never lose their feelings for their
602 own band, and a woman will either invite some
574 of her relatives to visit her, or else will go, with her husband and children, to visit her own family.

593 The family hut is merely a place for sleeping:
621 all other family activity takes place outside.
[571] There is, then, considerable interaction between one family and another. During the evening this applies particularly to the womenfolk, as at this time the men gather in a group by themselves. Family life is anything but private, and a dispute between a husband and his wife is
[184] taken up all over the camp. As with the archers, the authority of the mother over her children is fully equal to that of the father, and this is one of the most common sources of quarrel. As boys grow older they tend to spend less time near their hut and more with the men, so they come under the influence of the band rather than the individual family.

602 There is no information regarding relationships between affines, avoidance or otherwise.
[P. 212-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[p. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

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881
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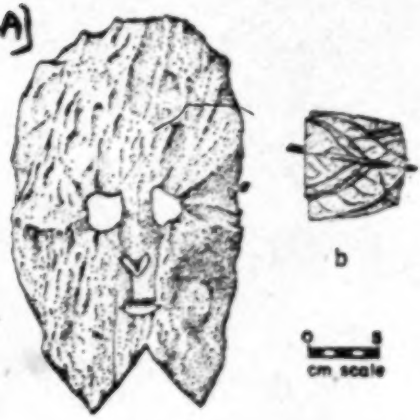

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

P
58
621

fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

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58
628
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[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

A net-hunting camp, always larger than that of archers, may not only be comprised of two or more different lineages but will also nearly always include a number of visitors who may originally have come to visit female relatives and who, for one reason or another, settled permanently. Putnam also mentions the frequency of adoption and foster-parenthood. While he says an Mbuti will never knowingly marry another related to him on either side (he does not give the degree of relationship), he has no qualms when only social parenthood is involved.

621 582 597 608 582

A further advantage to marriage within the band is that it does not immediately upset the economic balance, so provides a loophole in the usual requirements of exchange marriage. Putnam does not say, however, exactly what the economic status is in the band of resident alien families or of the offspring resulting from intermarriage between them and other band members. From what can be observed and from cases cited, common residence seems to be the most significant factor.

621 582 [591]

[P.220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Living as he does in the present, the most important consideration for the Mbuti is the present constitution of the band. Absent members of the band, regardless of lineage, are soon forgotten as economic members, though lineal ties will be remembered for as long as any Mbuti remembers such ties (not more than three generations). Consequently, the question of economic allegiance among the net hunters does not arise even for the first generation resident aliens, let alone for their offspring. Any considerations that do arise are invariably connected with the relationship between the individual family and its villager host. When an Mbuti changes his residence, he automatically changes his allegiance to the local villagers who act as patrons of his new band. The villager, on the other hand, does not so easily adjust himself to losing a Pygmy. He tries by threats and bribery to get the Pygmy back to his own district but, failing that, will take action against the newly adopted villager patron.

It is plain that the band as an economic unit is the effective unit for net-hunting Mbuti, and that its welfare, together with individual inclination, should be the prime concern when a question of marriage arises. When the marriage is within the band and there is no immediate change in its economic constitution, there is no concern, providing the general niceties of

[p. 220- D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
571 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
177 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." According to Putnam, the Mbuti re-
[157] spect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"
[P. 228-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 228-C]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [157]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628
between different bands of net hunters. Infor- 574
mal relationships are created through inter-band visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These vis- [584]
its are important with respect to the practice of [613]
exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which [184]
may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families.

Occasionally two or even three bands join to 628
form a single hunting unit. Under these circum- 476
stances each sets up separate but adjoining 361
camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a [578]
gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each [621]

[P. 228-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 [P.229-A] 496 change of camp may thus reveal significant 361 tendencies not only in interpersonal relations 578 but also in the composition of the band itself. • 621

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu 571 hunting band and its ties with neighboring vil- Z 563 lagers for more than two decades. As is stated 571 above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by P Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an in- Z [428] herited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the close- ness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affec- tion. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It Z may cause bad feeling between him and his pa- [628] tron, but it primarily affects the relationship be- tween the two villagers concerned.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 230-A]

422 owned or merely possessed by the individual is not answerable at the moment. It would seem that utensils are in fact owned by the women and spears and bows and arrows by the men, but hunting nets appear to be subject to collective control, not only over their positioning during the hunts but also over their participation itself. Further, it is recorded in the notes that on occasion a hunting net that has not produced game for the community may be burned. All we know is that, when it is burned it is done with the approval of the community, though apparently on the initiative of the 428 "owning" family. There is no detailed information on inheritance, only the general observation that girls inherit from their mothers, men from their fathers.

421 It seems, first, that the forest and both its animal and vegetable produce are considered by [186] the net hunters to be the property of the Mbuti as a whole, as opposed to the alien [621] villagers. Second, it seems that any one section of the forest belongs to the band that hunts that section. But, although the band may be said to own a part of the forest and its members have an equal right to the produce, the equality is of opportunity rather than of division. A

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.231-A]

627 to sleep and how he was to rebuild his house.
684 His wife, who would normally have undertaken this task, was sick. He was offered hospitality for the remainder of the night by other relatives, and early in the morning the offended family were themselves assisting him to rebuild his hut. During this dispute no mention was made of the fate of the transgressor.

621 This particular band was composed of two
627 major segments. The dispute was confined to
684 one segment and almost exclusively, though not quite, to the two families concerned. Other
[613] members of that lineage came forward only to appease and compromise.

The other segment, separated by a few hundred feet (the band was in the process of fission), listened eagerly to the dispute, making comments among themselves, mainly to the effect that the boy was a fool to have allowed himself to be found out and deserved to be beaten. When the pursuit of the boy led through their part of the camp, they hid. The older men carefully shut themselves up and refused to take any part in the proceeding.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly
578 heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
627 monial squabble may well become enlarged until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P. 231-B]

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

While there may be one preferred "camp language," most of the members of any one camp speak three different languages with more or less equal fluency. Each individual's linguistic abilities depend to some extent on the direction of his kinship ties and to some extent on his attachment to one villager tribe or another. The differences in social organization can be related directly to differences in hunting technique. Concerned as we are with the situation as we find it, we need not deal here with the alleged origin of these hunting techniques nor the relative "purity" of the Pygmy groups practicing them.

184 197 184 224 621 182

The immediate and most obvious difference found in a comparison of the accounts of the archers and the net hunters is in the size of their hunting bands which is related directly to the requirements of the particular technique. A distinct process of fission and fusion related to the economic size of the band is observable among the Epulu Pygmies. A successful net hunt cannot be carried out with fewer than seven nets, with an optimum of about 15. When a net-hunting band falls below 10 families (i.e., 10 married men with nets), hunting becomes difficult, because there is little allowance for sickness, or for the men and women required to

[P. 243-D]

[P.244-A]

184 remain in camp to guard it and perform other
224 duties. When the band falls below seven fami-
• 621 lies, it can no longer exist. Similarly, when it
182 rises above a certain number (between 20 and 30) it becomes too unwieldy to function as a single hunting unit and must, of necessity, split. Under these circumstances a compromise is reached, and very conveniently so, by the hunting from a forest camp by one section of the band, while the other section lives a more or less parasitical life near the village.

184 The composition of the bands of archers and
621 net hunters seems to be similar, though Putnam lays more emphasis on the presence of visiting families. The archers live in considerably smaller bands, some interconnected through kinship ties and also allegedly through common allegiance to a villager lineage. In the larger net-hunting band there may very likely be no single villager attachment.

182 With regard to material culture and tech-
184 nology, there is far more uniformity than diver-
gence. The technology of the net hunters dem-
onstrates a greater adaptation to the forest
environment, and their material culture is con-
sistent with the fact that they are more truly
[482] nomadic than the archers. Heavy objects such
as the mortars and drums mentioned by Sche-
besta could not be maintained by a nomadic
band unless it was always within easy reach of
the village.

ECONOMIC LIFE

224 In a comparison of the two major types of
184 hunt, according to which we classify the Mbuti
into archers and net hunters, three factors in
particular are worth noting:

1. The net hunt, of all the hunting methods
described (including the *begbe* beat of the arch-
ers), produces both the surest and the largest
supply of meat. The inadequacy of archery
[411] among the Mbuti, owing partly to inaccuracy
[177] with their small bows and partly to the gen-
[439] erally poor visibility, may account in part for
the greater economic dependence of the archer
bands on their villager neighbors.

2. The net hunt is essentially a cooperative
224 activity, requiring the participation of the band
476 as a whole, including women and children. It
62 reinforces the strength of the band as such; it
562 does not differentiate between the relationships
184 of the men and the women toward the forest;
and it establishes for each sex a basic and

[P. 244-B]

[P. 244-C]

mutually dependent and equally important role 224
in this, the major activity of the Mbuti. Arch- 476
ery, on the other hand, may be conducted on a 621
familial basis or, as is described by Schebesta, 562
with the cooperation of two or three men. It is 184
not essentially cooperative, and it does not include women and children, so placing the sexes in different relationships with the forest. In so far as hunting is the "superior" economic activity (though economically perhaps less important than gathering), it emphasizes the disparity of status between the sexes.

3. The net hunt, demanding close cooperation and lack of specialization, is associated 184 554 with a more egalitarian political system than 561 that of the archers. While Schebesta described 224 an embryonic chieftainship, with powerful lineage heads, Putnam vigorously denies the existence of even a council of elders. Further, 621 [114] according to Putnam, whereas an old man is treated with respect, he is so only if age is accompanied by wisdom. A great hunter is respected regardless of his age. An unmarried boy of 16 who kills a buffalo with a spear is entitled to have a net of his own and to take full part in the meetings of the men's religious association. Such leadership as exists among the net hunters is charismatic, with little emphasis on lineage—a position quite the reverse of that described by Schebesta for the archers.

[p. 245-c]
mere outward expression of an inevitable relationship brought about by territorial propinquity. It would certainly seem, from both accounts, that there is no question of necessity on either side. The Mbuti *can* gather all they need, and the villagers *can* hunt, without having to go far into the forest, by using traps, pits, spear falls, and other means. 439

SOCIAL LIFE

We indicate above some of the differences in social life that may be attributed to differences in hunting technique, notably because of the cooperative nature of the net hunt. In the material considered in the section on Social Life (pp. 211–223), these differences may be observed more directly. There is not only greater parity between the sexes among the net hunters, but also the father enters more fully into family life than among the archers. We would connect this difference with the lesser importance of the lineage among the net hunters. Schebesta (1948, 306–307) describes a "local group" (i.e., an economic hunting unit) as being primarily a lineage, under the authority of the 184 182 [562] [593] 184 613 621

lineage elder. Owing to the prevailing rules of 184
exogamy, this means that the "local group" is 613
in fact the adult male community, to which are 621
attached the wives and unmarried sisters or
daughters. The "family" is primarily a separate, [594]
if not opposed, unit consisting of mothers and
their children (including boys up to their
nkumbi initiation). Schebesta (1948, 320 ff.)
does not deny the authority of the father in the [593]
family. Indeed, he gives it as a frequent source
of conflict between husband and wife, but it is
authority as a member of the lineage to which
his wife is a stranger rather than authority as a
father. Further, Schebesta (1948, 313 ff.) makes
no mention of women's associations other than
individual friendship of neighbors who may
work and gather together.

The picture we get from Putnam's account is 554
quite different. Among net hunters the band is 184
primarily an economic unit. There is no such 621
highly developed lineage feeling. Authority is [613]
vested not in any representative of the lineage
but rather in the economically important and
valuable members of the group. He stresses the 184
part that women play in group discussions. Al- 621
though their position may appear to be periph- 562
eral, neither he nor Anne Putnam underes-
timates the weight they carry in any discussion,
[P. 245-D]

[p.246-A]

184 ostensibly between the group of males sitting
• 621 together around a campfire. The net-hunting
562 band, then, consists of men and women. There is no hint of any opposition between the individual family and the band.

601 That there is virtually a total absence of any data on kinship terminology is in itself significant. Apparently a classificatory system, if one exists, is in extremely simple form, reduced to generational levels (grandchildren and grandparents, children and parents, and siblings) for each sex. There is no evidence that special terms are used to distinguish between, say, a patrilineal and a matrilineal grandparent. Also, when referring to his wife's brother's child in KiNgwana, an Mbuti calls him, if he uses a term at all, *mutoto*, whereas an Ngwana uses the reciprocal term *muyomba*. But, more fre-
551 quently, the Mbuti use personal names, distinguished when there is possibility of confusion either by the addition of the name of the patrilineal grandfather (not the ancestor) or by the substitution of a name in another language.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with [613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor [614] names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used fre- [103] quently to differentiate one hunting band from [101] another.

• 621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are [832] they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P. 246-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 598 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p.247-A]

578 have taken part or not. With Schebesta's arch-
621 ers it seems that the lineage elder is the final
627 authority, below which rank the family heads.
[184] Whereas the status of men is related to hunt-
[554] ing ability and to proficiency in the arts of
554 mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in
555 determining the status of women are not clear.
562 Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost
certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good
singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebra-
554 tions. The *elima* itself may be connected with
88 adult male status, since one of its main features
is the battle between the young men seeking to
gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women
guarding it. Married men may and do take part
in this battle, but there comes a point when a
man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the
necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one
elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was
seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response
to a question he answered: "I fought my way
into many an Alima hut when I was younger.
Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Put-
[558] nam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not
take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

[P.251-C]

general acceptance of villager superiority among the Mbuti, although some individuals may rarely seek to increase their status by emulating their villager neighbors. From general observation I would say that the hunting band tolerates an occasional marriage to a villager because of its economic and political advantages, to which they are very alive and of which they take full advantage when it suits them. They receive little payment for the girl they give (a fraction of what the villager would give another villager), but they consider that they then have a villager they can well and truly "eat."

P 582 186

P 583 439

Ceremonial Attendant on Birth, Initiation, Marriage, and Death

All the areas of contact between the Mbuti and their villager neighbors so far mentioned have been in or near the village. This point is of no small importance. The Pygmies always make the move, make contact or break it, and they take care that, apart from occasional visits from villager individuals to their hunting camp, all contact takes place in the village. Also, the areas of contact so far described could all be explained away at a more or less superficial level. The degree to which trade and adoption of villager magical practices and beliefs actually affect the forest life of the Mbuti is bound to vary from band to band. But among the Epulu net hunters, at least, the points of contact described above have not affected their nomadic way of life unduly.

Z 563 179

P 177 62 361

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-
439 hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic exis-
• B21] tence and the loose structure of band composition, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 255-c]

shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling. 000

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well-knit bands, such as may be found among the archers described by Schebesta, may find it possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic relationship with the villagers, but not so an active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind of relationship must be established because of the inevitability of contact. As the smaller, more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies must make the move to fit into the larger, looser group. But there is no question of absorption; the smaller group preserves its identity. The *nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti with an opportunity both for establishing a place in villager society and for asserting their independent set of values by opposition. The antagonism that remains and is even heightened by this opposition is smoothed over to some extent by the secondary mechanism by which the two groups attempt to express their relationship- mutal trade

P 621-648 177 [184] Z [563]

P Z [439]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

533 tion. Once in the village, however, forest values
177 are cast off. Interpersonal relationships become
178 looser; the hunting band as such disintegrates
18 into so many individual families; forest norms
[621] of behavior are cast to the winds; forest song is abandoned. Drum-dance replaces forest music entirely. This is the type of dance and music described by Schebesta (1941, 245). It is never heard in a forest hunting camp among the net hunters, only in the neighborhood of the village. It seems that the Mbuti regard the village primarily as a place for eating, drinking, and making merry, free from the rigors, however pleasurable, of forest life. These rigors demand periods of relaxation. I have suggested that the honey season was once a major holiday season for the Mbuti but that visits to the village are now taking its place.

177 Through their relationship with the villagers,
18 the Mbuti find an opportunity for relaxation,
533 an excursion into the profane world, a period of license which ends, however, in a re-alignment and re-affirmation of the values of their own sacred world of the forest, all quite dramatically seen in the way in which a visit to the vil-

[P. 259-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 29[1]

A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

361 184 571 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

• 621 602 887 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

[1], /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 621
602
887
142
302

/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P. 291-B]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 621

[For general discussions of "authority" in Mbuti society, see category 554.]

2: Turnbull

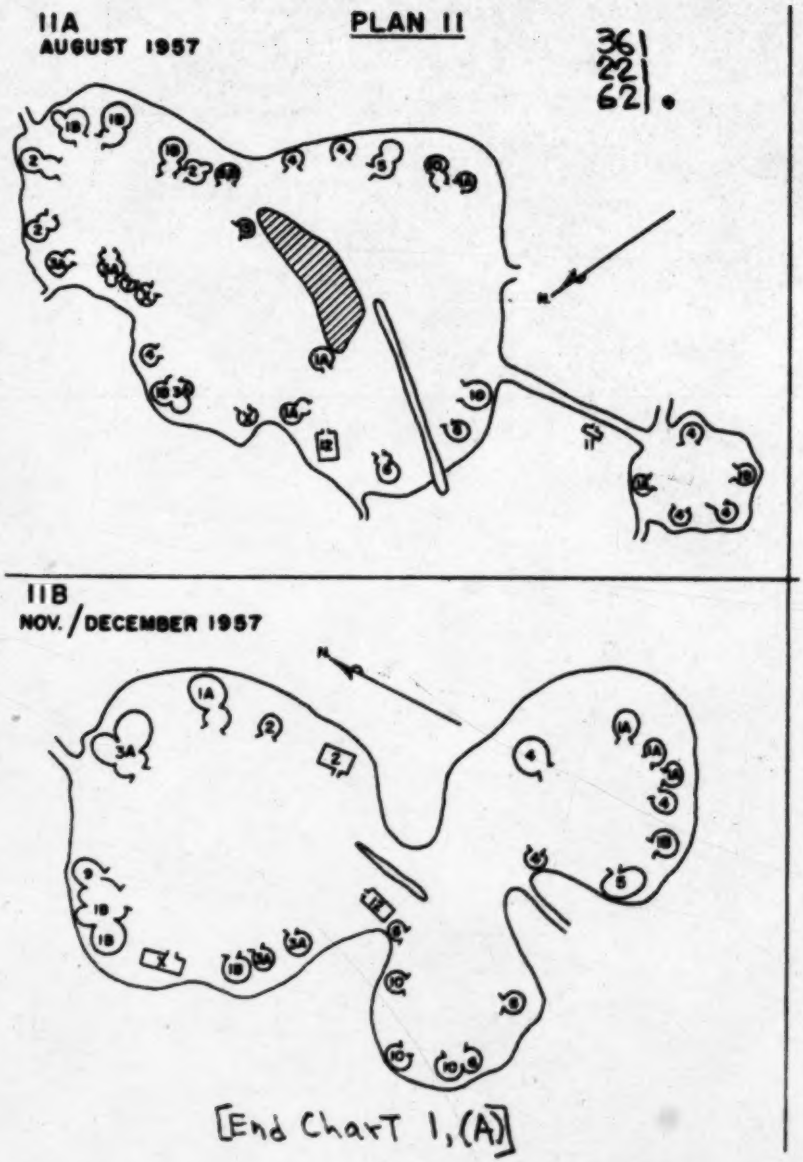
FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
221
621

(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)

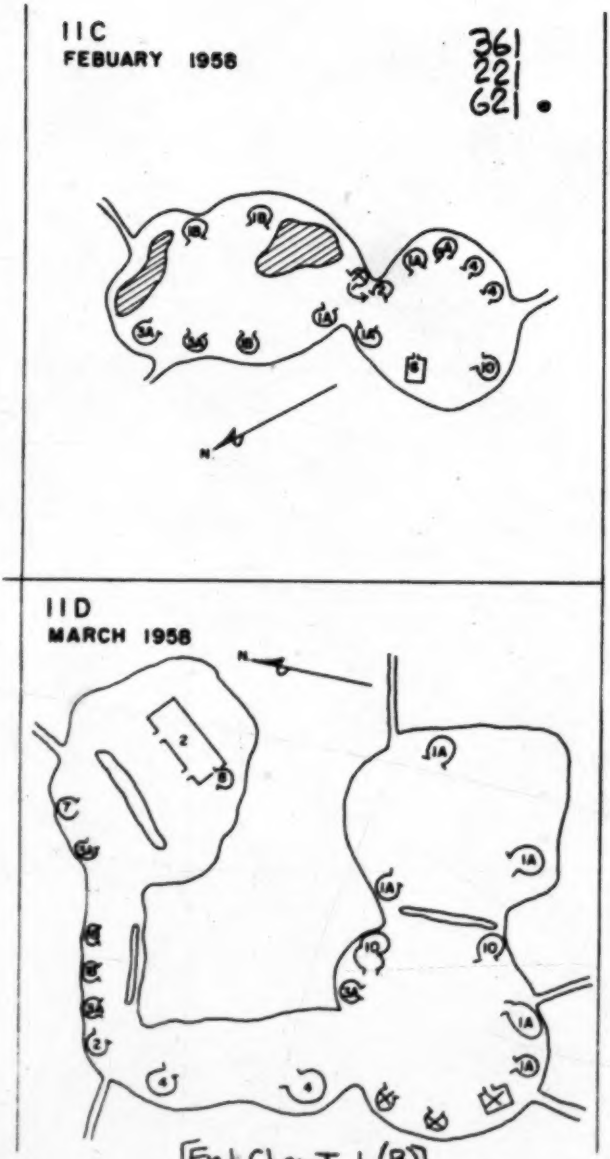
Chart of Positions of End Chart 1 (Plan 11).
[facing End Chart 1]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



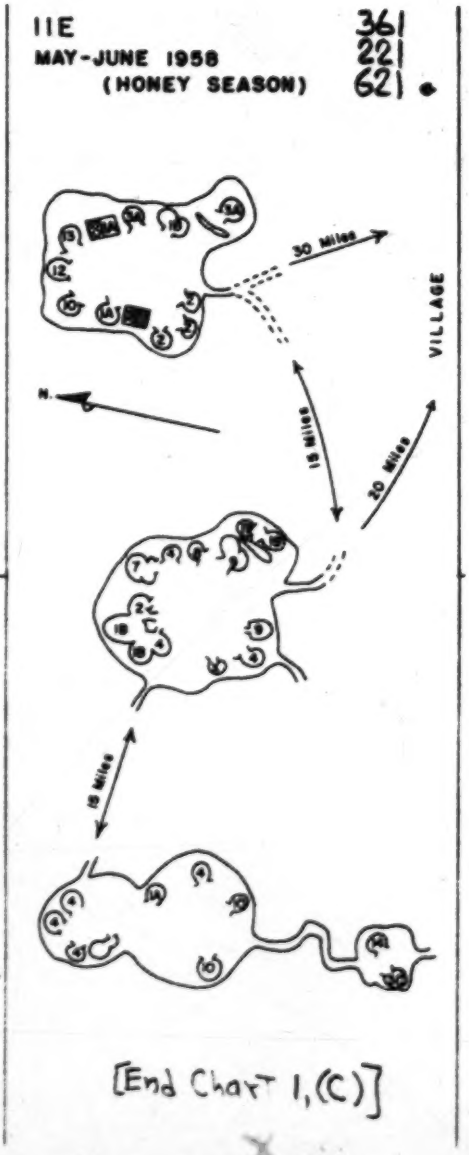
[End Chart 1,(A)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



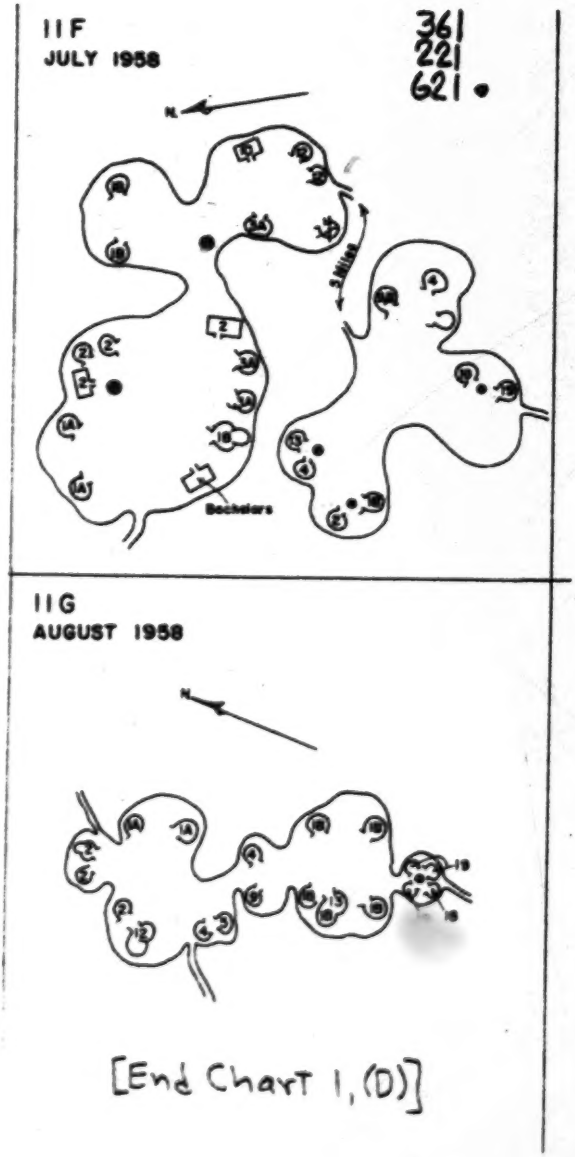
[End Chart 1,(B)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 1,(C)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[End Chart 1, (D)]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

11 H
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1958

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221
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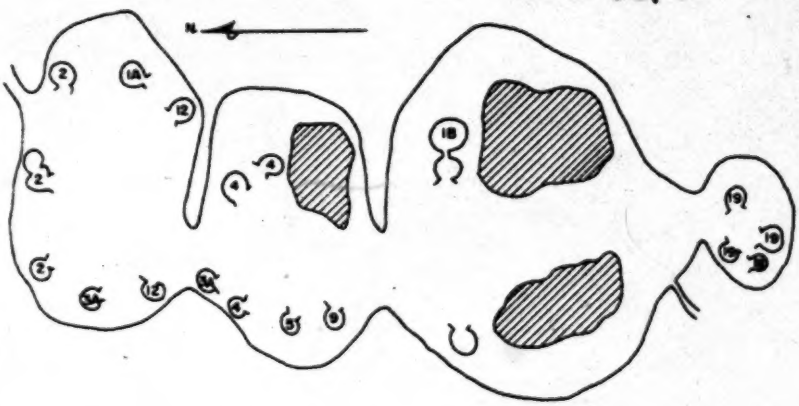
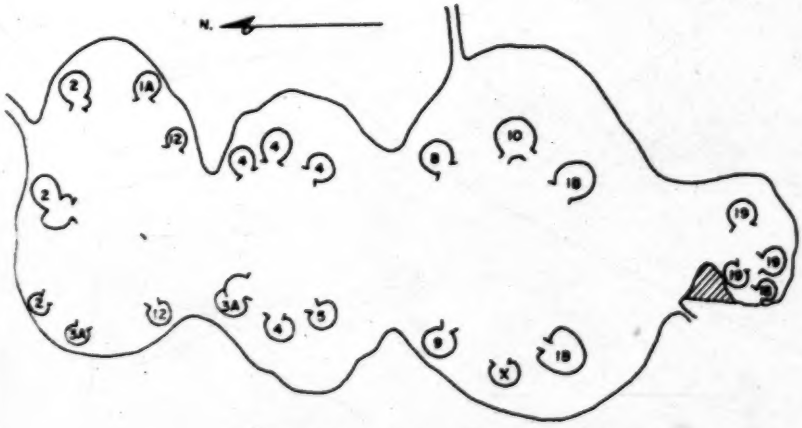


11 I
NOVEMBER 1958



[End Chart 1, (E)]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
• [621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

121 There are two major difficulties facing any discussion of the Mbuti. One is the fact that while they are true hunters and gatherers, they are nonetheless associated in some way, and apparently closely so, with the surrounding forest cultivators. The inseparability of the two peoples makes it especially difficult to know where to begin, as the Mbuti are one thing in one context and a quite different thing in another context.

114 The other difficulty lies in the fact that previous sources have not given us a clear idea of the structure of either group, Mbuti or villagers, and have completely misled us as to the nature of the relationship between the two. I have dealt somewhat with the latter difficulty elsewhere (Turnbull, 1956) and propose to deal with the former difficulty by giving a brief sketch of the nature of Mbuti society that will adequately provide a basis for a preliminary investigation of the actual nature of the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers. Only then can we safely attempt to understand the nature of Mbuti social structure, even in their forest society, as divorced as it may seem to be from the village context.

114
121

161 It is impossible to give an accurate estimate of the population of the Mbuti of the Ituri Forest, as there has been nothing approaching an efficient census. Owing to the mobility of the individual hunting bands, and the lack of co-operation offered by villagers whenever queries are made about the number of Mbuti they "own," we must regard with suspicion any figures based on a count of bands attached to villages and an average band population. From my own experience, and from discussion with missionaries and administrators who have attempted counts, one way or another, I would hazard a guess at somewhere around 40,000, with no evidence to show that the population is increasing, but certainly none to show that it is decreasing.

619 The total population may be divided, as we have seen, into groups [224] that emphasize one hunting technology or another, the two main groups being the archers and the net-hunters. The spear-hunters also use bows and arrows for defense as well as for occasional individual hunting. None of these groups can be said to have any political identity, however, any more than can the Mbuti totality, except in opposition to the villagers.

621 The only effective political unit is the band, which we have defined

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

• 621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*177 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

[881] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
*[177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
[622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621 the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771 pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 796 evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try [765] to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the [177]* picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121 a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177* the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621 any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti, and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently lawless, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

[P. 30 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]

Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends. They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans. It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups. In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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still Ngoma's Mbuti. Ngoma himself said he had no objections to the Puemi, or any other of his Mbuti, hunting for other villagers while he was away, so long as they still acknowledged him as their *kpara*, or owner. He was wealthy enough to have no economic need of the Mbuti, but he was greatly concerned with his status, which was, he said, determined largely by the number of Mbuti who called him *kpara*. Certainly status was an important consideration for the villagers, and ownership, effective or otherwise, of a large number of Mbuti would add to it, but there were few who could afford to ignore the economic aspect of the relationship as could Ngoma.

The situation then becomes seriously complicated for the field worker who is trying to disentangle the system of ownership. Any villager will claim hereditary rights over even the most recent newcomer. But he will also claim rights over the Mbuti who have left him, and in some instances over those that he would have inherited from his father had they not left his father. As hereditary ownership can be transferred by adoption with compensation (a sum in cash or goats, and a promise of a share of any meat that falls into the net of the Mbuti transferred, or of that of his senior male descendants) and as the "clan" names also sometimes become adopted in this way, any attempt to discover a system of hereditary ownership becomes doubly hazardous, if indeed such a system exists except in theory.

The Epulu situation is perhaps more complicated than others because most of the Mbuti in that band are claimed by Bira villagers, whereas the band itself is in Ndaka territory and has formed effective links with both Ndaka and Bira villagers, offering forest foodstuffs to the local villagers, who are mostly Ndaka, and performing some service for their more remote Bira owners. In this way, of course, they maintain two sources of supply of village goods. But the actual distribution of the clans that contributed to the composition of the Epulu band, as shown in Table 2,[1] indicates how ineffective the principle of hereditary ownership is, in fact. The same kind of picture can be drawn for most net-hunting bands, and when we come to consider the forest world, among both net-hunters and archers we shall find a situation that militates against any effective stable and durable exchange relationships between Mbuti and villagers, particularly if based on the principle of unilineal descent.

The myth of hereditary ownership, then, does not seem to provide a much more effective means of control for the villagers than does the creation of mythical but comparable political systems. But it is not totally ineffective.

[1] [see page 323 -- Analysis]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

rate. I have known it to happen for Mbuti youngsters to go through the entire village marriage ceremony simply for the sake of the feasting, considering their relationship as no more than a mild flirtation. In either case the premature separation involves their respective *kpara* in restitution proceedings, which even if successful will still leave a net loss to the extent, at least, of a feast that may have involved a hundred or more Mbuti and villagers for up to three days.

This, together with the fact that a union that is considered as incestuous by the one group is not necessarily considered incestuous by the other, is sufficient to indicate the incompatibility of the two systems, which is only heightened if we attempt to correlate either kinship system, that of the villagers or that of the Mbuti, with the economic exchange system.

By extending the parallel still further, however, the villagers make their final attempt to gain some effective measure of control over the Mbuti and resolve the inherent conflicts through supernatural sanctions. And once again they are thwarted by a number of factors, one being that the Mbuti continue to adopt the outer form of the village customs with the utmost readiness, but do not adopt the system. Whereas, for the villagers, the total social structure is an integrated whole consisting of a number of institutions interrelated in a definite manner, for the Mbuti, in the village context, the same institutions are adopted but by no means interrelated in the same manner. The relationship between kinship and leadership, as we have seen, does not apply to the Mbuti. Their *capita* is elected rather than descended, and his whole meaning and purpose are correspondingly different. The *capita* has absolutely nothing to do, among the Mbuti, with the maintenance of law and order, and in no way symbolizes the common origin of the male members of the band.

So also, for the Mbuti, is the economic exchange system unrelated to either the kinship or the political systems in the village context. The exchange relationships may run directly counter to all those prescribed by the various political and kinship institutions the Mbuti have equally adopted.

Their apparent readiness to participate in village institutions, if not in the system, however, leaves the Mbuti open to yet another line of attack. Unable to enforce any of the control that would normally derive from the adoption of their socio-politico-economic institutions, the villagers open their magico-religious institutions to the Mbuti, and thus seek to place them under supernatural control—the

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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C 881 Of all the various *rites de passage* practiced by the villagers, and to which they are forced to introduce the Mbuti, none probably is so important as the *nkumbi* initiation of the boys into manhood. Among C [171] the Bantu tribes this is practiced with circumcision, among the Sudanic it is without circumcision, though there is a tendency among some Sudanic tribes situated close to the Bantu, such as the Lesé bordering on the Bira, to adopt the custom, one village at a time.

The major purpose of the *nkumbi*, as stated by the tribes that practice it (I refer mainly to the Forest Bira here), is to fit the youths as men, to make them men in the eyes of the ancestors. A boy who does not undergo the *nkumbi* is denied access to the ancestors after death, and during his life has the status of a child. Boys between the ages of eight and twelve, generally between nine and eleven, are eligible for the ceremony, which now takes place once every three years and lasts for two or more months. The traditional time element has been completely upset by the administration, which, together with the missionaries, has tried to discourage the whole institution. But the *nkumbi* initiation has remained as the only way to achieve adult status within the tribe. I have seen an entire *nkumbi* ceremony, including circumcision, held for a boy who died just prior to being initiated.

C 881 Effectively the *nkumbi* also unites a few neighboring villages as a 628 single political unit, and affords an opportunity though the system 182 of *karé* blood brotherhood, of cementing specific political bonds. It [608] also effectively unites those tribes who practice circumcision in opposition to those who do not practice it, and it determines certain lines of marriage prohibition.

C 881 One such line, of course, divides the circumcised from the uncir- 608 cumcised, and theoretically marriage between a Bira and a Lesé would 582 be unthinkable. The only cases known to me allegedly happened dur- P 881 ing war, captive women being taken as wives. But equally theoretically 608 these prohibitions should apply to the Mbuti who, according to the 582 practice of their *kpara*, not having any of their own, either do or do *177 not suffer circumcision at village hands. As we shall see, however, [621] forest territorial organization is no respecter of village tribalism, and band composition is fluid, to say the least. Consequently, in any one band one can by no means be sure that all the men are circumcised, and the question is never raised. Further than that, there is no objection to marriage, among the Mbuti, between a family whose *kpara* circumcises and one whose *kpara* does not. Such marriages would cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 685 648 571 121 It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

C 648 571

P [361] [621]

P 829 648 571 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

P [224]

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

P [825]

C 439 648 121 Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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behind, but in the village world they are dormant, and do not come into play until the two worlds begin to impinge upon each other.

Thus the economic, kinship and political relationships that bind the Mbuti together as a society in the forest do not pertain in the village, and consequently the society disintegrates as such. An example can be had by comparing plans of the forest hunting camps with plans of the village camps over the same period (see Plan 2). It will be seen that there is virtually no correspondence, and that while each successive forest camp (approximately one a month) shows a significant change in structure related to the constant process of fission and fusion and of fragmentation, the village camps show no such pattern. At first they seem much more stable, but that is due at least in part to the fact that the actual camp is more permanent in nature, being occupied for much shorter periods of time. Also, such camps are sometimes built in imitation of the real villages, the houses being made smaller, though of the same semi-permanent mud and wattle construction. It is only the physical disposition that remains constant, however, and that only for as long as the physical camp remains unchanged. This may be for as long as a year or more. During that time the composition of the village camp is constantly changing, according to no discernible pattern, and certainly none related to the composition of the forest camp.

The Mbuti living in a village camp can no longer be considered as a band. Indeed, there are times when the village camp may be fully occupied, as if by a band, but in fact by Mbuti who have nothing more immediately in common than their intent to "eat" those particular villagers. Even considerations of kinship and of age break down, though nuclear families tend to continue to live together. A nuclear family will not co-operate within itself in the same way, however, as it would in a hunting camp; nor, most certainly, will it co-operate with other nuclear families. There is not even the necessity for a wife to cook her husband a meal, as he can always scrounge one from a villager. Whether he does so or not is purely a domestic issue between himself and his family and, as seen, because of the flux that pertains, different members of the same family could choose to establish village relationships, each by invoking a different context—the one *karé*, the other *kpara*, another economic exchange—so even three brothers technically "owned" by the same villager could find themselves attached to three different villagers, possibly living in three different houses (when in the village, the Mbuti sometimes

sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from *attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the* Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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mand that they come to some kind of terms and establish some kind of mechanism for dealing with the threat that each feels.

We have seen how the villagers attempt to deal with the situation by asserting control over the Mbuti through the adoption of the Mbuti into the village social system, thus placing them under the supernatural sanctions of village society. We have also seen that the Mbuti evade such control, though we have not exactly seen how, for at the moment the success of their evasion seems to lie in the rejection of system, in a flux and instability that alone would lead to chaos. In examining the forest society of the Mbuti now, however, we shall see how this flux and apparent instability is in fact a structural factor, and that while the villagers are constantly attempting to absorb the Mbuti into their village social system, the Mbuti have evolved a social system of their own which, while still permitting their traditional hunting and gathering existence, takes this new village factor into consideration and, so to speak, by opposing, ends it. For the Mbuti forest system seems almost expressly designed to run counter to the village system, and, by opposing it at every point of possible structural contact, it makes any structural relationship except one of opposition quite impossible.

Thus in examining the forest system of the Mbuti we have to remember that the same institution may well have a double function; the one of maintaining cohesion with the forest world, the other of maintaining opposition with the world outside. And insofar as the invasion of the village tribes is relatively recent, this is a system that is still evolving. All the more so because the successive waves of the invasion, followed by the advent of the Arab slave traders and finally by the arrival of the Belgians, have all wrought sudden and drastic changes in the nature of village life and on the village settlement pattern. There may indeed be some institutions that are newly evolved and the purpose of which is directed primarily at maintaining the relationship of opposition between forest and village. Others are in the process of adaptation, notably the Mbuti *molimo*, where the forest system of values has its deepest roots and where, consequently, their opposition to village values must be most forcefully expressed. And some institutions appear to be in a state of atrophy.

We are, then, very clearly going to be studying a society in the process of change. The structure that will emerge, involving a disconcerting lack of emphasis on kinship, is not necessarily or even probably characteristic of hunting and gathering societies, and should cer-

[P. 93]

CHAPTER 8

The Band

TERRITORY

Before we can begin to understand what the Mbuti band is, we have to understand the notion of territory, which is effectively the only concept through which the band can be defined. Insofar as the band is the largest effective political unit, so the widest territorial boundaries that are recognized are those separating each band from the others. As will be seen, there is a current tendency for all Mbuti bands to recognize a loose unity to bind them in common opposition to the villagers, and in this context they will define a correspondingly wider territory, the forest, in which the villagers are regarded as trespassers. At the other end of the scale, the nuclear family has no territorial claims except those held jointly with other families of the same band. An individual may stake his claim to a tree that he knows or believes will yield honey, or to one that promises to provide good bark for making into cloth. A common way of showing that the tree is claimed is by tying a vine around the trunk at shoulder height.

A claim thus made by no means gives the individual or his family exclusive ownership of the tree or exclusive rights to its produce, however. It merely conveys the right for that individual to have the first opportunity for collecting the honey or for cutting the bark. When the honey is collected or the bark cut, it is done collectively and the claimant is subject to all the usual rules governing the sharing of forest produce. He will have precedence of choice and his share will be larger. If he is not on hand when the honey is ready, however, and if he does not signify his intention to come to claim it, his right is forfeited. It may be seen that the advantage accruing from this slight departure from the norm of joint band ownership of the territory and its produce is in no way great enough to detract from the central value of communal territory, but at the same time it is sufficiently

62 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
13 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
62 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
[822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, *as if* shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

[A] [see page 221 -- Analyst]

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assumption that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to express and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[8]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[8] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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		Male Members		Female Members	
• 621 614 613 Camp 3a – in 26 huts, there were		13 lin.	5 tot.	9 lin.	6 tot.
3b –	22	10	5	10	6
3c –	22	12	5	11	5

When the band fragmented into small camps, the picture was not far different:

		Male Members		Female Members	
Camp 3d – in 9 huts, there were		5 lin.	5 tot.	5 lin.	4 tot.
3e –	9	5	3	6	3
3f –	6	4	4	4	3
3g –	3	2	1	3	3

Apart from the totemic subdivisions of the Puemi and Bokelé, the lineages all intermarry freely and do not consider themselves related to each other in any way whatsoever other than as affines.

621 613 361 The camp plans (Plans 3a–g)^A indicate the extent to which the lineages maintained their separate identities in the above camps. If we consider the lineages of both the husband and wife, we can see a slight tendency for women to build the family huts so that men of the same lineage will be near each other. The significance of this is [578] dubious, and the rest of camp life does not indicate lineage to be of any particular interest, although in disputes lineage members tend to support each other, but not necessarily.

[184] With other bands of net-hunters and also with archers the situation seems similar, though there is some tendency, perhaps, for the lineage divisions to be more visible in archer camps (see Plans 4a–m). 621 114 I was not able to stay long enough in these other camps to thoroughly verify the genealogies, however, or to observe what changes took place from camp to camp. The material is all the more interesting, nonethe- [614] less, in that in the first instance I was always told that the camp consisted of one "clan" (using the village terminology), yet they did not deny the possibility of marriage within that unit.[4] This is another indication of how difficult are the conditions of work among the Mbuti, when they are constantly using words that have definite and very specific significance when used by the villagers, but which may have a completely general and other meaning among the Mbuti. The

[4] "Clan" terminology is used freely by the Mbuti when talking to villagers. It is rarely used in the forest, and was used to me only in response to my genealogical inquiries.

A [see pages 340–345 -- Analysis]

The figures for six net-hunter bands and seven archer bands, where I am most certain of the genealogies, are as follows: 621 613

		Total No. of Lineages	Members Male	Members Female
NET-HUNTERS				
In Camp 4a there were	28 huts,	10	5 lin.	9 lin.
4b	18	3	3	3
4c	16	5	5	5
4d	13	7	5	5
4e	11	5	4	3
4f	8	5	4	4
ARCHERS				
In Camp 4g there were	25 huts,	8	6 lin.	6 lin.
4h	11	3	2	3
4i	10	4	3	2
4j	10	6	4	4
4k	9	3	2	3
4l	6	3	2	2
4m	5	3	1	2

Owing to the difficulty of ascertaining the lineage membership of the women, the above figures, for them, are probably minimal. I also found it difficult to be certain of the totemic observances elsewhere than among the Epulu band, where I had ample opportunity for cross-checking, but the proportions elsewhere appeared similar—in any band you would expect to find each lineage sharing its totem with one other lineage. The plans of the above camps (Plans 4a–m)[1] indicate the possibility of greater lineage solidarity among the archers, if we are to judge by the disposition of the huts, but the significance of the lineage did not appear much different. Structurally it seemed of little importance. [114] [361] [184]

We cannot arrive at any immediate conclusions from these examples of camp composition beyond the Epulu, but drawn as they are from bands selected for study at random, at the extremities of the forest as well as in its center, they at least indicate that the Epulu situation is not unique. Returning to the Epulu band, then, we are left with the fact that even a cursory glance indicates clearly a certain lack of lineage interest as manifest in the physical arrangement of the hunting camps. It certainly indicates that the band as a whole in no way and at no time resembles a patrilineage in its composition. With [128] [361]

[1] [see pages 346-351 -- Archive]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 this in mind we shall go on to discover the nature and extent of lin-
613 eage participation in band activity, but the nonlineal nature of the corporate unit—i.e., the band or sub-band—has first to be examined in another context.

FRAGMENTATION, FISSION AND FUSION

We have already mentioned that the band may be large or small, that it may be established in a single large camp or in a number of smaller camps. In examining the process of fission and fusion, it is plain that lineage considerations are by no means paramount, but that, if anything, there is some effort to maintain nonlineal composition even in the smaller camps. That is to say, there is at least a consciousness of lineage and an apparently felt need to maintain some kind of balance between lineages. Whereas the process of fission and
621 fusion—the division of the band into small segments, each with its
361 own hunting camp within the hunting territory, and the eventual realignment of the band as a single unit—is systematic, it is not without an element of the less systematic process of fragmentation that takes place within any single camp, large or small, and which starts the day the camp is first established.

The whole shifting complex is best understood by looking at the camp plans at the end of the book. As each hut represents a married
[613] couple with or without unmarried children, Plans 5 and 6,[1] respectively, show the lineage groupings according to male and female membership for the camp named *apa* Lelo. *Apa* Lelo was one of the larger camps and is as typical as any. Plan 7[2] shows the significant changes made in the direction in which the huts faced as the camp took shape, day by day.

On looking at Plans 5 and 6 it is evident that not only does the shape of the natural clearing lend itself to the division of the camp into sections, but that these sections show as much consideration for affinal as for consanguineal ties. Plan 7 shows how the natural divisions offered by the clearing were made plainer by the addition of screens to hut entrances, or by rebuilding huts so as to face them in different directions. The fallen tree trunk and a clump of undergrowth are also utilized, and in other camps such undergrowth was eventually cleared if the reason for making use of it disappeared.

When we examine the camp, section by section, it will be seen
[613] again that lineage is only one of many factors in determining the social groupings within the camp.

1,2 [see pages 355-357 respectively -- Analyst]

social groupings within the camp. Plan 8 offers a dramatic example of the kind of major change that can take place in any one camp, and of the kind of change that may lead to ultimate fission, and that is certainly likely to determine one of the lines of cleavage when fission does take place. The change was brought about by the arrival of a controversial sometime member of the band, Cephu.[5]

The camp was already settled at optimum-to-maximum size when, on the fifth day, Cephu arrived. He used to migrate from his natal band to this one, and was not overly welcome in either. He arrived by stealth with his father's brother's son, and their families pitched their belongings in a small clearing near the main camp. They were joined by a member of the important Puemi clan of the main camp, whose wife was friendly with Cephu's womenfolk. Their camp established, they opened a trail leading directly into the main camp. The various reactions, seen in Plan 7, effected a consolidation of the southwest corner of the main camp and caused a rift between two sets of brothers: M and N (N having joined Cephu while M pointedly rebuilt a new hut in the main camp), and D and I, D setting up with Cephu, his brother I and nephew J refusing to leave the main camp and join him.

Even more important, the consolidation of the southwest and, to some extent, the southeast corner of the main camp involved the southward realignment of S, T and U, S and U being highly influential elders, T being one of the greatest hunters. T and U were members of one section of the dominant Puemi clan, the other section being localized in the north part of the camp.

Plans 9 and 10 illustrate the rather more radical change that may take place, effecting a temporary consolidation of lineages. Such changes within a camp are extremely rare however—in this case the consolidation was of the lineages concerned in a vital dispute against one of their members, the same controversial Cephu guilty of a serious hunting crime. Table 4 gives the relevant kinship structure for this particular camp, and Table 5 gives the complete list of lineages, as far as I could trace them, with indications as to which individuals were effective members of the Epulu band during the year.

[5] I use personal names that were used in the forest, though some Mbuti use different names when in the village. It is perhaps significant that Cephu is a common name among the ill-considered Ngwana, and that Cephu's children were also mostly known by villager names or even by European names, such as "Teresa," currently in vogue among the villagers. Any one Mbuti might be known by as many as four names, certainly two or three. The names used here correspond to those used elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961) from which source some additional information on the personalities involved may be gleaned.

A, B [see pages 358-359 respectively -- Analyst]

C [see pages 393 A-F; 326 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
• 621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[612] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built
342 a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The
• 62 two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having
[602] on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more
361 than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link
621 between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some
578 members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually,
[614] Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage.
[613] Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the
[487] main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few
[613] yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

wife was, like Pangia and Betuli, a member of the lineage that normally associated with Cephu. Three days later, however, two more female kinsmen of Toko arrived, also members of the rival Puemi/chimpanzee lineage, and they too joined Cephu's camp. The two camps had effectively divided two sets of brothers, indicating much more sharply than the more subtle divisions within the main camp the extent to which lineage values may be counteracted and even superseded by other values. 361 621 613 598

In the following chapters we shall see more of the kind of petty disputes and hostilities that bring about this shifting of alliances, and the gradual fragmentation of a camp into distinct sections. It should suffice for the moment to have this one example of a single camp in a state of flux from the first day of its existence, and to know that this flux, whatever its cause, cut directly across unilineal descent groupings as conceived by the villagers.

Apart from the personal, unpredictable causes for constantly changing alliances, there are other factors that can always be relied on to introduce change into a camp, cutting across unilineal descent lines and causing further change in its balance. Visits from affines and to affines are one such factor; such visits sometimes become permanent, as can be seen in the composition of this particular band. Visits to neighboring villages may also affect the balance of its internal sections as, apart from the major co-operative activity of the hunt, there are other activities calling for co-operation of only a few people, and such smaller co-operative units almost invariably fall within the sections that divide the camp. If a section becomes depleted because some of its members have gone visiting, it may be forced to co-operate with another section in activities such as gathering, collecting firewood and building materials, repairing nets, and so forth. 621 574 [476]

Not having seen an archer *begbe* beat-hunt camp, which approximates in size, as in hunting technique, to the normal net-hunting camp, I can supply no material for comparison of the process of fragmentation. The smaller, and for the archers more normal, camps are similar, however, and exhibit the same tendencies but with less emphasis. This may possibly be related to the fact that the smaller camps involve food-getting technologies that do not call for large-scale co-operation, but which demand the co-operation of two or three adults. Thus such divisions as may appear on the formation of such a camp tend to be rather more stable, and with the archers they are certainly 621 184 224 [114]

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224] other factor.
[184]

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

agreement persists, however, then when the honey season ends and the band is forced to resume net-hunting, and therefore has to rejoin its forces in the common interest of an effective net-hunt, one or another of the dissident segments will join up with another band in another territory. It is said that it would not stay within the same territory and hunt there, even if it were numerically strong enough.

Thus we can say that the composition of each camp is ad hoc, responding to the needs of the moment rather than to any preconceived plan, or to any notion derived from tradition. The lines of division are never the same; the reasons for division are nearly always personal. The system does not lie here, then, but rather in the economy, which favors a unified camp for the major part of the year and a divided camp for a brief two months or so. The complete break and freedom of separate association allowed by the honey season (which is also a particularly bountiful season as far as vegetable foods are concerned) is, in fact, what makes practical this otherwise apparently unsystematic flux. That the flux has a function we shall shortly see.

For the archers much the same process pertains. The economics work in reverse, however, for the *begbe* season is made an occasion for the entire band to gather together. Normally, throughout the year, the band is divided into three or four small sub-bands, all within their common territory. Tracking and ambushing and using the bow and arrow do not call for co-operation among more than two or three or four men. A large camp of, say, twenty-four men would then have at least six hunting parties setting off each day, and this would necessarily mean frequent changes of camp. A small camp, however, sending out two parties in opposite directions, can remain in the same area for a long time without scaring the game away. There are few occasions for members of different sub-bands to get together during this time, except for casual visits. Once a year the whole band unites, however, for the communal beat-hunt known as *begbe*. The mechanism for convening the whole band and the exact time of year this takes place, if there is a special time of year, are not clear either in the literature or from my own records. Each archer band I visited, however, assured me that it was near the honey season, and I suspect before the honey season.

However, the essential remains the same. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, there is a process of fission followed by fusion —or perhaps, in the case of the archers, it would be better to say there is a process of fusion followed by fission. We now have to try and

discover, at least for the net-hunters of Epulu, what is the structure of this process.

We have seen that the band is plainly a nonlineal entity; it cannot even truly be called bilateral, as descent is not counted on either side for practical purposes.[8] Lineages are known, and these are always patrilineages, but they seem to have little economic, political or even religious significance. The only time the lineage is mentioned with any frequency is when discussing the merits or otherwise of a proposed marriage, and then it is not the lineage name that is usually mentioned, but rather the names and relationships of the individuals concerned, their parents and grandparents. It can be seen from the plans, in any case, that the process of fission and fusion under discussion is not one that supports the integrity of unilineal descent groups, but rather one that cuts across such groups.

Nor can the nonlineal nature of the band or the flux of band composition be attributed solely to the ecology. The situation is comparable between the archers and the net-hunters, and yet each of these groups practices a different hunting technique, and the process of fission and fusion takes an opposite direction. Either the archers or the net-hunters could, in fact, operate perfectly efficiently without all the internal movement that we have seen, and they may very well once have operated as patrilineal bands. While in no way supporting those who suggest that band composition is due to local ecology, it is undeniable that there is an interest in lineage, evident in the attempt to balance lineages and prevent lineage dominance. Further, the camp plans indicate a general tendency toward lineage solidarity, particularly in times of crisis. For instance, with reference to Plans 9 and 10, the normally unsystematic camp plan that pertained (9) was abruptly altered and became divided along strict lineage lines when one of the sub-band members, Cephu himself, committed the unforgivable crime of placing his net in front of others during the hunt. The only significant relationship of the flux to forest life is that it enables the band to respond to changes in environmental conditions by altering its size. It must also be admitted that it is

[8] Some misunderstanding may arise owing to different usages of descent-system terminology. Some schools of thought consider "bilateral" as synonymous with "cognatic," and hold that the terms include all affines and do not imply any differences in the method of tracing descent. To such an extent, perhaps the Mbuti band may be termed bilateral or cognatic, but to me, and I believe to others, both terms imply one kind of descent system or another, placing an emphasis on lineage that is not characteristic of the Mbuti band and therefore to be eschewed.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occations for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangosé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
• 621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
583 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[965] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561 concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627 such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [888] are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561 are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582] stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765] *elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621 a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628 cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561 part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621 age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561 be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765 pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535] will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533] *molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621 prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611 would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561 which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621 times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611 hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594] lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

621 gardless of lineage, depending upon the context. Affinal ties are con-
61 sidered just as legitimate, and used just as frequently in balancing
[602] power and in determining allegiance as cognatic ties. In this way
[82] security is guaranteed to any individual because of the number of
[571] recognized social groups to which he can claim membership. This ambivalence is again an important structural principle, and is certainly manifest in the social groupings observable in the building of successive hunting camps.

62 If age rather than kinship fixes one's place within the band, then,
56 we have to consider how a band maintains any sense of continuity from one generation to the next. There is the alliance of age groups and the educational role of age groups which provide some degree of continuity, but this would not be sufficient in view of what we have said about the shifting composition of the band. It is undoubtedly territory that gives the band its identity as such and enables that identity to persist, and it is to his territory, as to his age group, rather than to any kin group, that an Mbuti owes allegiance.

602 Kinship is recognized in assessing problems of inheritance, but
[429] with so little to inherit the problems are minimal. In general a man's belongings are divided among his sons or, if his sons are too young, they are held in trust for them by his brothers. Similarly with a wom-
[82] an's belongings. Kinship may also be used to maintain an economic balance, just as it may be used to maintain a political balance, by advancing claims to the spoils of a hunt on the ground of kinship, or
[611] indeed by advancing claims for the adoption of children. But again, as such claims are advanced on grounds of both cognatic and affinal ties, the principles of unilineal descent are directly contradicted.

621 In fact the nuclear family is best regarded as one of a number of
594 cells that make up the totality of the band, each cell reflecting the same basic structure as the band itself. Within the family the factors of territory and age also play a part, the locality of the hut symbolizing the unity of the family and its separateness from others, the age differential dividing the family in activity, authority and allegiance.
59 Even fission and fusion are a part of family life, as children are apt to leave their natal family any time after they reach the age of three or four, and either be adopted by or simply live for a while with another family in the same band; or they may be adopted by a family in another band and go to live there, even if their parents continue living together in their home band. Such separations within the band do not affect their relationship with other members of their family of the

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.118]

CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

621 626 694 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which activities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on 62 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal in-183 stitution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream should wash himself, or at least a part of himself, even if he crosses another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[785] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
93 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely.

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off.

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey.

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters.

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again.

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much

21 Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

PUBERTY: THE *ELIMA*

P 881 At the next crisis in the life cycle, however, it is the band rather
• 621 than the nuclear family that takes charge. By early childhood the child has already grown away from its family to some extent, and become more a member of an age group cutting across kinship lines. At puberty the boy or girl may not even be living with kin any more, let alone in the nuclear family. But even if they are, the band takes control of the situation. It is an occasion that concerns the band as such, for adolescence leads into marriage, and marriage will inevitably bring about a significant change in the economic structure of the band. A member of the band may leave it, or a new member may join it, or, if the marriage is within the band, then at least there will still be an additional net, and a change in the hunting and gathering pattern and perhaps in interfamily alliances. The process of fission and
P fusion might also be affected by the political implications of the mar-
881 riage. The *elima* is best regarded as a premarital festival. It does not necessarily lead directly into a marriage that is marriage in the sense of a final, childbearing union. It is rather a preparation for marriage,
P an opportunity for the youngsters to find suitable partners. It does
[524] not even have to end in betrothal, so there cannot be said to be a
[182] functional connection between *elima* and marriage.

C The arrival at puberty among boys being somewhat less easy to
881 determine, the signal for an *elima* is the first appearance of menstrual blood in a young girl. This is something that fills the local villagers with horror, and with fear of evil influences against which they take elaborate ritual precautions to protect themselves. These precautions are costly and inconvenient, and the girl who has brought both shame and annoyance to her family is hidden and treated harshly. There are elaborate cleansing ceremonies for the girl and her family.
P Among the Mbuti, however, the appearance of menstrual blood is a
881 sign that the girl is now a potential mother, and it is consequently
P a signal for rejoicing and for preparation for motherhood. Thus an
[524] integral part of the festival is the selection of suitable potential husbands. Such selection demands that the boys prove their manhood, since it cannot be proven as simply as is the womanhood of the girl. In this sense, then, the *elima* is a joint initiation of boys and girls into adulthood. Having dealt with it in descriptive form elsewhere (Turn-

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered prefer-
584 able, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's
591 band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable
58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status
[985] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut,
584 a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be
• 621 called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be dis-
583 cussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

MARRIAGE

Betrothal and marriage among the Mbuti, then, are permissive. 583
Prescriptions and prohibitions are minimal, and even preferences are 584
not dominant. But permission of the band or bands involved is re- 621
quired. In giving assent a band does not concern itself with the niceties of the kinship relationships involved, nor with the question of reciprocal obligations and privileges, except for the question of sister exchange. While not expecting an immediate exchange to be made, or even asking for a suitable future exchange partner to be named, the band bears this reciprocal obligation in mind and will demand that it be fulfilled the moment such fulfillment becomes necessary to band composition.

Considerations in approving a betrothal or marriage are personal 584
and economic, and to a lesser extent political. The affections of the 581
two individuals concerned is of the utmost concern to everyone, for 157
great mutual affection is considered to lead to a "real marriage" rather than an "empty marriage"; that is to say, affection is thought to carry the desire for children, and will so bring stability to the marriage. But the band is also concerned with the character of any individual, male or female, who will join them through marriage. A boy wishing to marry a notorious flirt and bring her to live with him is likely to meet considerable opposition, and may have to go to live with her band. In that case they will consider how faithful he is likely to be, or whether he will find he prefers his own territory to his wife, and will abandon her to return to his own band. In the general discussion that takes place when a betrothal or marriage is proposed these are the kinds of issues discussed, together with the personal habits of the newcomer —cleanliness, laziness, talkativeness and noisiness.

The hunting and gathering abilities of the individuals are also dis- 584
cussed, first to decide whether they are able to look after themselves, 581
and second in relationship to the band economy. As with personal 157
considerations, the discussion is of particular importance if one or the 621
other of the proposed partners is a newcomer. If the marriage is within a band the same discussion takes place, but because both partners are known well the problem is much simpler and arouses less argument. There may still be differences of opinion, however, as to whether the couple are likely to have a real marriage or an empty one.

The band will also discuss the question of residence. If the band is 584
591
621

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
761 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person,
152 it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
761 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
763 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not
152 going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[887] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [768] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

2: Turnbull E-3 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the south-eastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *mamoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1960) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.148]

CHAPTER 10

The Economy

THE BAND AS AN ECONOMIC UNIT

621 613 602 We have seen the limited importance of the family in the lineage context, and that the band itself can only be defined, as a persisting entity, in terms of territory. Its composition and size fluctuate in response to a number of factors, among which the current economic context is of undoubted importance, regulating the size to a large extent, but also sometimes affecting the composition. We can clearly say that the band is not a unilineal institution, as seen in our camp plans for both archers and net-hunters, and in many instances even if we consider the band as a bilateral unit, lineage considerations appear to be minimal in determining its composition.

621 439 We now consider the territorial band as an economic unit. When discussing the Mbuti/Villager relationship (p. 33 *seq.*), we assumed that there was no economic necessity involved in Mbuti dependence on the villagers for plantation foods or village utensils. This is the first point to be considered here, in order to justify our treating the band as an economic unit without reference to village economy.

621 439 431 261 To begin with, it can be clearly stated that nowhere in the Ituri, except possibly in the triangle bounded by the three roads linking Beni, Irumu and Mambasa, have I ever come across a hunting band suffering from any shortage of forest foods, unless the band was at that time camped near the village. Further, in the heart of the forest I have come across many bands that are too many days away from the nearest village to maintain any kind of supply line, and that have existed solely on forest foods for from three to six months, with ease. It has been obvious, however, that in those bands there was considerable hankering for the luxuries supplied by the village, and there is no doubt that in time these luxuries will become necessities, given a continuation of the situation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

P 439 C 439 608 band composition, these institutions have little direct economic application. However, they do serve as a means by which any villager may assert a claim of any Mbuti. Villagers frequently enter into agreements and become involved in disputes with each other as a result, but nonetheless a villager whose *karé* or hereditary Mbuti is supplying another villager with meat may demand either compensation, a share, or rights to the services of one of his fellow-villager's Mbuti.

P 439 *177 This, however, is still from the villager point of view. From the Mbuti point of view the only relevant factors are strictly economic: they will exchange meat and their services whenever it suits them, for whatever goods suit them, with whichever villager suits them. The subsequent complications due to any breach of *karé* or kinship considerations does not affect them in any way. Owing to the variable nature of Mbuti wants and the whimsical nature of his behavior when dealing with villagers, there can be no attempt to establish any kind of equivalent rates of exchange.

P 439 • 621 571 C [439] Whereas with the villagers the exchange is institutionalized and integrated with the over-all social structure, with the Mbuti it is not. It is in the realm of individual and nonformalized behavior, not even necessarily linking the various members of a nuclear family. Since the exchange almost invariably takes place in the village, this may be taken as an indication of the breakdown of forest bonds among Mbuti living in a village. This fact is extended when, rarely, a villager visits a forest camp in the hopes of insuring at least an immediate and temporary supply of meat. His very presence, if permitted, changes the context from forest to village, and the hunting band becomes, with respect to the visiting villager, a village band, with corresponding social relations. The Mbuti only permit such visits if it is to their advantage, and even then they conceal with ease the game they catch daily and only give the villager what they wish to give.[2]

P 439 433 184 224 In view of the absence of any necessary dependence of the Mbuti upon the villager, for food or material, and even more in absence of any mutually accepted institutional relationship, we may regard such exchange as takes place with the village as having little or no bearing on the structure of the Mbuti forest economy, and we need consider it

C [648] [2] Villagers consider it perfectly legitimate to cross their own territorial boundaries to visit any of "their" Mbuti who might be in someone else's village area, providing the visit is to a forest camp. This is one of several indications that the villagers clearly acknowledge the forest as belonging to the Mbuti; the offering of the firstfruits of a new plantation is another.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a *capita* or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any consecration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *beghe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[8]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[8] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Area	Portion of body	Given to
Ndaye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasu	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *eima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 magic seems to be somewhat more prevalent. Further, although
• 62 archery does not demand a relatively large co-operative band as does
[221 net-hunting, and although for most of the year the archers seem to be split into small bands of maybe only three or so nuclear families, the band is actually comparable in size and composition, and manifests its unity once a year for the annual *begbe* beat-hunt.

The *begbe* is remarkably like the net-hunt in technique and in social function. The major difference is the absence of nets, which makes for a much smaller circle for the same number of participants. Seven nuclear families could successfully hunt with nets; they could never form a *begbe* hunt. By the same token, more than thirty families could easily participate in *begbe* without inconvenience or danger, and if we define the archer band by stated territorial boundaries, and consider its composition as consisting of those who hunt within those boundaries during the year and form the communal *begbe* hunt once a year, then the average size of the archer band is probably larger than that of the net-hunting band.

The *begbe* demands large numbers; the men form a tight semicircle, each man well within sight of the next, the women and children forming a similarly tight semicircle opposite. The men are armed with bows and arrows, and with spears; the women make petards, which when beaten on the ground make a sharp, explosive sound. When the circle is complete, the women beat toward the men, who try to kill the animals before they break through their ranks, a procedure that is considerably more hazardous than the net-hunt, where the hunters can afford to wait until the game is at least temporarily held up by the net.

224 Among the archers the *begbe* is referred to as the beginning of the
221 new year, and the hunt coincides, it seems, with the honey season,
621 which for the net-hunters is similarly the beginning, or the end, of the year. During this season, then, the archer band is consolidated and co-operative, though it seldom builds a single camp. Rather, there may be from three to five large camps, but built close to each other (within earshot) and connected by trails. This, however, is the one time of year when the band does meet and hunt as such, though even at this time there is no central authority.

621 For the rest of the year the band is broken up into smaller units,
221 each one economically and politically independent of the other. These sections may vary in size from two or three nuclear families to as many as ten, or temporarily even a few more. Generally an archer camp contains from three to six families.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo - Kinshasa F01

P 224 628 825 [554] sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

P [221] P [621] P 224 613 614 Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

C [613] [614] [439] P 224 613 614 262 825 Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
169 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[171] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[176] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madi*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madi* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkuas* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the
621 economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is
628 determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to
224 move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it
166 temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself
131 is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence
131 the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING
224 BANDS
131

It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the encroaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the encroaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seeking a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge occur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-operation as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P 621 628 volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

P 439 621 121 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen C 439 621 121 to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of C [611] [591] either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

P 439 621 608 571 The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another P [156] band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

P 439 608 571 The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[5] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[5] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions concerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

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CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621 in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121 of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571 a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554 is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622] or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623] elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791] adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778 as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571 feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787 poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778 clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571 is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829] of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192] a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

554 558 627 201 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, 156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al- 627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby • 621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis- 648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, 554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

156 627 There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to [202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 554 578 152 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he

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554 627 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[178] and morally, beyond the forest.
[156] In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the 621 frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or 578 in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his 626 fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends [593] with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between [522] the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is gen- 578 erally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in 621 his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately 626 involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp [522] clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rig- 627 orously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

224 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of 626 [821] friction).

[158] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur- [166] [648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten- 621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par- 821 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came 593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. 152 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and 291 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing 621 it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some 593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute 621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said 166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being 626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem- [221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

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their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did 621 626
an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly ("*apa ndaso aké sinana*"). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: "*kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi*") and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the 621
dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very qui- 626
etly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo 829
and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of ele- 769
phant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly 621
that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made 602
Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey 571
camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable 578
cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sec- 621
tions, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with 221
Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a power- 224
ful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended 578
Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[8] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[8] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

626 621 578 222 152 537 537 [431] wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

157 461 536 [261] [789] 7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 461 626 578 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] [156] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

is bad to split a camp because of blood. Usually the metaphor of "stomach" is used in such cases to express kinship, but it was plain that this was what Asofalinda meant.

Masisi joined in and said that all members of a camp were of one hearth, regardless of stomach, and they belonged to the hearth; so Isa belonged to this hearth and his father to that. Until the next move of camps that was how it should be. Isa capitulated and continued to stay on.

23 and 24. Mbaaka fell from a tree and broke his arm. While incapacitated in this way, his recently acquired wife took off to join Cephu, who had invited a number of his Lesé-speaking in-laws to hunt in the western borders of the Epulu territory. When Mbaaka was well enough he went to Cephu's camp and brought her back. On arrival back in the camp, he threw her to the ground and said he had brought back rubbish, and he didn't know why. His wife got up and sat down in the door of the hut, upright and rigid, in a posture widely used by Mbuti women to show their utmost displeasure. Mbaaka told her to get his supper but she ignored him. His pleas and threats fell on deaf ears, and even when he slapped her once she barely moved. Masisi's wife eventually brought over some food and put it down between them. Mbaaka offered some to his wife but she pretended not to see it, so in a burst of temper he ate all he could and threw the rest away behind the hut. His wife found this too much to bear, and went inside the hut sobbing. She sat upright still, holding a tiny oil lamp in her hand. Mbaaka went in after her and knocked the oil lamp out of her grasp. She promptly picked it up, and this was repeated several times. Eventually she gave up and, still not saying a word, lay down. Mbaaka, trying hard to make peace, lay down beside her, but no sooner was he down than his wife sat up again, and remained bolt upright for the next two hours.

25. Meanwhile there was a diversion. Kengé and his wife were also having a squabble. Kengé, only indirectly connected with Njobo's family as an affine, was a person of some consequence because, although boastful, it was said he knew the forest better than any other Mbuti, and although he liked village life as well as any, he was not one for any display of individual authority. Roused by Mbaaka's having to go all the way to Cephu's camp to fetch back his wife, Kengé said that all wives were a lot of trouble, his own included. She was empty. "She cannot even speak; when she opens her mouth she just makes noises. She is an animal."

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had
[224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket,
[462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or
[186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti
[183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

578 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source
*177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in
186 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling
436 the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission.
[621] Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and
186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for
[753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village
514 also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some
[224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc-
439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

[P.218]

CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 *Marriage*

• 621 As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which
584 might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass.
574 The third, probably the most important structurally, is the inter-
571 family visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns,
561 each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands,
584 it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial ex-
574 change, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of
[591] visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each
584 band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-
561

628 582 583 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. 628 581 594 182 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relationship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 224 131 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 224 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange. 628 224 [602]

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other. 628 224 221 621

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible. 628

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month. 628 602 574

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have [621] 591 [594]

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FOI

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 563 571 177 P 571 *177 As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial, and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

C 621 613 571 P •621 613 571 Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going elsewhere to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage relationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

Karé/Karé

C 608 628 571 88 177 P 608 571 *177 881 Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individuals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initiations which take place periodically (every three years for the past twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

C 608 571 177 P 608 571 *177 It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initiation camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, although any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed. They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P *177 than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

754 [192] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
621 628 posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 776 778 184 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré*, *e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The association with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

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2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology, [621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band. [648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance [182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest. [778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother [829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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601 602 621 the crosscutting vertical loyalties of a lineal kinship system. The territorial band is the only reasonable answer.

We use the term "territorial" rather than bilateral, for the latter 602 621 561 121 term still overemphasizes considerations of vertical descent. This is to negate the whole functional value of the generational system as used by the Mbuti, who use it to establish firm bonds between age mates, and to assign different and essential tasks to different age levels, thus avoiding the remotest chance of centralization of power or [114] authority. But we certainly do not use the term as does Steward (1955, 143), who uses it "to designate certain primitive societies which consist of many unrelated nuclear or biological families." Steward implies that relationship (he does not state what degree of relationship) not only is of no concern, but that it does not exist between member families of the band. It would be difficult to find a more composite Mbuti band than that of the Epulu, yet a glance at Table 4, giving the band membership at the close of 1957, shows that every single individual, representing some twenty-two different lineages, is "related" by clear consanguineal or affinal bonds to every other. No individual stands alone, though the relationship may sometimes be remote.

621 602 121 582 And most certainly while stating that age and territory are more effective principles of organization than kinship, we do not deny that kinship is recognized. We are merely stating that social interaction among the Mbuti is based on generation and territory. A system, to deserve the term, must be effective in action, and we have seen how seldom kinship relationships are called into account among the Mbuti, the major occasion being a proposal of marriage. There the concern with kinship is not so much in terms of the politico-economic implications of the marriage, as a clear-cut consideration of lineal distance. The stated prohibition is against marrying on the side of either the mother or father, but so long as the memory of the elders can trace no connection, there is no further concern.

58 621 602 [561] Sister-exchange marriage preserves the unity of the *apua'i*, and indeed enhances it when, as can happen in the composite band, the two couples reside side by side. The lack of marriage and divorce ritual does not indicate any lack of concern for one's age level, for one always marries within that level and so is never lost to it, but it is another symptom of the general lack of concern with kinship, this [illegible] with affinity rather than lineality. A marriage is effected by living together; divorce is effected by one or other spouse simply going to live

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship. 58 621 602

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels. 561 621 [571]

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation. 881 885 581 561

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition. 888 561

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual 621 613 561 621 [582] [591] [181]

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

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Mbuti

is resident. It is seldom that he refers merely to geographical boundaries, for trespass, as seen, is rare and of little consequence. Yet it is a term he frequently uses, and as an organizational principle it is equal in importance to age. 621

While agreeing with Steward that the environment may to some extent be determinant as well as permissive of certain elements of social organization, I find it impossible to see the validity of his wider deterministic claims for cultural ecology.[5] But while Steward seems to have overreached himself, or rather overreached his material, in trying to draw up general principles of culture change, nonetheless in regarding cultural ecological adaptations as "creative processes" (1955, p. 34), his stress on cultural ecology as a particular factor is highly relevant to the Mbuti and in itself an important contribution. We have seen throughout the importance of the economic abundance offered by the forest, permitting economic independence to each band. While the presence of the village tribes is sufficient indication of the permissibility of cultivation, at the technological level of the Mbuti one might say that the environment determines hunting and gathering. It is certainly relevant to say that the Mbuti, at least, would agree with Steward, for they say it is the only way they can live, that if they cultivate they will die. The truth of their assertion is not relevant here; its importance lies in that it reveals the depth of their felt dependence upon the forest. 114 182 621

Nothing is gained, however, by saying that the Mbuti exploitative

[5] Indeed, it would be impossible to do so since Steward uses the Mbuti as an example of an ecologically determined patrilineal band, content to base his analysis on Putnam (1948) as interviewed by Carleton Coon and represented in a brief and obviously general and sketchy article. Steward's only other Mbuti reference is to Schebesta's preliminary seventeen-page field report in *Anthropos* (1931). A minimum of inquiry would have revealed numerous other sources, which while admittedly unsatisfactory would, through their very divergence, at least have demonstrated the inadvisability of relying on the two sources quoted (ref. Turnbull, 1965). Further evidence to support his theory, for the Central African Negritos, was drawn by Steward from the reports of Schmidt (1910) and Trilles (1932). Not one of the many articles in *Zaïre*, *Congo*, or *Kongo-Overzee*, is cited, nor is Schebesta's major work, *Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri*, nor the abridged and revised edition of that work which appeared in French in 1952, *Les Pygmées du Congo Belge*. Unsupported assertions such as that "the exploitative patterns produced the features typical of the patrilineal band" (Steward, 1955, p. 128) are bad enough; the apparent ignorance of major texts (for Steward nowhere gives any reasons for not using them) is worse; but still worse is the sheer misrepresentation of the facts he does claim to have at his disposal. Thus he claims that the populations he has selected to illustrate patrilineal bands—the Bushman, Congo Negritos, Australians, Tasmanians and Fuegians, "and others"—are similar "because the nature of the game and therefore of their subsistence problems is the same in each case" (1955, p. 38). It is difficult to see much similarity between subsistence problems of the Kalahari Desert and the Equatorial Rain Forest, even if they are on the same continent.

patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, regarding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and disputatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association between religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion, upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious

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Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
• 621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[793] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621 •
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177]* concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

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Mbuti

Indeed, certain elements of the forest system can only be explained in relationship to the village context, such as the excessively fluid composition of the band and the almost paranoid attitude to a single villager passing through a hunting camp, sufficient to suspend the vital and central, all-important *molimo* festival, even at its height, or transform it into a village-style parody. This quite singular feature has found no explanation in terms of either the village alone or the forest alone. Let us then briefly review the forest system, and look at it again in the village context. The following elements have emerged as having the greatest structural significance:

1. THE BAND is the basic unit, its membership being influenced by economic rather than kinship considerations. Constant association and cooperative compatibility outweigh kinship even within the band in regulating the process of fission and fusion. This latter process is related to the annual honey season, but it is not determined by it. The over-all size of the band, or of its subsections, is, however, determined by ecological factors resulting in a maximum of about thirty nuclear families for a band, and a minimum of three families for a subsection. Although the band is nonlineal, the network of consanguineal and affinal interpersonal relationships is recognized to link all members, so that the terminology, while referring to age levels regardless of actual or fictive kinship, still has the same affective qualities of kinship terminology, the term referring to age mates (*apua'i*) being the most widely used, and the most effective.

With the best will in the world, it is not possible to apply the kind of analysis suggested by Lévi-Strauss (1958) for following his argument (that the biological family makes a poor starting point); further we must also abandon the affinal family and the system of affective relationships that Lévi-Strauss saw to pertain there. For among the Mbuti affective relationships are determined more by age than by kinship, consanguineal or affinal. We simply cannot follow a set formula that takes no account of the age factor. Thus *f/s* is positive when *s* is a child.[1] It is negative when *s* is a youth, becomes less strained when *s* becomes a hunter, but only approaches positive again when *f* becomes an elder. In other words the relationship is positive as long as *f/s* are not in adjacent age levels. The greatest friction arises when *s* approaches adulthood and is about to become a hunter, a signal for the retirement of the father into elderhood. It

[1] *f* = father; *s* = son; *m* = mother; *d* = daughter; *b* = brother; *z* = sister.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 131 [648] [192] 628 602

621 778 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also represents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 121 *177 571 C 121 177 571 in the Mbuti/Villager situation. The basis of the proximity and distance elements does not rest on kinship, and the relationship is as much between the two groups as it is between individuals, otherwise the situation conforms to Radcliffe-Brown's model quite clearly—*viz.* (1952, p. 95): "The show of hostility, the perpetual disrespect, is a continual expression of that social disjunction which is an essential part of the whole structural situation, but over which, without destroying or even weakening it, there is provided the social conjunction of friendliness and mutual aid."

In the Mbuti/Villager situation the relationship appears to be symmetrical and permissive, though both sides do occasionally take offense, the village side even sometimes taking counteraction. The ineffectiveness of taking offense or action, however, only serves to heighten the characteristic "social disjunction," and there is no doubt that beneath the display of hostility and disrespect there is cooperation, and even considerable amity. Considering the completely opposed value systems of the two worlds, this is, indeed, the only way in which the two peoples could meet and still retain a separate identity. The reasons for the meeting taking place at all, as we have already seen, are circumstantial—the historical invasion of the forest by the villagers, and their use of the Mbuti as guides; the continued parasitism of the Mbuti upon the villagers long after the original need for cooperation had gone; the contemporary mutual convenience of economic exchange; sheer territorial propinquity. These reasons do not lead automatically or easily to a structured relationship, particularly when the values of the two peoples are so divergent, so while a form of joking relationship helps to stabilize the alliance, maintaining the combination of Radcliffe-Brown's "conjunctive and disjunctive components," it is not by itself enough.

C 563 177 608 881 439 P *177 439 • 621 We have seen the methods by which the villagers have sought to further stabilize the situation, through a formal economic-exchange system, a fictive parallel-kinship system, and through introduction to village supernatural sanctions by establishment of magico-religious bonds through *karé* blood brotherhood and *nkumbi* initiation. Any one of these, had it worked, would have reduced the Mbuti to subordination, yet this plainly has not been done. The defense of the Mbuti has lain in their own indigenous forest system, which works not only to maintain internal cohesion but also to maintain the utmost possible structural distance from the village world while allowing a minimal amount of "mutually convenient" economic exchange.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyama, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sistent as a major principle of organization in all realms of Mbuti life, with a consequent lack of interest in lineage. This adds both to the compositeness of the band and to its fluid structure. The division of authority renders the band, at any stage of its existence, without the slightest trace of individual leadership other than fictive to which the village headmen or chiefs could relate. Even more important, it means that the band has no constant kin grouping by which it can be related to the village unilineal descent group claiming hereditary ownership over a comparable Mbuti group. The comparable Mbuti group only exists in the minds of the villagers, and functions among them as an institutionalized means of regulating intervillage disputes over Mbuti "ownership." The effect of placing a horizontally divided hunting band in a vertically divided village is fragmentation. The only effective relationships, even when the Mbuti happen to be in a village where their *kpara* resides, are interpersonal. The loyalties that the Mbuti feels toward an age group are negated by the lineal loyalties of the villager, and conversely.

Again the Mbuti employ the joking relationship to their advantage. They invoke claims upon *kpara*, *karé*, and "kin" without the slightest compunction, but when the same claims are reversed, they either deny or ridicule them.

3. TERRITORY, which acts in one respect as a focus of band unity, is the only principle that also, in this limited respect, offers any measure of consistency in intergroup contact. Thus while the villagers in any given village may never be sure of just which Mbuti they will be dealing with in the adjacent hunting territory, they are always able to look to that territory for *some* Mbuti. There is, in fact, a reasonable continuity within the band, achieved by territorial considerations, and this helps stabilize relationships with the neighboring village to some extent. But in its wider extension, as the forest, territory only serves to unite the Mbuti in common opposition to all villagers.

4. NOISE is associated with the village, and noise is associated with death. The term *akami* is used together with the terms *bulé* or *tupé*

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are insufficiently strong to hold together village and nation." The "consciousness of national unity" (*ibid.*) that exists among the Ndembu nonetheless is, according to Turner, because that unity is moral rather than political, its source lying in the value system.

In considering Mbuti society we have to think of opposition within the forest society, such as that created by the age-level system, and within the total society, such as that created by the "kinship" system. At each level there are indeed opposed groups, with crosscutting membership. The absence of a common value system between forest and village, further, is accompanied by a corresponding absence of a wider unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 563

ing the Mbuti, are not only trying to subject the Mbuti to the authority of village supernatural sanctions but are also trying to assimilate from the Mbuti some of the spiritual power they believe to reside in the forest.

P *177 105 • 621 648

The ultimate nature of the relationship between the two people cannot be determined until further studies have been made of similar situations from both the Mbuti point of view and, a major need at the moment, from the village point of view. For now, it seems sufficiently clear that the general nature of the relationship is one of opposition, and that Mbuti society, in response to the demands of the situation or by fortuitous chance, meets it with an organization based upon the very antithesis of village organization. Against political centralization it offers complete decentralization and diffusion of authority. Against a sedentary, patrilineal, patrilocal village it matches the nomadic, nonlineal, territorial band. The vertical village kinship system is countered by a horizontal age-level system. Village values are directly opposed by forest values. And within itself Mbuti society uses these same principles, in a state of almost perpetual flux, to maintain a cohesion fully as powerful as that found among the villagers. Instead of looking to the more conventional structural principles for the source of unity of Mbuti society, we have had to look rather to values, and it is in terms of values that the over-all society, of Mbuti and villagers, has its ultimate being and significance.

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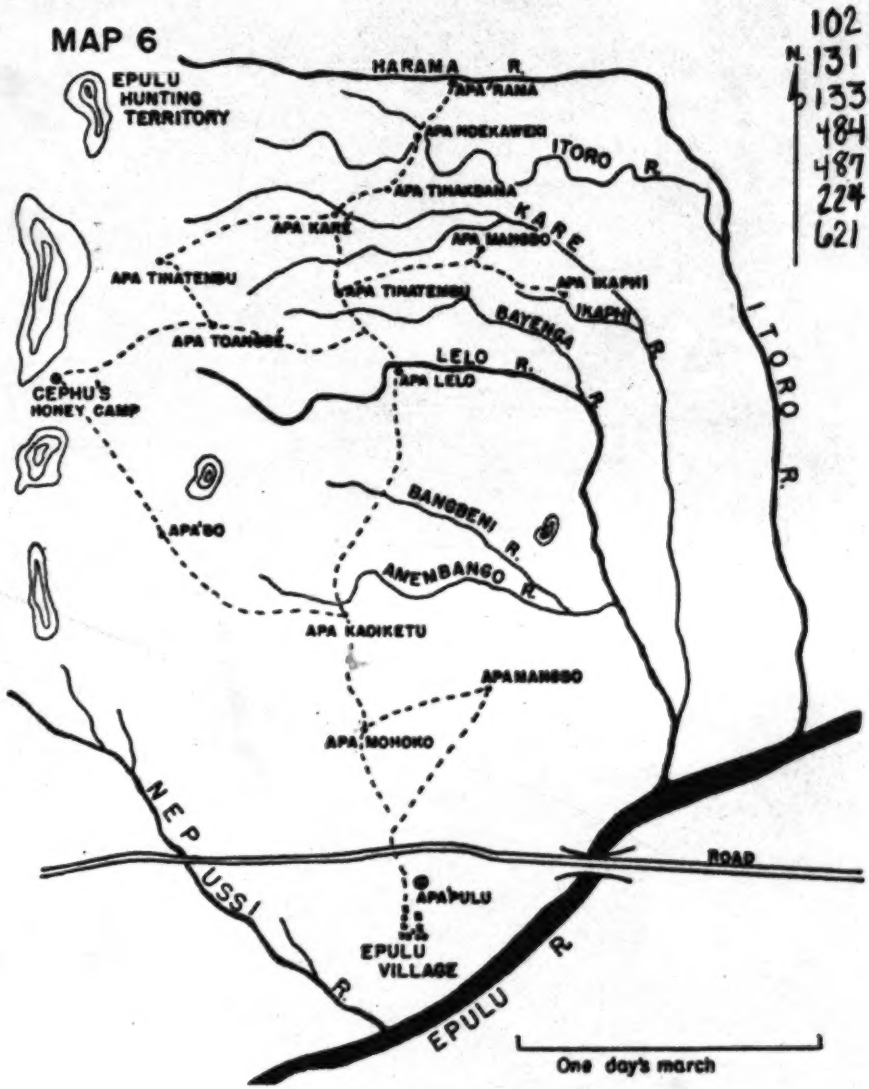
P C [181]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 5

613 LINEAGES CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMPOSITION OF
•621 THE EPULU NET-HUNTING BAND DURING 1957–1958, NOT
162 INCLUDING VISITORS STAYING LESS THAN THE DURATION OF ONE CAMP

		married		*unmarried*
Bambaka		14	13	15
Bandohwa		1	—	3
Bi		—	2	4
Bokele	(1)	2	3	4
	(2)	9	5	11
	(3)	—	1	—
Bolima		2	—	—
Bomasua		3	8	8
Bongwana		2	5	5
Buela		1	1	—
Bwango		2	1	3
Meki		—	2	2
Molomba		—	2	1
Ngamo		5	—	7
Pasama		—	1	—
Pokama		1	—	4
Pokbaya		2	2	5
Poté		—	1	—
Poteba		3	2	5
Potola		1	2	—
Poya		2	—	5
Puemi	(1)	5	4	7
	(2)	6	3	12
Pukena		—	2	2
Puma		1	2	4
Pumasa		—	1	—
Pusa		—	2	5
Pusei		—	1	1
Tisi		—	—	1
Ungbausu		3	—	7
Totals:		65	66	121

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Individual members mentioned in text by name are indicated on Table 4. 613 621 162

To get some idea of the extent of mobility from band to band, the figures in Table 5 (total) should be compared with figures that could be reasonably expected to apply to an average-sized camp of this band; i.e., of 17 huts, each containing a married couple and three or four unmarried children.

Any one such "average" camp would be composed of little more than a quarter of all those who, at one time or another during the year, would be band members.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

TABLE 8

621 561 554 562

FIELDS OF AUTHORITY	Nuclear Family	Youths	Hunters	Elders
1. *Economic*				
Hunting (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			△	
Gathering (Joint male/female authority among the net-hunters)			○	
Honey collecting			△	
Exchange with village	△○			
Industry (manufacture of material possessions)	△○			
Camp supervision (in absence of the hunt)		△○		△○
2. *Ritual*				
Birth	△○			
Puberty, betrothal and marriage: the *elima*		○		○
Death: the *molimo*		△		△
3. *Legal*				
Conjugal harmony	△○			
Individual disputes (personal insults, abuse, failure to share food or property, etc.)			△○	
Group disputes (any of the former that become enlarged beyond the realm of those directly concerned)				△○

Thus distribution of authority according to age and sex is almost equal as follows:

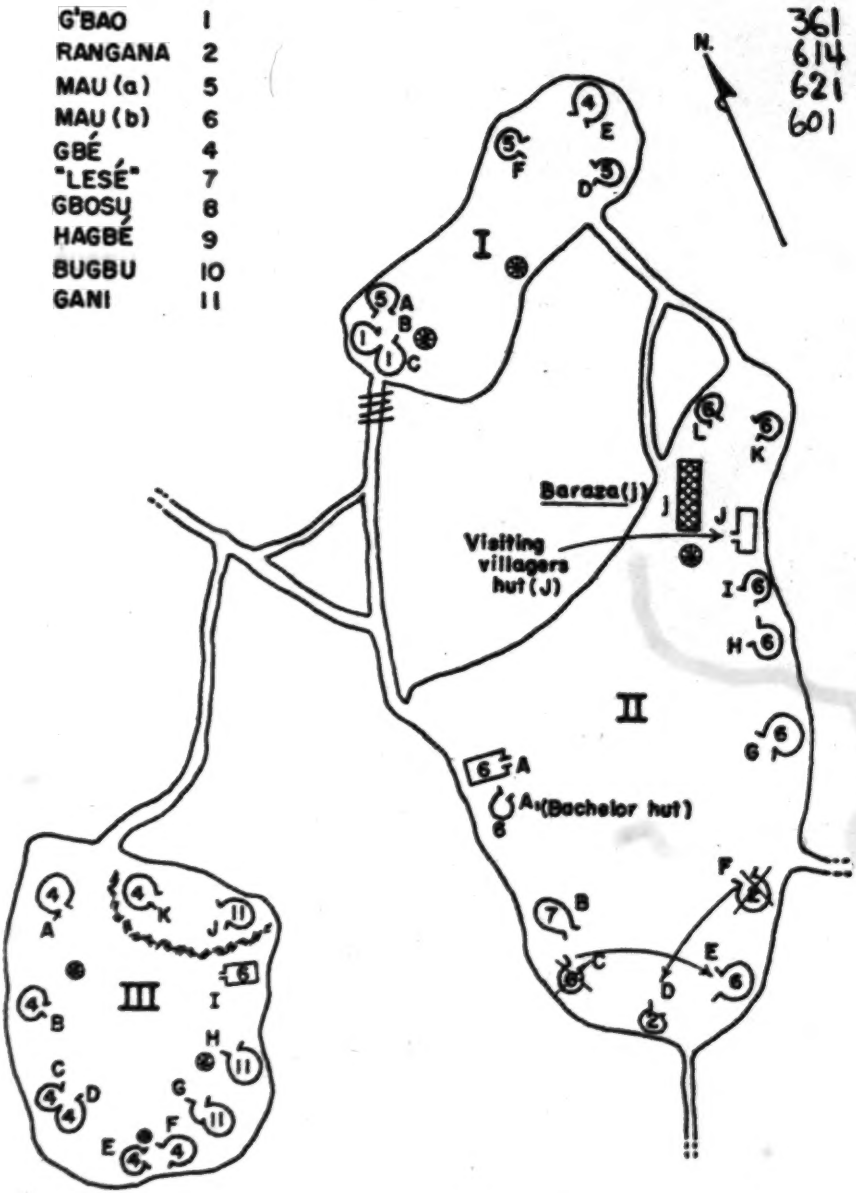
Family:	4	Male:	12
Youths:	3	Female:	11
Hunters:	4		
Elders:	4		

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.346]

Plan 4a

G'BAO	1
RANGANA	2
MAU (a)	5
MAU (b)	6
GBÉ	4
"LESÉ"	7
GBOSU	8
HAGBÉ	9
BUGBU	10
GANI	11



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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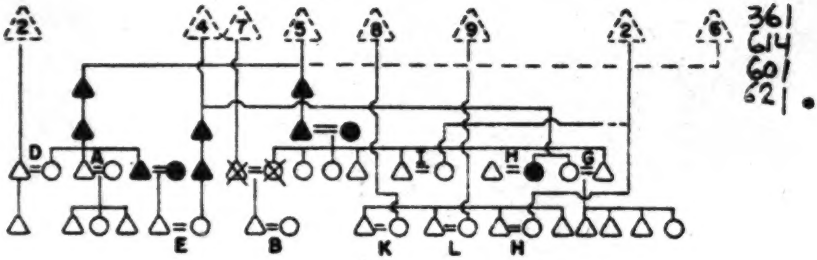

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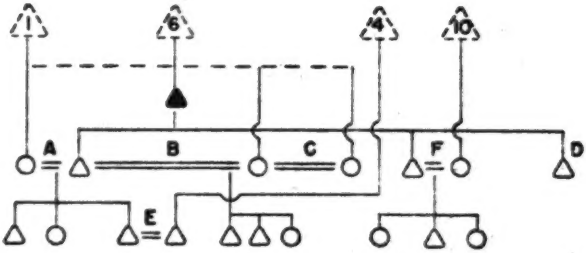
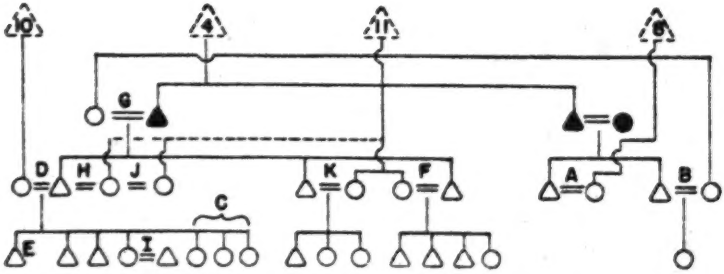


III



PLAN 4a–m *Hunting camps of net-hunters and archers other than at Epulu, showing composition.*

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.348]

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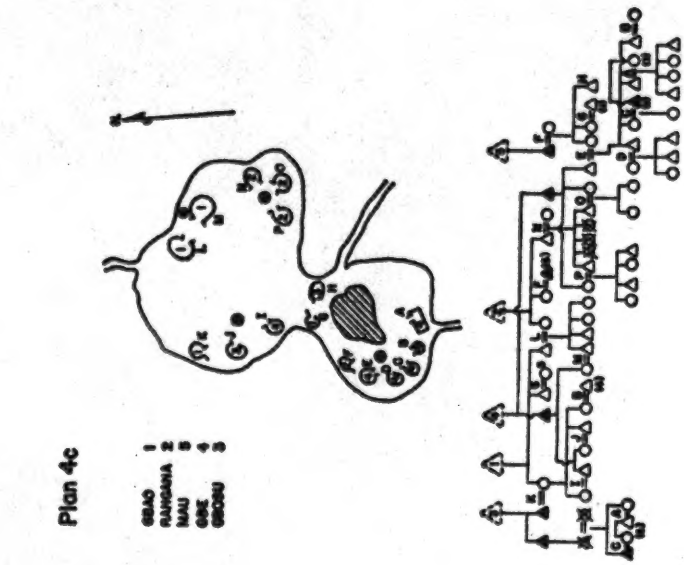

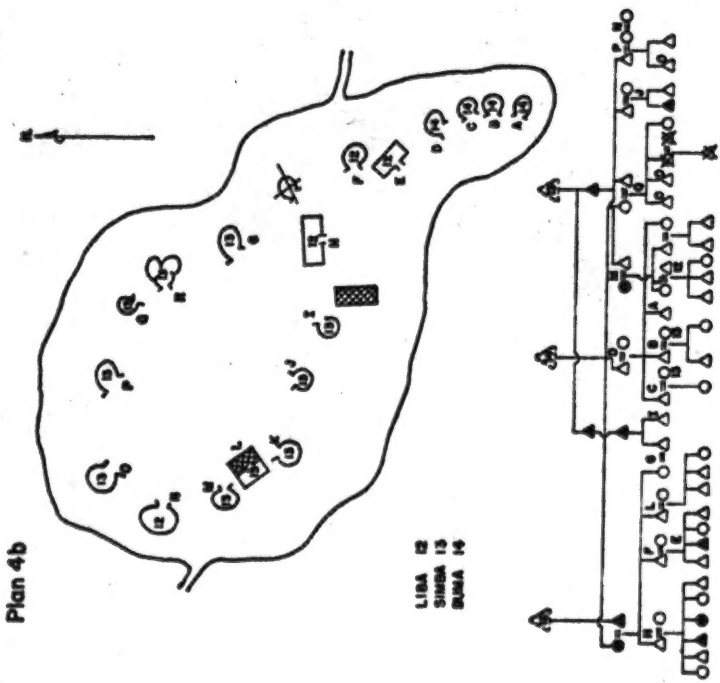

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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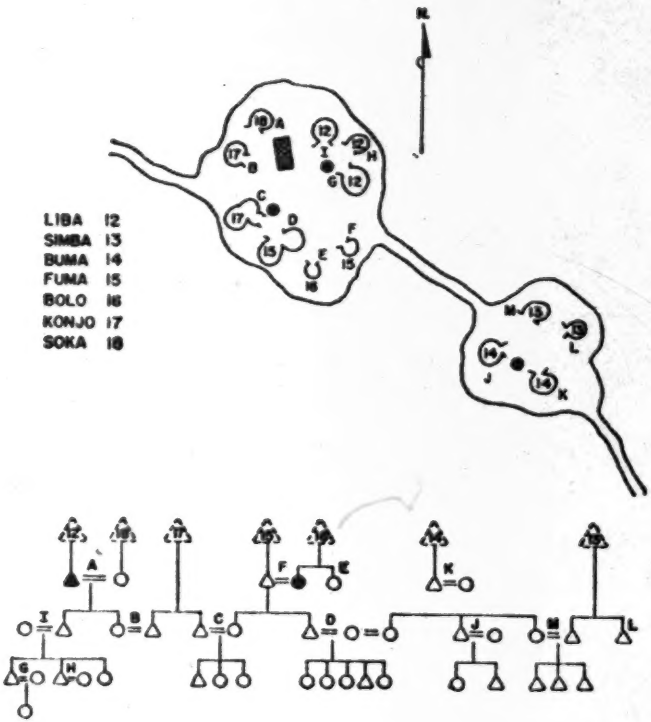
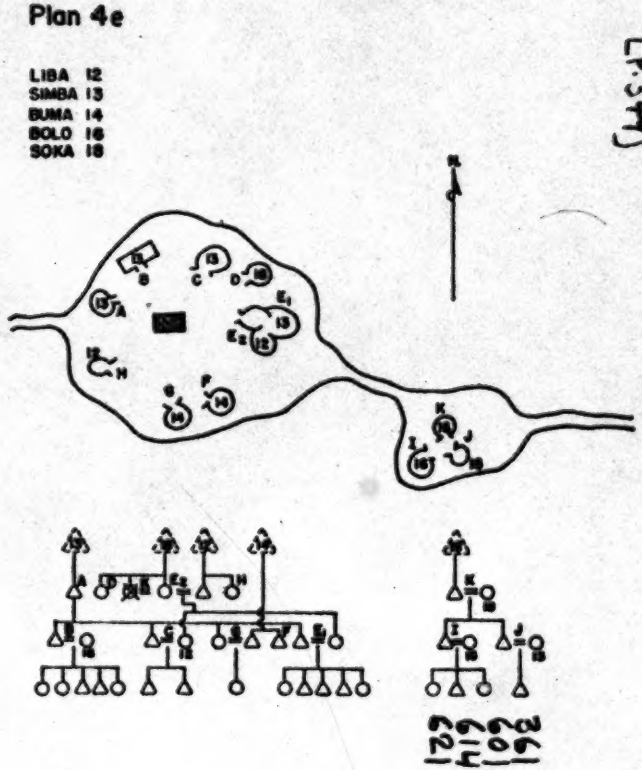
Plan 4d



Plan 4e



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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4f

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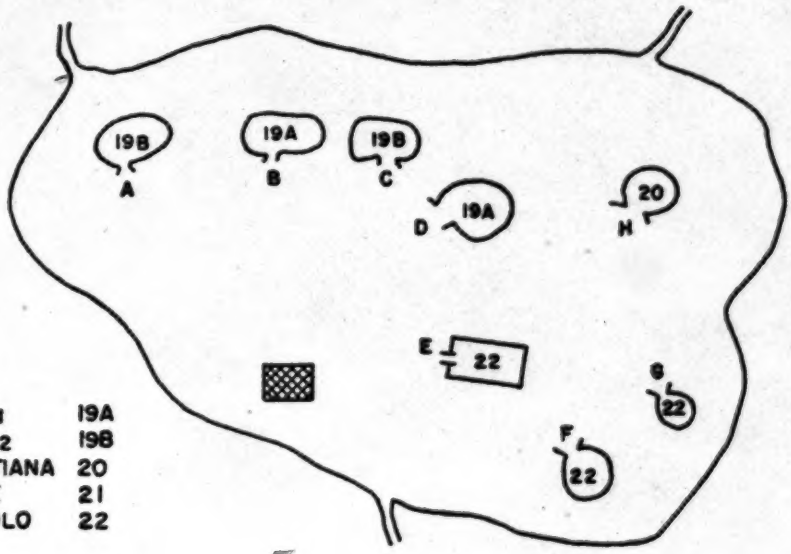
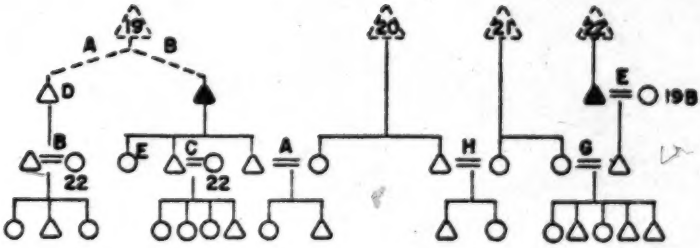


KIMA1	19A
KIMA2	19B
PIPUTIANA	20
DOLÉ	21
TOBOLO	22



2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Plan 4g

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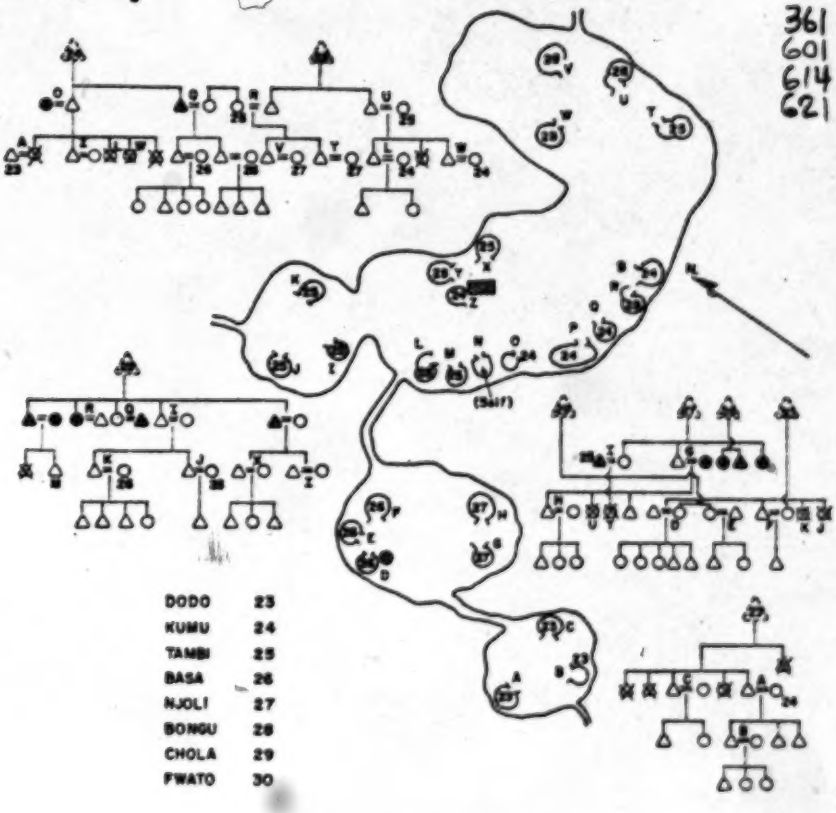

DODO	23
KUMU	24
TAMBI	25
BASA	26
NJOLI	27
BONGU	28
CHOLA	29
FWATO	30

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361
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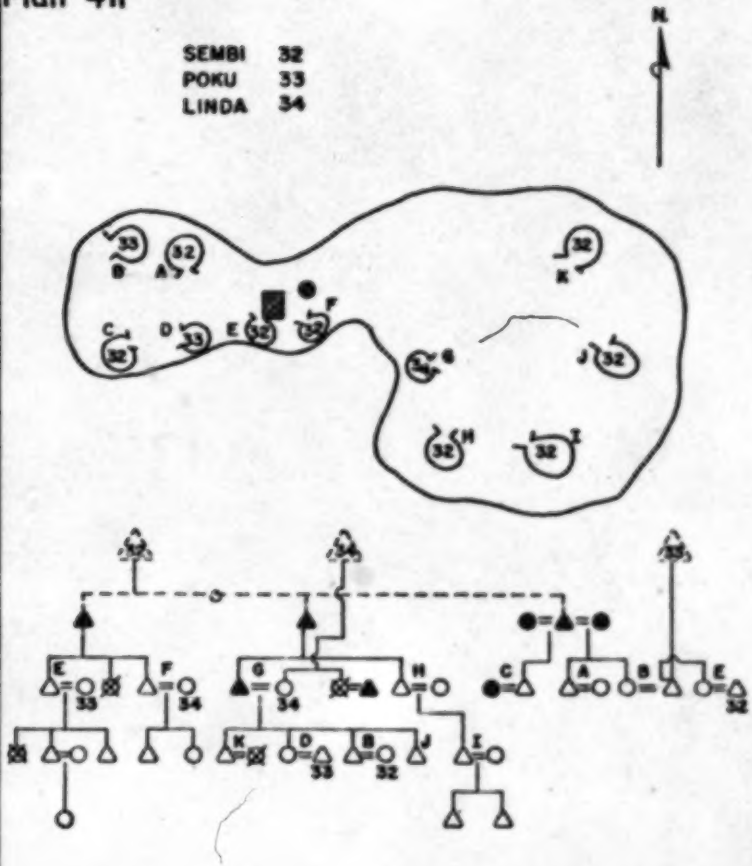
[P.352]

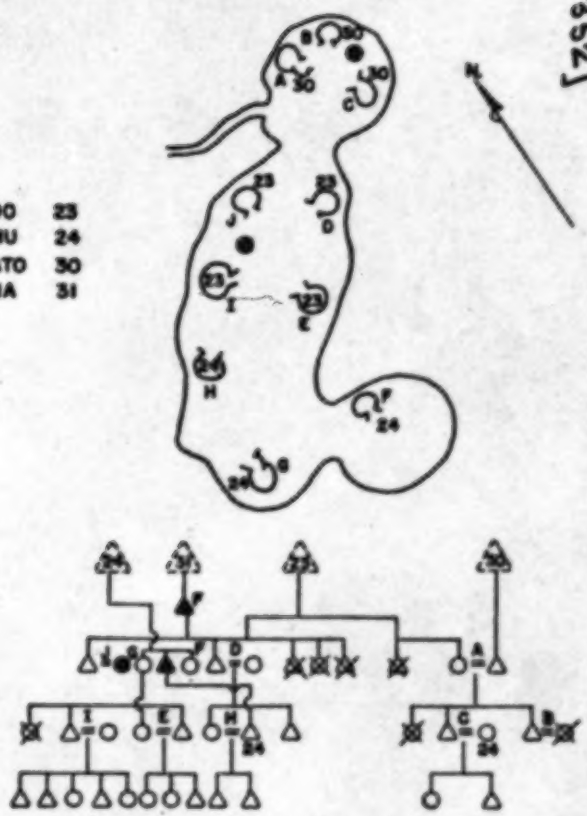
Plan 4h

SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34



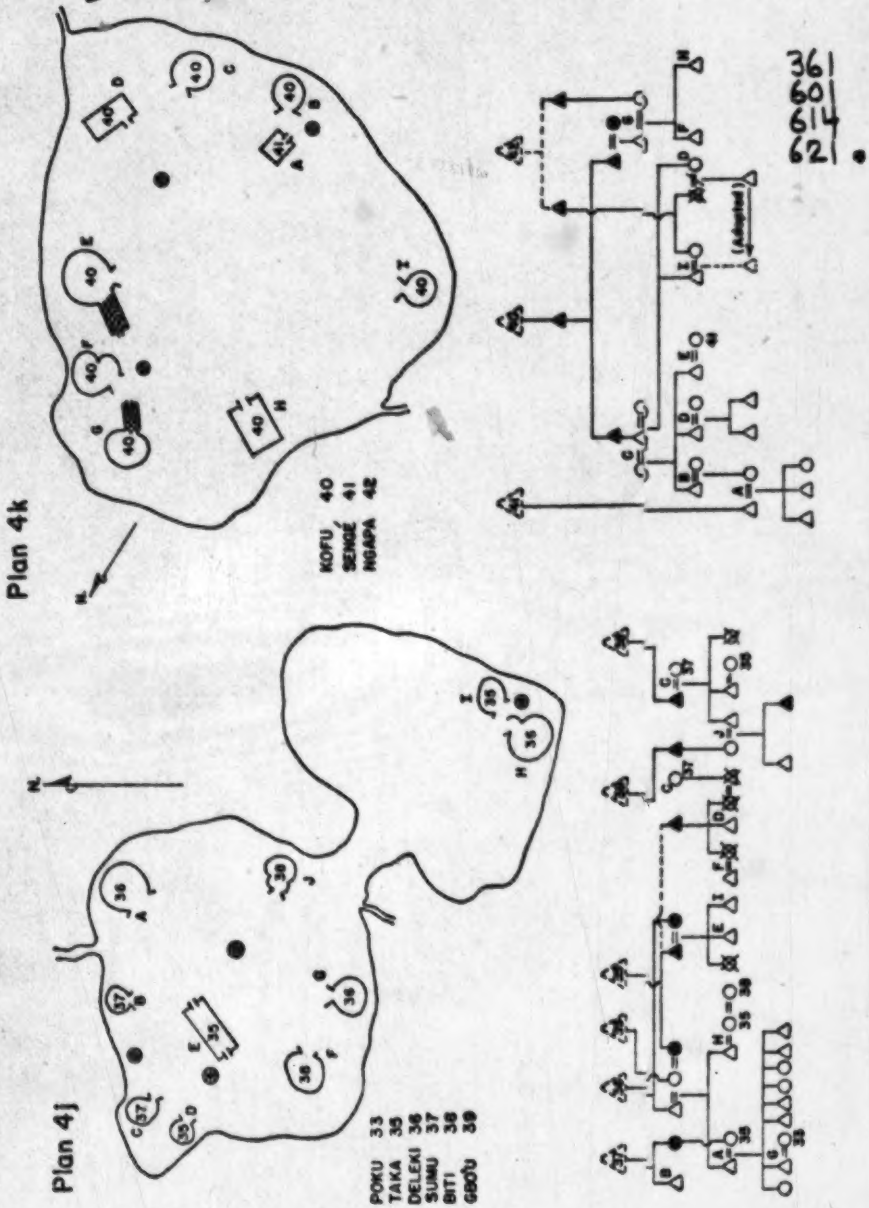
Plan 4i

DODO 23
KUMU 24
FWATO 30
DENA 31



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 353]



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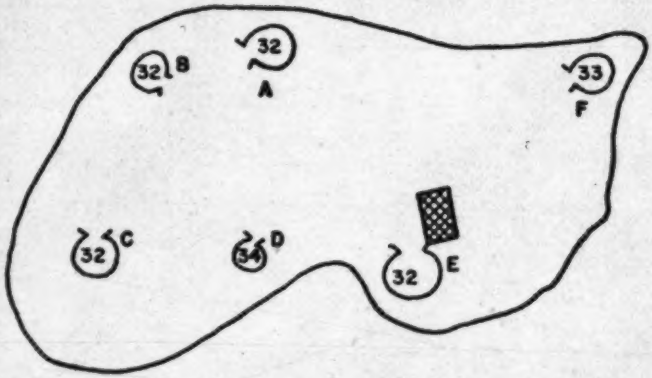
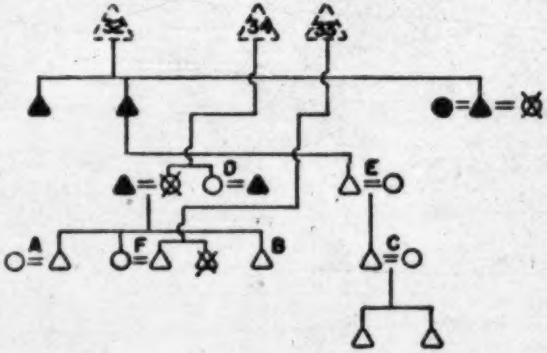
[P. 354]

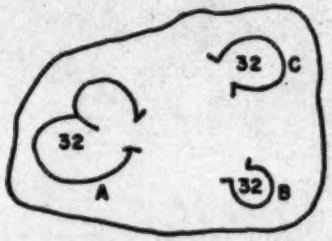
Plan 4L



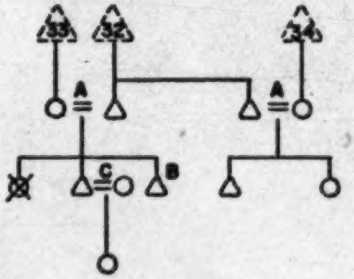


SEMBI 32
POKU 33
LINDA 34

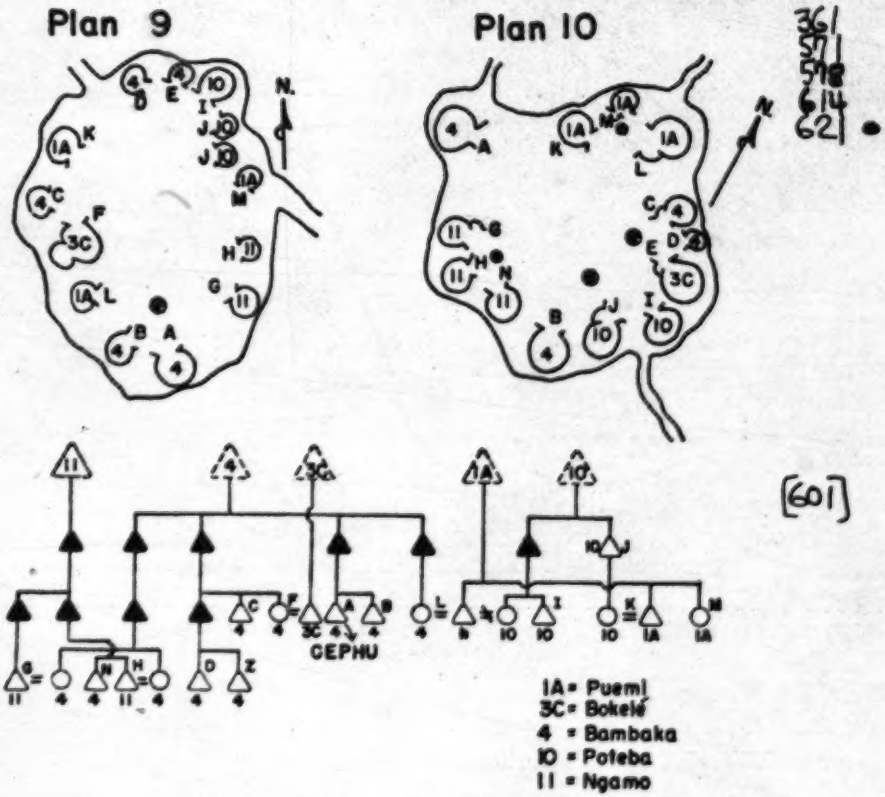
Plan 4m



SEMBI 32



2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Cephu's camp before (Plan 9) and after (Plan 10) his hunting offense.

[Plan 11 is located inside back cover.]

[P.360 is blank]

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [954] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to 578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp [583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

The leader of this group—although with Pygmies it is always unwise to talk of single "leaders"—was a wily but rather naïve Pygmy by the name of Cephu. Most Pygmies use their real names among themselves, but they all have additional names, in KiNgwana, by which they are known to the Negroes. Cephu always used his KiNgwana name, pronounced just slightly differently from the Negro equivalent, Sefu. No matter what language they are speaking, the Pygmies always retain their own peculiar intonation, which renders the language almost incomprehensible to non-Pygmies.

Cephu's family was large, but not large enough, even with all his in-laws, to form a hunting group of his own. To do this you have to have at the very least six or seven individual families, each with its own hunting net; only in this way can you have an efficient net-hunt, with the women and children driving the animals into the long circle of nets, joined end to end. Cephu's group was usually not more than four families, and so he tacked himself onto Njobo and Ekianga. Sometimes this worked out well enough, as Pygmies are great people for visiting their relatives, and one or the other group might be depleted by absences. But at other times they would have a number of families visiting them, and then the addition of Cephu and all his relatives made the whole group far too large and unwieldy. But as he had taken the precaution of exchanging sisters, he could not be refused, and so he would make his own little camp close by connected by a narrow trail. He would follow the others whenever they went hunting and was invariably blamed when the hunt was not a success. At night he and his family kept to themselves, seldom venturing into the main camp. They sat around their own fire, offended, aloof, and rather unhappy, but with hides as tough as that of a forest buffalo and impervious to the most obvious hints and thinly veiled insults. But Cephu was the best storyteller in the forest.

Kenge's position in the group was an undefined and rather happy one. His father had married a sister of Njobo and joined his wife's

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

224 765 578 156 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how everyone wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing, lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 765 578 156 593 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply. He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense, but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

[602] [621]

578 156 152 224 224 578 156 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu, who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

224 156 626 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [858] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

593 595 598 606 607 887 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

• 621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 578 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But the men usually know this anyway. 621 626 578

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass. 626 593 584

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility. 626 157 181

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great provider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator. 621 829 778

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 Chasse as they were put through their exercises, all obscured the faint chirpings of crickets and birds and the chatter of monkeys. And as the sun rose and began to beat down on the parched and scorched earth, the village asserted once more its determination to dominate the hostile world around it. The men went off to cut down more trees for more houses and bigger plantations, and the women went to hoe and cultivate the small fields so laboriously prepared, which after another one or two years of hard work would have to be abandoned. For the soil which can support the primeval forest with luxurious ease refuses to bear fruit to the crops of the villagers for more than three consecutive years.

In the neighborhood of the Epulu there were, in fact, several villages. Some twenty-five years earlier, when Patrick Putnam first came to the spot and decided to settle there, there were none. He built his home with the help of various men of different tribes whom he took around with him to assist him in his work. Some were from villages several hundred miles away. They called in other helpers, and gradually the village of Camp Putnam came into being. A pretty, straggling village, neat huts dotted haphazardly either side of a gracefully curving track, just wide enough for a car to pass through to Pat's home. Even though its members came from half a dozen different tribes, it quickly assumed the characteristics of a traditional, tribal, forest village. The family feeling that is so powerful where a village consists of all the men of a single clan, their wives and children, was replaced by a common loyalty to Pat, who worked day and night in his small dispensary, saving the lives of the people he loved and, in the end, giving his own. Pat acted as chief in nearly all respects. Disputes were brought to him and he settled them, wisely and justly, according to the tribal laws he knew so well. The village began to attract Pygmies, who gradually attached themselves, again in a perfectly traditional manner.

To a lesser extent this was so even with the new and distinctly

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred.

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery.

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in

this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

3t Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

gathered, but the forest gives its people honey only during two happy months. It gives with even greater abundance, however, and the honey season is a season for abandoned merry-making, when even the cares of hunting become unimportant, as each individual, young or old, male or female, sets off every morning in quest of this precious gift. Above all, it is a season for rejoicing, for dancing and singing. It is also a season when hunting groups split up into even smaller units, each going its own way, claiming certain honey trees for its own by marking them with a vine tied around the base or with some other sign that they know will be respected by all other Pygmies. Only villagers would be capable of breaking such a trust. And so it is also a time when the Pygmies tell stories for the benefit of the villagers of the dreadful and dangerous spirits that they have to fight in order to get the honey. Naturally enough, then, it is a time when the villagers prefer to leave the Pygmies, and the forest, well alone.

Cephu was already off on his own, slyly camping near the valley that divides the territory of the Epulu Pygmies from that of the next group to the west. He had relatives in both groups, and he felt able to claim trees in both territories, depending on where he thought he would do best. Those that were left split into two bands. One set off with Ekianga, far away to the north of Kaweki's fishing camp. There they hoped to combine good hunting with the honey quest. A few made a permanent halfway camp so that they could act as a convenient relay station between Ekianga and the village, using the surplus meat to obtain luxuries that would help make the season even more festive.

Masisi, however, refused to have anything to do with this plan. The honey season was no time to be bothered with hunting, he said, and in any case he was fed up with village food and village tobacco and dirty village water. He wanted to forget about the village and eat nothing but forest food. He decided on an area that was little frequented. There was a great deal of dissension among those who

otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister, Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda, shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

621 be very glad if I came to their camp; I would find it less noisy than Ekianga's.

I asked Kenge what he wanted to do, and without hesitation he said he was going to follow Masisi. Maipe was his half-brother, and a very good friend of his, but his main reason, he said, was that he was tired of noise. He knew that Masisi's camp would be a quiet one, with lots and lots of singing and dancing. To the Pygmy, noise is synonymous with trouble, with dispute and discontent; music is never referred to as noise, but rather as "rejoicing." I felt that Kenge [114] was right, and we decided to follow the next day.

114 It was, I knew, to be my last trek into the forest with the people I had come to think of as such close friends, and even though I still had another two months to spend with them I was sad. It was partly because of this, and partly because, like Kenge, I was so profoundly content to be back in our own part of the forest, that I found the forest more beautiful than it had ever been. Kenge said it was just because it was the honey season, but as we passed the plantation and entered once more into the shade of the great friendly old trees, he added, "This is the *real* world . . . this is a good world, our forest."

We walked slowly, enjoying every minute. We passed through the plantation that Njobo and Masisi had begun to cultivate more than a year and a half earlier, and found it a ruin, happily abandoned for more worthwhile things. We skirted Apa Muhoko because Kenge said Cephu had camped there recently and it would be full of jiggers. In the deserted remains of Apa Kadiketu we stopped for a rest, sitting on a log that had once resounded to the hammering of ivory bark-cloth beaters. I thought of the great molimo songs that had been sung there, and wondered if I would hear them again before I left. Beyond Apa Kadiketu we followed the path to Apa Lelo, almost to the spot where I had once seen a leopard crouching up in the trees above me. There we turned west, following an animal trail that was narrow and tangled. It led through hilly country completely new to

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] [821] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sent him, their own brother, none. And why did they not come and join him? I expect that Ekianga was saying the same thing about Masisi in the south, with all his honey.

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One day I decided to go and see for myself. With Kenge I set off early in the morning, but after several hours of rapid trekking we came to a deserted camp. The fires still smoked, and it had obviously not been long abandoned. We scavenged around and found two spears and a bow and some arrows that had been left behind, presumably in the hurry to get away before we arrived. There were also several baskets and pots. Armed with the more worthwhile trophies we returned to Apa Toangbe. Masisi was wild with fury at this deliberate insult. He told Kenge and me to go off again the next day and find the others, and bring him back some meat.

We found them a considerable distance away. They were thoroughly surprised, having thought we would have been shaken off and discouraged. They hurriedly tried to conceal the great amount of dried meat that had been accumulating, but they could not hide it all. So they criticized Kenge for having been so mistrustful as to sneak up on them silently from the side, instead of using the main trail.

Kenge replied that in our experience we found that main trails only led to deserted camps. He then delivered Masisi's comments in full. The comments were pithy, and Kenge added his own embellishments. He dwelt mainly on family loyalties. There was no doubt that Manyalibo was wrong; he had even taken Masisi's hunting net, promising to send meat, and had never sent any. Njobo's net was there, too, yet his sister, Maipe's mother, had received none of the meat it had trapped. Ekianga himself had sent no meat to Asofalinda.

I had expected a spirited defense, but Manyalibo slowly came out of his hut, where he was hiding, and said grandly that we could take all his meat back to Masisi; he had had enough, and anyway he had really been saving it for his "brother." He added that as for

621 joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as every-
578 one would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet
224 later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?
[602]

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and
[574] industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

621 On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters
628 to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621 •
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.

621 of me. Masisi, still breathing fire and fury about the treachery of his relatives, came to visit us from time to time; otherwise he kept strictly to his own camp.

221 And so, after the Pygmies had taken advantage of the one season
621 they know, a season which allows them to forget about the cares of communal hunting and the need for constant co-operation, the camp was beginning to come together again. Every year this splitting up takes place, and every year the forest draws its people back together. Whatever frictions had existed were soon healed; a new year was about to begin. Before this camp ended, Masisi would have found some excuse to move a little farther north. Ekianga was already talking of shifting a few hundred yards south, and Cephu would make up his mind to jump this way or that. Everyone knew it, and within a week of arriving at Apa Kadiketu they were talking about where they would build their next camp, and how it would be one camp again—until the next honey season.

114 But I would never know that next camp, so I made the most of my last home in the forest, sharing it as always with a good and constant friend. Maliamo set up house in Masisi's camp, and sometimes Kenge stayed there, sometimes in the main camp. At all times the forest was full of the song and dance of life. The games special to
221 the honey season filled the daylight hours and at dusk there was the
524 dance of the honeybees. Tremendous vine swings were slung from
526 the highest branches, and on these the youths practiced their acrobatics, leaping and somersaulting in the air. When a vine broke it was used for interminable games of tug of war, men against women. But there was a conspicuous lack of gallantry in this particular game, for if either side saw that it was losing ground it sent a saboteur into the other ranks. It is difficult to concentrate on pulling at a line
221 when someone is flirting with you—as Pygmies do. But best of all
535 was the dance. Once again the men and the women divided, and

while the men pretended to be honey gatherers, dancing in a long 221
curling line through the camp, looking up with exaggerated gestures 535
as if searching for some sign of bees, the women danced in another long line through the trees at the edge of the camp, pretending they were the bees. The two lines gradually came closer and closer together, the women singing in a soft, rhythmic buzz, buzz, buzz, while the men pretended to hear but still not to see them. Then the women seized burning logs of wood and attacked the men, tapping the logs on their heads so that a shower of sparks fell over them, stinging them like the sting of the honeybee. At that they all gathered [372]
up the embers, and where some of the younger men had been building an elaborate hearth of special woods and special leaves, moistened to just the right extent, they lit the great honey fire. There was no flame, but dense clouds of smoke billowed upward. Men blew [534]
on their honey whistles, women clapped their hands, and everyone burst into the song of magic that would travel with the smoke and call the bees to come and make more honey.

On such occasions I found that Masisi and Cephu made their ap- 621
pearance more and more often, paving the way for a reunion at the next camp. When the time came for me to leave all animosities had been forgotten.

One day Kenge had gone off on some unknown mission and I 114
decided to make a final pilgrimage to Apa Lelo, where the cycle had begun. This day of all days I wanted to be by myself, but there is something about the forest, not exactly threatening, but challenging, that dares you to travel alone. I had to refuse several Pygmies who wanted to come with me, and once I was well away I was glad. I knew what the challenge was, for to be alone was as though you were daring to look on the face of the great God of the Forest himself, so overpowering was the goodness and beauty of the world all around. Every trembling leaf, every weathered stone, every cry of an animal

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 574 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

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Although between themselves the pygmies have little division of labor, in another sense they are all specialists in hunting, and the division of labor is between them and the Negroes. In this sense the pygmies form an ethnic caste, a genetically and occupationally segregated segment of a larger economic entity.

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This does not mean that the Negro does no hunting. However, the pygmy spends all of his time hunting, the Negro only a portion of his. The pygmy depends largely on his ability to move noiselessly and swiftly about the forest, and to climb trees. The Negro depends on his greater patience and mechanical ingenuity, for he hunts largely by means of elaborate traps, deadfalls, pits, weighted spears dangled over elephant paths, and other deadly devices. The pygmy could never be induced to dig a pit; it is too much work, takes too long, and takes too much concentration and persistence. Nor do they ever use traps.

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Throughout the pygmy country, the pygmies can be classified either as net hunters or non-net hunters, depending on whether they habitually practice big community hunts, driving animals into nets, or depend entirely on individual stalking as a means of securing game. They may also be classified by whether or not they use bows and arrows. In both net hunting and the use of the bow and arrow, the pygmies follow the lead of the Negroes among whom they live. Where the Negroes have nets, the pygmies have nets; where the Negroes have bows, the pygmies have bows. This is easily understood, since the Negroes make both the nets and the arrowheads. Presumably, the bowless pygmies are net hunters, for otherwise they could not live.

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• [621]

Whether the pygmies in a group are net hunters or bowmen or both makes a considerable difference in the rest of

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224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

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594 family; that is, a man, his wife, and their children, if any. This group will occupy one hut together, and its personnel is normally fairly stable.

596 614 602 Each biological family belongs to a larger family group or extended family. All the families within a family group are closely related to each other through the male line. That is, each family group will consist of one or more closely related old men, and his or their male descendants and their [561] families. It is these old men, from all the family groups in a camp, who together form the "ruling" age grade.

• 621 614 Ideally, a pygmy camp consists of a number of these family groups descended through the male line from a common ancestor, for whom they are named. Therefore, the basic pygmy camp is thus a classic gens, or, in looser terminology, a patrilineal clan.

582 594 596 614 621 The families and family groups are strictly exogamic, and the clan is also exogamic if all members live in the same camp. If, however, it is scattered, the exogamy is not too strictly enforced, although a pygmy will never marry anyone to whom he knows himself to be related, on either side.

614 621 **The pygmy camp.**—Although this is the formal, ideal situation, the composition of the camp is complicated by the presence of visitors from other camps who belong to different clans and can be married. So it can be seen that the clan and the camp are not, in practice, synonymous.

621 Pygmy camps are not all the same size; there is a minimum and a maximum number of people who can live together as a cohabitive group, owing to their needs of hunting, and so forth. Fifty huts is about the limit, with from twenty to forty the optimum, and twenty-five the average. Each hut [592] contains one man, his wife, or wives, [162] and a few children, so that one hundred and fifty might be an average number

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621 592 162 of pygmies, of both sexes and all ages, to a camp, with from twenty to forty active adult males.

621 361 **Moving camp.**—The pygmies live in any given camp for a month or two at a time. By that time they will have frightened most of the game out of the immediate neighborhood, so that they have to walk a long way to hunt and a long way back. Furthermore, since [514] they relieve themselves at only a short distance from their huts, the whole camp will have become extremely malodorous by that time and uncomfortable even by pygmy standards, and a shift is doubly necessary.

484 361 When they have decided where to move, the women pack their carrying baskets with their pots and axes, and a small supply of ficus bark for the men to beat into cloth at their leisure. [487] Whatever they own they will pile on their backs, along with their babies, the babies often mounting the rest of the load. The men will take only their weapons—their bows and arrows and elephant spears.

Once the women are loaded they will start out, and reach the new area at about noon. They begin wandering about looking for a good spot—a place near water where there is supposed to be game, and fruit. Game is the first consideration, then fruit, but a *sine qua non* is to be about fifty yards from drinking water. The next consideration is to have the camp on a moderate slope so it will not become a quagmire when it rains. Another consideration is the absence of dead branches or leaning trunks which might be blown down during the wind storm which precedes the afternoon rain.

361 621 When they have hit upon a suitable spot, the women build the huts in a circle with the doorways facing in. There is no orientation, nor are any spots preferred. There are no special huts for unmarried boys or girls, or

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361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
621 There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts
361 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is
621 dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

None of the foregoing material is much concerned with leadership, and, indeed, it has been scarcely necessary to mention it. Some of the early sources, such as Casati (1891), Burrows (1898), Geil (1905), and Lang (1919) assert the existence of hereditary chieftainship; others (Johnston, 1902, 1904; Christy, 1924) deny this just as emphatically. Stuhlmann (1894), referring to bands of Mbuti living near the Manyema, states that the leader of each band is the ablest hunter and that he controls the wanderings of his band. Whether or not he has any other jurisdiction is not known. 622 114

Schebesta flatly denies the existence of hereditary chieftainship anywhere among the Mbuti, except among those most acculturated. He also denies the existence of charismatic 622 [177]

[1] Antelope cries are imitated in this way.

[P 184-D]

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[P.186-A]

622 leadership among the Mbuti except very rarely. He himself discusses the lineage elders ("*Sippenältesten*," Schebesta, 1948, 332, 559) and states that lineage authority lies with these elders alone. Under villager influence these elders may assume the characteristics of a chief (cf. the "Sultani" of the Pygmies, mentioned by Geil, 1905). Encouraged in this by the villagers, who see a way of extending their authority, the lineage elders may appear to become headmen or chieftains of Mbuti bands, representing the band to the village chief.

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622 613 888 [769] As mentioned above, the authority of the elder derives from his age, by virtue of which he represents the lineage ancestors. Any offense against the elder is an offense against the lineage. He takes precedence in all matters: the best part of the game is his, whether or not he took part in the hunt; he presides at various ritual offerings; he is responsible for settling disputes with other bands or with villagers; he leads at the head of the dance. Succession by age is strictly observed. This much Schebesta (1952, 221–223) reports, but without citing examples in sufficient detail to enable us to make a valid comparison between different groups or bands.

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• 622 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
629 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages. [171] Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[114] [1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and confusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship constitution of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and as descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[P. 185-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system." P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *kare* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors. P Z 439 177 571 [114] P Z [881] [608]

[P. 185-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

• 622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*177 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

[881] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
*[177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
• [622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 829 648 622 563 834 P 648 622 834 C [835] back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

C 648 574 P 648 There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

P C 648 [439] But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

P C 648 691 C [622] P C 648 691 423 186 [173]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[p.44]

CHAPTER 4

The Notion of Hereditary Ownership

P C 121 648 A superficial glimpse of the Mbuti/Villager relationship in any village might well tend to confirm the belief that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for the very principles of their social C [186] organization. This is the claim of the villagers, the more sophisticated of which use a popular description of the Mbuti as *"les gens sans culture."* The Mbuti themselves will readily admit it, and investigation will, up to a point, confirm it. But we have already witnessed one contradiction; namely, that if the situation is one of superordination, and one of total cultural dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, then the villagers would have and be able to exercise some form of political control, and they do not. Indeed there are only the most tenuous political mechanisms for relating the two groups, such as the supposition that each hunting band has a headman or chief (entitled *capita* or *sultani*) who is answerable to the village headman. C 648 The villagers accord the Mbuti headman due respect, not far different from the respect they would accord a junior headman of P 648 another village, and hold him responsible for the behavior of his band. But even supposing that the Mbuti headman had any actual • 622 authority over his band, we have seen that the villagers are incapable of enforcing their will by taking either retributive or restitutive action against the band or the *capita* for fear of reprisal, and because of their very real need for the continued, if minimal, service of the Mbuti and their fear of losing even that.

P The Mbuti *capita*, in any case, is merely a village creation and car- # 117 ries no authority whatsoever and little influence among members of 622 the hunting band. The other Mbuti accord him his title when in the 554 village, or even when in the forest, if discussing a village problem. They use him as a convenient link who can also serve as a scapegoat. Through their "chief" the other Mbuti are freed of many of the cares and considerations involved in their relationship with the village, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]

Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends. They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans. It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups. In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

621 more related to the demands of economic co-operation than to any
[224] other factor.
[184]

But however stable a camp may become after the initial fragmentation, that fragmentation is but an indication of the more systematic processes of fission or fusion that come into play each time a camp moves. Plan 11[1] gives the layouts of each camp built by the Epulu band for a period of over a year, and the cyclic process is quite clear. For the net-hunters a large camp is normally advantageous, although beyond a certain point a net-hunt becomes unwieldy. But once a
[621] year comes the honey season, when hunting is of secondary impor-
[622] tance, and it is more advantageous for the band to be split into two or more sub-camps, thus tapping the territory's honey resources more effectively.

361 The series of camp plans shown indicates how the process of frag-
621 mentation as observed at work within *apa* Lelo is continued and
578 sharpened with the building of each new camp. Sites are even chosen because they afford greater privacy between the various sections, thus minimizing any serious disputes that are in progress. Some interpersonal hostilities will persist, however, and it is these and not lineal relationships that are reflected in the final fission, when the camp divides into a number of independent camps, or sub-bands, each going its own way. If the dispute is serious, one or another sub-band may go off to another territory, and seek to join up with that band. This was in fact Cephu's situation. During the honey season he left the Epulu territory and went back to his home territory to claim his honey trees. But that territory was occupied by a large band where Cephu's hunting chances were no greater than those of anyone else, and this was not to Cephu's liking. Cephu tried to carve out a territory for himself, between his own band and the Epulu band, but he was always being forced by sheer economics to join the one or the other. He could never induce enough men to camp with him to set up an
[224] effective independent net-hunt. For this a minimum of seven is generally required, and Cephu could seldom raise above six.

So the monthly change of camp is an opportunity not only for a diplomatic rearrangement of the layout, minimizing latent hostilities, but it is also an opportunity for improving the economic strength of the band by either adding to it or subtracting from it.

[221] The honey season itself is a last opportunity for old hostilities to fade away, and the complete separation of the sub-bands into camps many miles apart generally resolves most sources of friction. If dis-

[1] [see pages 392 A-D -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[F 108-B]

E
• 622
344
352
291
516

2. The village headman's *baraza*, used for receiving visitors and holding public discussions.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622] •
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561
433

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for village luxuries. Bribery, indeed, may be said to be the only effective control the villagers have over the Mbuti. But it is short-lived and costly, and is on an individual or familial basis at the most. As far as internal relations are concerned, the band clearly exists as a territorial unit composed of a number of nuclear families cooperating in economic food quest. The Epulu band, and nearly all others studied, are characterized by a composite nature, negating the possibility of lineal authority. Any form of central authority is further negated by the constant changing of band composition. Leadership exists in respect to different fields at different age levels, and is nowhere centered in a single individual. Any attempt at the assumption of individual authority, or even of excessive influence, is sharply countered by ridicule or ostracism.

There is consequently no central leadership, in the form of an individual or even of a council, with which the centralized village leadership can deal in political terms. Nor is there any lineal leadership, let alone any stable lineal unit, with which village lineal units can relate, except in theory. The institution of *karé* brotherhood is primarily an individual relationship, and although its abuse can enlarge the relationship to a band/village level, there is again no mechanism of effective relationship at that level. Therefore the *karé* relationship, insofar as it is effective, only relates individuals.

Effective economic relationship of a stable nature can be seen to exist only between individuals or between families, determined by territorial considerations and by mutual satisfaction. The only control arises from these considerations, heightened by the Mbuti addiction to certain village foods. However, this fragments the band to such an extent that we can say the band simply ceases to exist, as such, in relationship to any village community. Neither the Chief nor the *capita* has the slightest authority or control over the band; flux renders a lineal interrelationship impossible, and we are left with no more than an agglomeration of person-to-person exchange relationships that may be economically effective but convey no political control to either side, the nuclear family being the largest effective unit, and frequently not even being that.

commercial village that was set up on the roadside, by the government, immediately after Pat's death. The main focus of the village was not, as in so many villages, in either special plantations or road work, but in the Station de Chasse. This, with its collection of live forest animals, became an attraction for wealthy tourists with time and money enough to make the trip from Stanleyville or Beni; hence the optimistic Belgian who built the motel directly opposite. A little farther up the road, away from the river, were the houses of several hundred workers. This village stretched right up to the entrance of Camp Putnam, and beyond was the Hotel de Bière and a line of a half-dozen or so stores. The majority of these villagers, as in Camp Putnam, were from distant districts and from many different tribes. But here they had nobody to hold them together, as Putnam had his workers; their disputes were settled arbitrarily, according to Belgian notions of right and wrong. It was a village filled with jealousies, deep-seated grievances and smoldering hatred. 361 177 621 [578]

A few kilometers to each side of the Epulu River were two traditional villages. To the west was Dar es Salaam. The name was brought from the coast by the slave-traders, and its inhabitants were all descendants of the almost universally disliked BaNgwana, who had sold their souls to the traders and helped them in the capture of slaves and the theft of ivory. The headman of Dar es Salaam was a friendly rogue, Musafili. About two kilometers away from Dar es Salaam was the camp of Musafili's Pygmies. Like every other Negro he referred to "his" Pygmies as though they were chattels. Although Dar es Salaam always offered the warmest hospitality, I never felt at ease there. The heritage of a bloody and treacherous past was only barely dormant, and the BaNgwana are suspected today, as they always have been, of practicing the most dreaded forms of witchcraft and sorcery. 361 181 175 [622] [563]

A little farther to the other side of the Epulu was a very different village, and one much more typical of the traditional settlement in 361

this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. *It* was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

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173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, "... there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

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621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

• 623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." According to Putnam, the Mbuti re- [57] spect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"

[P 228-B]

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[p. 228-C]

is almost certainly informal, because special au- 623
thority within it is the result of individual 554
qualities rather than of hereditary title to any [57]
particular office. Nowhere is there mention of any formal constitution of the council or hereditary tenure of office. Mrs. Putnam's information serves to confirm Putnam's assertion that there is no formal leadership, that any question that arises is settled by discussion, and that there is no single leader in such discussion, though respect is given to the older and more experienced men.

Nowhere is there any mention of any repre- 621
sentative of the lineage or clan ancestors, or any 613
indication that the lineage as such is of any im- 614
portance in government. The net-hunting [184]
bands, it will be remembered, are larger than those of the archers and are more often comprised of more than one lineage.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

62 **Government.**—There are no chiefs,
571 councils, or any other formal govern-
561 ing bodies in a pygmy camp. In mak-
ing any decisions concerning the whole
camp, two factors are involved. The
[888] first of these is respect for older peo-
ple.

561 A pygmy will always, in addressing
571 a man of an older age group in any
576 formal situation, call him "senior"; he
888 will listen respectfully to an older man
and will always obey any reasonable
orders he may give. If a younger man
[626] shows disrespect, the other members
of the camp will gang up on him and
berate him. This respect for age, and
for the opinions of wise old men, is the
basis of pygmy government.

623 Secondly, while the opinions of most
571 of the old men are respected, every
561 man in the camp is entitled to state his
[888] own views on any subject. Thus, dur-
ing the evening talking time, the pyg-
mies will discuss whether to move
camp, where to move it, and why; or
whether to go net hunting, and where
to hunt. The discussion has no leader
and may go on for several evenings.
Finally the men who are shouting out
different opinions will come to an
agreement and the decision will be
acted upon.

623 In general it is the older and more
571 experienced men who make the deci-
561 sion, but as some of the old men are
888 considered eccentrics and freaks, little
[828] attention is paid to them. Rather, it is
an oligarchy of the more respected
among the old men, a body with no
formal membership or specific compo-
[562] sition. In their decisions the pungent
remarks of the women also have a con-
siderable influence.

594 PYGMY SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Families and their extensions.—
The smallest normal social unit in a
pygmy camp is the individual biological
[P. 334-B]

[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against 613
antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards 689
find that they receive no share when game from 626
the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does
not share any of her gathering products with
others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and [685]
above all those suspected of sorcery, who are [754]
considered the worst types of antisocials, are
punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp,
and left to die if they are not executed by some
means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta [114]
cites neither examples in detail nor enough
cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He
seems, however, to be generally in accord with
what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, ex-
cept with regard to the position and authority
of the elder and the alleged "system" of law
and punishment.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge 802

There is little information on division of time
and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives
the result of his work among five Mamvu-
[P. 186-D]

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621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
578 monial squabble may well become enlarged
527 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, 578
listening and making loud comments, is not 626
insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute 562
among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions.

Apart from the driving of the incestuous 627
youth from the camp, there is no record of even 684
temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere.

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

[NET HUNTERS]

538 114 with origin, but rather with dissociating the insignificant from the significant, regardless of origin. A collection of legends as told by four men of the Epulu net hunters, then, is something of great value but to be used with care. Mrs. Putnam made such a collection, totaling some 200 legends. Its very size, coming from a single hunting band, adds to its value. To a person knowing the band and the men who told the legends, the significant can often be easily distinguished from the insignificant. But source material of this kind needs much fuller documentation than is available for use to be made of it for purposes of sociological analysis (see Turnbull, 1959).

538 [1] Similar caution is needed with legends, which, as with the archers, are an important means of expression for the net hunters. The legends are also effective means of social [626] control and illustrate attempts to rationalize the unknown. If we talk about "Mbuti legends," we not only open ourselves to questions as to whether particular legends are of villager or Pygmy origin, but we also imply that the legends necessarily have traditional significance for the Mbuti. The Mbuti like a good story; they will retell it whatever its source. A legend may have had some particular significance for the people to whom it originally belonged, but for the Mbuti its only importance may lie in the scope it offers their histrionic talent.

[P. 233-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[765] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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CHAPTER 9

The Life Cycle

DAILY LIFE

621 The life of the nuclear family is so closely interwoven with that of
• 626 the band that it is not always easy or possible to separate which ac-
594 tivities and occasions are the concern of which. The difference is only one of degree, for even the most insignificant and routine action in the daily life of the family is potentially of major concern to the band as a whole. Thus a man seeking to borrow his brother's pipe may provide the occasion for a petty jealousy to flare up and divide the brothers, if not the camp (this case is quoted in full in the section on
62 Government). In fact, in a society where there is no formal legal in-
183 stitution for the redress of wrongs, individuals resort to self-help and forcibly bring their case to public attention by deliberately provoking an incident. It is important then that there should be a pattern of behavior that is generally accepted, and which covers every conceivable activity so that there may be some direction and constancy in the ensuing discussion. The degree of "general acceptance" is of course not of such rigidity as to preclude the flexibility necessary for the pursuit of justice. But beneath the evident ambivalence there is a recognizable pattern of things that should or should not be done. This pattern is sometimes most plain in matters that seem most trivial, such as the insistence that embers that fall from the fire should not simply be scooped or pushed back, but should be picked up and placed on top of the fire; the feeling that anyone passing through a stream should wash himself, or at least a part of himself, even if he crossed another turn of the same stream a few yards back. If anyone is silent and untalkative, this is considered unusual and unfortunate. If one trips up accidentally, or stumbles even while crossing the camp, without harming anyone or anything, there is a distinct air of reproach among the onlookers. Such patterns of generally accepted behavior

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
56 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if
he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
56 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
226 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 824 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

E: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 of the youths will put it across his shoulders and take it back to the
482 camp, or it will be divided on the spot. Such division, however, is not considered final, and further sharing may be demanded on return to the camp if the hunt was not fully rewarding.

224 The system of sharing is nowhere the same, and the frequent interchange of visitors between hunting bands renders sharing even more complex. Each band, however, will state certain rules, and will not hesitate to override them in order to bring about the recognized goal—equitable distribution of the spoils, with special consideration for the owner of the successful net and for anyone who contributed to the kill by using or lending his spear, and so forth. Elders and children are allocated certain parts of each animal, and this helps to insure that these nonhunters are cared for adequately, though their friends and kin will always provide them with more if needed. If the hunt is so successful that game falls into every net, then there will be no sharing, though there may be exchange simply for the sake of preferences of taste.

224 This is not to say that sharing takes place without any dispute or
578 acrimony. On the contrary, the arguments that ensue when the hunt
152 returns to camp are frequently long and loud, and appear to be al-
• 625 most deliberately sought. One such example is when someone will invoke the rules of sharing of another band, where perhaps she or he may have a relative. Indeed it is remarkably seldom that the Mbuti will admit to having had a completely successful hunt. As a result, the return of the hunters is the inevitable signal for personal grievances, however far out of context, to be aired and expressed in terms of sharing rights. There is no formal settlement of the dispute, but invariably there is a compromise and there will be an exchange, at least, if not a sharing. This is undoubtedly an important outlet for petty hostilities and jealousies, which are automatically kept well within bounds by the very fact that, whatever the nature of the original dispute, it is made to relate to the hunt. No dispute can be allowed to threaten the
[476] co-operative pattern of the hunt, for subsistence depends completely upon the continuation of such close co-operation. This is of course particularly true among the net-hunters, whose hunting technology demands larger bands and closer and more constant co-operation between band members.

000 Following is an example of different rules for the distribution of game:

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Area	Portion of body	Given to
Nduye	Head	Women
	Back and legs	Shared all around
	Private parts	Dog-owner (who will give them to the dog)
	Intestines	Shared all around
	Stomach	Elders
Biasa	Head	Owner of dog
	Chest and legs	Shared all around
	Back	Dog-owner
	Private parts	Children and elders
	Stomach	Elders

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It will be seen that the only element the various systems have in common is in the selection of certain categories of people. Women are separated from the men among all three net-hunting bands and one archer band. The net-owner corresponds to the archer dog-owner. Elders are singled out everywhere except at Biasiku, where the hunters said they would be obliged to give the elders whatever they wanted. Children figure in two net-hunting bands, and only in one archer band, where they are coupled with elders.

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The only kinship relations specified are "sister and sister-in-law," which can perhaps be better interpreted simply as "women," among the Wamba net-hunters, and "dog-owner's father" at the Kilo archer camp, where the hunters were insistent that the rump would be given to the father, if alive, for him to divide among the other elders as he thought fit. In practice, however, sometimes using a village system of kinship obligations, the Mbuti men and women will make claims on grounds of kinship. In any case, as stated, the actual sharing generally is accomplished to suit the needs of the moment rather than to satisfy any system, stated or otherwise.

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The net-hunt can then be seen not only as a determining factor on the size of the band but also as a major mechanism for insuring cooperation of band members, and for allowing daily expression of internal hostilities and providing for their resolution through the highly fluid "system" of sharing. While the net-hunt expresses the importance of the nuclear family in that the nuclear family is the basic hunting unit (the father owning the net, the mother beating toward

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste. It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8,[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
56 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[648] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
622 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analysis]

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Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

554 581 582 156 [626]

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

554 156 157 [555] [626] [595] [593] [626] 156 554 842

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[518] and morally, beyond the forest.
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In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
• 626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among
[152] the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is generally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rigorously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, 627
though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain 578
behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from 252
Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Tening- 152
bengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually 578
her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and [626] •
was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad 224
and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His 578
cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody 224
should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was 626
reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they [578]
moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had [821] been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and dis- [52] comfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move [166] wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur- [648]

224 626 [821] [152] [166] [648] ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of friction).

There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Murmurs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 621 221 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when tendencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, particularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old 578 593 152 291 621 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja. Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young [224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 593 621 166 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 626 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its members. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting [221] should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies .FO4
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their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it was splitting badly (*"apa ndaso aké sinana"*). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: *"kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi"*) and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinama*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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626 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs,
621 and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masini found the
578 competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women
222 away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.
152
[533] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering
[534] and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.
[431]

7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always re-
157 lated to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is an-
461 other, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by
536 public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value.
[261] One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discon-
[781] tent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number
46 of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to
626 be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the
578 hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

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gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of general shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

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626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [165] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

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765 593 578 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 626 593 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

834 578 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a
837 villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met
627 (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

833 That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

832 18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the
837 married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's
578 daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Manisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began
[579] fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

837 Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in
• 622 and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hun-
[685] dred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

573 19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced
578 on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

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the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage. 593 578

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes. 595 578 [582] [591]

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut. [626]

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan. [837]

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed 595 578 626

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Everyone agreed that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and that her belly should not become big again until her child became big.

One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignoted her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense, all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed. Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apus'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

DISPUTE	Number Recorded	Number of Decisions or Judgments made	Instances of Positive Action
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.0%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

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forest as an incentive toward good behavior is far more important and far more strong than its negative aspect as a deterrent against bad behavior.

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likely to be highly disruptive but where disputes nonetheless occur. Any personal intervention or judgment would only be likely to lead to further disputes. The impersonal nature of the forest as arbitrator and judge maintains the impersonality of the laws; or if the forest is considered as endowed with personality, it is a spiritual personality and owes no more allegiance to one Mbuti than to another, and so is still impersonal in this context.

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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

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P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take C 754 563 Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gath- P *177 761 754 621 166 554 ered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same P *177 554 754 184 professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P *177 than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

754 In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

[482]
[626]

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for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

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THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are
[621] effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

577 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
621 upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

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sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three 577
principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, 778
even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the 626
forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experi- [2]
ence it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which [114]
kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism —is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the ob- 621
vious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological 778
determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of or- 181
ganization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total ab- 778
sence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as 533
such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have [189]
seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure 765
from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be 181
regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society 121
and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of re- 182
ligious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and 761
inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens 182
more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

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the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

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593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonethe- 578 less concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

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bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubasi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[5] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*" —"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[5] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

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with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

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(empty), *mbafu* (stupid) and *mota* (in the sense of dangerous) as assessments of all village institutions and beliefs. A certain amount of this ridicule is again a part of the joking relationship, but it is significant that the Mbuti do not frequently accuse the villagers of being *sinana*, "bad," however much they might refer to the village itself as a "bad place." From the forest standpoint, however, there is no question but that the village system is singularly inapplicable, and therefore at least *bulé* (empty) and possibly *mbafu* (stupid), if not actually *mota*, or dangerous. The village does become *mota*, and very much so, the moment it impinges upon the forest, and any villager in this situation becomes truly *sinana*, or bad. But as seen, in forest life even *akami* can be turned to good use, and the noise of village life, while in itself definitely not good, can be turned to advantage. In the same way that *akami* is the duty of hunters in the forest, as a means of resolving disputes, or at least bringing them into the open, so may *akami* in the village be used as an institutionalized means of resolving a dispute without settling the blame on any single Mbuti. Thus individual villagers, village demands, or village allegations of witchcraft or sorcery can all be invoked to explain what could otherwise only be explained by Mbuti delinquency. Individuals or families who are under criticism, openly or covertly, may decide to go to the village to fulfill some obligations to village *karé* or *kpara*. The village generally is a place for relief from the tensions of forest life, and by bringing their *akami* to this center of *akami* the Mbuti often hope to shed their own internal dissensions. The village is associated with "war" (*vita*).[8]

In the sense of constant interpersonal conflicts, there is no doubt that for whatever reason an Mbuti band reassembles after a stay in a village, it is likely to reunite in the forest with considerably more *ekimi* than it possessed on leaving. In the same way that individuals leave a forest camp for a visit to the village because of *akami* (probably of their own making), so whole bands move to the village when

[8] *Vita* is, strictly speaking, a KiNgwana word, but is invariably used by these Mbuti, as are some other words of the same language, even when speaking in KiBira. A future study of such usages might reveal significant connotations in Mbuti thought. Certainly the wars still uppermost in the minds of the Mbuti, as of others in this region, are those of the Arab slavers, whose pawns the Ngwana were. Similarly the KiNgwana word *bulé* (empty) is used far more than its KiBira counterpart (*bobo*) when the implication is particularly derogatory. Thus *kelele bulé*, which is all KiNgwana, means empty noise, a phrase that might be used to describe a dispute that has no just cause. If an Mbuti were to refer to a dispute as being *akami bobo*, it would have a similar connotation. However, if he said *akami bulé*, it would no longer describe a merely pointless dispute, but one that is both without just cause and with deliberate hostile intent. In fact the odium of *vita* clings to almost every KiNgwana word, as does that of *mayelé*, or trickery.

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

6

The Giver of the Law

CEPHU HAD COMMITTED what is probably one of the most heinous crimes in Pygmy eyes, and one that rarely occurs. Yet the case was settled simply and effectively, without any evident legal system being brought into force. It cannot be said that Cephu went unpunished, because for those few hours when nobody would speak to him he must have suffered the equivalent of as many days solitary confinement for anyone else. To have been refused a chair by a mere youth, not even one of the great hunters; to have been laughed at by women and children; to have been ignored by men—none of these things would be quickly forgotten. Without any formal process of

224
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224 156 620 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent spe- [858] cialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them- [522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

593 578 152 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 578 152 621 626 689 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 626 576 836 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an [152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. 578 626 576 836 [152]
Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends. 578 626 554

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the 578 689

593 595 598 606 607 887 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout, with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 626 578 181 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 626 578 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leadership appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involving the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know 621 626 578
that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But
the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he 626
does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his 593
friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group 584
will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they 626
are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that 157
they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a 181
husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, 621
no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, 829
"Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great pro- 778
vider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

own father had died, and a man to her. And now that he wanted to 593
have a wife of his own she had made him a hunting net, but what 584
did this worthless girl do? She gave Yambabo a hefty slap. Yambabo, however, had lost all her fight and could only whimper. When she had reached her mother's village she had promptly been turned around and made to walk all the way back, right through the night. Badorinji continued, telling everyone that her daughter had been a no good right from the start; all she liked doing was eating, sleeping, and going with boys. She would do no work, and she had refused Taphu, who loved her, many, many times. Then Badorinji ended 593
with a masterpiece of statesmanship. She said that she would betroth 584
her youngest daughter to Taphu, which would allow Kenge to marry 626
Maliamo, and that she would have nothing further to do with Yambabo. Yambabo would lose Taphu, and without her mother's help she would never be able to make a respectable marriage, for she had no other brothers. She could find someone to marry her, but unless [583]
a girl were given in exchange for her she would have no status and [554]
no security. Only her mother or Kenge could give her away and receive a girl in exchange.

Yambabo let out a cry of protest at this. She said that she was tired and wanted to lie down, and why did everyone shout at her. Her mother slapped her once more and asked her if she would marry Taphu or not. Yambabo, with a final wail of protest that everyone had treated her so badly that she would surely die, gave up the battle and said that she would marry Taphu, or anyone else for that matter.

For the first time Kenge stopped trying to pretend that he was 584
not listening to what was going on. He called a young boy and told him to run to Babama village with the news, and to tell them to get ready to receive Yambabo's wedding party. He added, hopefully, "And tell Maliamo that she is my wife now and I want her to come here at once and cook my meals for me. I am too busy to go and collect her."

224 get one cut of one animal, another cut of another, depending on what part they played in the capture of each. In any case, even if there is only one animal, everyone will get something to eat. This does not mean that all families eat equally well, however; some have more than others, some better cuts. There is both a reward for special luck and prowess, and a charitable mechanism for those who have shown neither. Sometimes the net hunters catch an okapi; in this case there is enough meat to feed the camp for a week, and everyone eats and eats well.

The meat is cut up by the man who killed the animal, or anyone who knows the rules. In any case there are always arguments. The man who makes a [626] mistake is cried down; they all know [571] the rules, or think that they know them. Government, as far as distribution of spoils is concerned, is by argument and common consent without specific leadership in any individual—the typical pygmy way of making decisions and ordering events.

In the case of the hunter who catches his animal all alone, without help of any kind, the carcass belongs to him alone. Theoretically, he and his family could [626] eat it all up if he wished, but there is little chance that this would happen; he would not dare face public opinion. He would be labeled a mean man and [439] would suffer for it in the end. It may happen however that he is behind in his gifts to his Negro host. In this case he will take the carcass uncut into the village, to avoid trouble from that quarter, and the other pygmies will not hold this against him, provided that there is other food to eat.

[171] The division of spoils after an elephant hunt follows the same principle as it does among the Indians of Tierra del Fuego or Lower California when a whale washes ashore—regardless of who may be responsible there is a

[P 333-A]

62 **Government.**—There are no chiefs,
571 councils, or any other formal govern-
561 ing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole
[888] camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 A pygmy will always, in addressing
571 a man of an older age group in any
576 formal situation, call him "senior"; he
888 will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable
[626] orders he may give. If a younger man shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 Secondly, while the opinions of most
571 of the old men are respected, every
561 man in the camp is entitled to state his
[888] own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 In general it is the older and more
571 experienced men who make the deci-
561 sion, but as some of the old men are
888 considered eccentrics and freaks, little
[828] attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific compo-
[562] sition. In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 **Pygmy Social Organization**

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological
[P. 334-B]

[ARCHERS]

628 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
• 627 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages.
[171] Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[114] [1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and confusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship constitution of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and as descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[P. 185-B]

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 621 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

[NET HUNTERS]

In the absence of any "elder," it is difficult at first to understand the legal system and how it functions. From the examples cited, however, it appears that one of the first rights of every Mbuti is the right of self help, but because of the nature of the band in which he lives it is unlikely that any serious dispute will remain restricted to the original participants and left to them to settle. Such can happen, and has, but usually the dispute is widened, involving more and more of the others and, finally, the whole band itself, until a settlement is reached. 627 508

Thus in a case of incest between members of the same lineage, the first act on the part of the girl's family was to pursue the boy, threatening him with knives and spears and driving him from the camp. There, they said, he could die. He would get no shelter and no food. Returning from this chase, they promptly tore down the house of the boy's "father" (actually his father's brother, with whom the boy was staying). As far as the offended family were concerned, the matter was finished, but the "father" thought otherwise and threatened to take counteraction. At this point, while the womenfolk on the girl's side were making the usual demonstrations of grief (throwing themselves on the ground and beating themselves) and the men on both sides were brandishing spears, knives, and bows and arrows, the dispute degenerated into the practical consideration of where the houseless "father" was 627 684 [52]

[P. 230-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.231-A]

627 to sleep and how he was to rebuild his house.
684 His wife, who would normally have undertaken this task, was sick. He was offered hospitality for the remainder of the night by other relatives, and early in the morning the offended family were themselves assisting him to rebuild his hut. During this dispute no mention was made of the fate of the transgressor.

621 This particular band was composed of two
627 major segments. The dispute was confined to
684 one segment and almost exclusively, though not quite, to the two families concerned. Other
[613] members of that lineage came forward only to appease and compromise.

The other segment, separated by a few hundred feet (the band was in the process of fission), listened eagerly to the dispute, making comments among themselves, mainly to the effect that the boy was a fool to have allowed himself to be found out and deserved to be beaten. When the pursuit of the boy led through their part of the camp, they hid. The older men carefully shut themselves up and refused to take any part in the proceeding.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
• 627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
578 monial squabble may well become enlarged
627 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P 231-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, listening and making loud comments, is not insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions. 578 626 562

Apart from the driving of the incestuous youth from the camp, there is no record of even temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere. 627 [884]

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

POLITICAL LIFE

The fact that authority is vested in the lineage for the archers, and in the great hunters among the net hunters, is mentioned above as one of the major differences corresponding to the difference in hunting technique. Also relative to this difference is the greater emphasis laid by Putnam on the participation of women in public discussion among the net hunters. We cannot go beyond this bare observation of fact, however, as there is no recorded description of authority in action beyond one or two isolated records of conjugal disputes. From these it is evident how even a private dispute enlarges its bounds by being taken up by all within earshot (which means in effect all in the camp), until everyone is involved. If the dispute is settled before it reaches these proportions, it can be assumed that it is with the approval of the entire group, as they are all aware of it whether they

184 554 [562] 578 621 627

[P. 246-D]

[p.247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
• 627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[765] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

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Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [888]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

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nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

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888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

62 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
62 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
93 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
561 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[648] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
522 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
• 627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analyze]

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554 156 522 626 627

Everyone recognizes that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

554 522 156 [626]

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

554 156 157 [555] [626]

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

[595] [593] [626] 156 554 842

554 156 157 595

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

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When Njobo was away from the band for a number of months with his son, these two nephews moved in. Normally they were not resident. Asuku brought not only his wife but also his father. He insisted on Njobo's wife looking after them, building their hut and so forth. Although Asuku was not liked, he would have been tolerated had he not tried to assume the status of Njobo, but this assumption moved him into an age group to which he did not belong, and he was consequently always being shouted down.

On one such occasion, Asuku was annoyed at the hunt for not leaving as soon as he would have liked. He strode up and down, telling everyone that they were lazy. When they shouted him down, he told them he was Njobo's son, so "I *am* Njobo, and this is Njobo's camp." When he was ignored he then turned from one great hunter to the other, and they all ignored him except one, who placed a stick on the ground at Asuku's feet and said, "There is a stick; if you are so big, pick it up and hit me." Asuku then turned to the elders, and Moké, the most influential of all, laughed in his face. At this, Asuku entered his hut and stayed inside for the whole day until dark.

On another occasion Asuku tried to say that his net was Njobo's net, and he was therefore entitled to Njobo's position in the hunt and should not be out on the fringes. He had chosen a time when his mother, Njobo's sister, was visiting, and the hunters did not want to make a dispute of the matter in front of her, out of respect for Njobo. However, one of them, Njobo's paternal cousin Manyalibo, went up to Asuku and said that if Asuku wanted that position it would mean setting his net next to him, and if that happened he would set up his net alone rather than stay in the hunt. This temporarily checked Asuku, and that evening old Moké gathered the senior hunters around him and, for once not smiling, he raised his arm and pointed across the camp to Asuku. This is considered a grave indictment, and the whole camp fell silent. Moké, very quietly, and talking as if only to the hunters but never lowering his arm or taking his eyes off Asuku, said, "That is a completely bad man. I have been watching and I have seen with my eyes, and my spirit [*roho*] makes me speak. He makes noise all the time, and he is the cause of all the noise in the camp. I would like to throw him out forever. But he is a relative of Njobo, and we should wait and see—and watch. That person is a child and has no right to share conversation with men. He is not of us. He comes from far off. I don't like people from far off. They are bad for any camp; they kill any camp completely." He then changed his attention and pointed at Ekianga, the other hunter of

554 renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent
658 cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké
• 627 said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit
201 [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months,
156 however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Al-
627 though this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby
621 much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and dis-
648 loyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp,
554 old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked
156 around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?"
627 Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to
[202] Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

156 His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon
554 after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he
578
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began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

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554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
[118] and morally, beyond the forest.
[156]

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké
[621] that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to any-
[608] one in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names
[614] were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate be-
[621] tween lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*).
[354] Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that
[354] usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with
[152] anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

one on the forehead, which is considered a dangerous spot. In the frequent marital disputes, any man who hits his wife on the head or in the face promptly loses any sympathy he might have had from his fellows. A dispute that follows such lines almost invariably ends with an elder, male or female, physically interposing himself between the disputants, who then revert to hurling abuse which becomes more and more exaggerated until it is so humorous that even they join in the laughter. Alternatively they may lapse into a sulk, which will last for the rest of the day and through the evening, but will be gone in ample time for the next day's hunt to take place as though nothing had happened.

If a dispute becomes widened in scope, however (and this is generally achieved by one of the disputants naming someone, either in his own support or as a supporter of his antagonist), it will ultimately involve the entire subsection of the camp, and quite possibly the whole camp. In either case the process is the same. Whatever the cause of the dispute, it is still regarded as essentially the concern of the individuals concerned. Rather than attempt a probably impossible reconciliation of the excited participants, the rest of the band joins in an effort to divert attention away from the actual cause of the dispute. If this fails, they attempt to dissipate the blame by raising all sorts of minor but associated disputes, so that a number of people become involved. If blame still seems inescapable, the camp clown is likely to try and take it on himself, or else it will be put upon him by the others. The disputants, in my experience, accept this device as a genuine solution. There is no attempt whatsoever, nor have I heard of it in other bands, to make any restitution other than verbal.

As already mentioned, a dispute may be stopped simply by making life intolerable for the disputants by miming them and throwing them into ridicule. If these measures fail and the dispute persists, the hunting automatically suffers, and if no reconciliation is effected, the band splits, either forming two subsections or remaining as a single band, with the splinter section joining another band, at least temporarily.

Not only is the attachment of blame avoided or dissipated as rigorously as possible, and restitution largely ignored, but punishment is almost completely unknown. There are one or two instances where a youth might be thrashed by communal decision, but they are rare and foreign to Mbuti nature. Closer to an indigenous system of pun-

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Closer to an indigenous system of pun-
627 ishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo*
[765] society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

681 There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against
684 the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender
688 will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat
765 is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu
533 Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

627 The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon
578 the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly. 627 578

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal. 252 152 578 [626]

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave. 224 578

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur- 224 626 [578] [821] [152] [166] [648]

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of 627 224 animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, 578 and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [165] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would 157 be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch [224] in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

someone's hut.[8] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most frequently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[8] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a
837 villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met
• 627 (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

833 That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

832 18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the
837 married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's
578 daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began
[579] fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

837 Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in
626 and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hun-
[683] dred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

593 19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced
578 on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *essumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

627 attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other, [126] even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

627 578

DISPUTE	*Number Recorded*	*Number of Decisions or Judgments made*	*Instances of Positive Action*
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such [626] [182] disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on almost any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

627 626 578 121 182 An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, despite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stomach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior. 626 There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including 121 the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the 182 contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in 778 the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[171] [10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pattern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

224 156 620 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent spe- [858] cialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight. 627 681 [685]

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention. 684 835

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned [412] [152]

684 their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all
835 manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over
[152] and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to
835 live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what
• 627 he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the
[753] forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857]
by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593]
burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] [593]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602]
the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
• 627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four 685
hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to 159
his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine 627
and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly [152]
because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It 578
blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very 578
involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a 583
sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, 593
as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had 595
just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since 578
Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not 853
to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they 607 [583]
could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

[P.160-C]

among the archers from three to 37 huts,[1] but averages about six huts per hunting band (termed "*Lokalgruppe*" by Schebesta, 1948). The net-hunter bands are larger, averaging around 15 huts per hunting band. The particular Epulu band to be considered was an exceptionally large and fluid one, in itself varying from 10 to 30 huts. In practice it often became two hunting bands. Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that hunting bands do occasionally combine for some special hunting project, but that such alliances are temporary and rare. The Putnam material indicates that, even when such an association does take place, each band rigorously maintains its separate identity, building adjacent but separate camps.

Each single hunting band, among both archers and net hunters, has its own defined hunting area, but until more material is available it is impossible to learn in what other ways the forest is thought of as being divided.

621 162 621 628. 621 224 423

1, [See footnote, bottom of p.160-D --Analyst]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 172-B]

shoot if the animal passes their way. Sometimes 224
the animal is killed by the dog; sometimes it escapes or is only wounded and must be pursued. It may happen that the dog itself is wounded, a major catastrophe for the hunters.

The rewards of this type of hunt are varied. A group of five or six hunters may be able to bring back an antelope each day, or may fail completely for days on end. The hunt seldom strays far from the camp and, with or without game, returns by late afternoon. According to Schebesta, the game caught is usually gutted on the spot and divided among the hunters, who bring back their shares wrapped in leaves, nothing being left unused. This division of game is according to traditional usage. If the game is [554]
brought back whole, only the elder with the aid of an assistant can divide it. It is laid on leaves, then skinned with sharp metal arrowpoints and gutted. The sharing is theoretically only between members of the band, but in fact is between any who took part in the hunt directly or indirectly. Thus the owner of the dog, or of the bow and arrow (if borrowed) that killed the game, may claim a share. An animal killed in [628]
the territory of another band belongs to that band, but Schebesta says that normally neighboring bands overlook this unless it happens frequently, when hostilities may ensue.

[ARCHERS]

[P.176-C]

The huts are built by women, and each wom- 592
an regards this part of the camp as her prop- [462]
erty. It is there that the family lives: the food is
prepared and cooked over a fire in front of the
hut entrance; the children play near the hut;
the husband sits by the fire, doing odd jobs,
guarding the food in his wife's absence, or help-
ing her in some way or another. Visitors do not
enter the hut but wait outside where they meet
any member of the family. Owing to the custom 621
of exogamy of hunting bands, allegedly on a 628
patrilineal-patrilocal basis,[1] *the married women* 609
may all be strangers to one another. In some 582
cases most of the women come from the same 591
neighboring band, so their communal interest is [313]
greater, but generally they come from widely [594]
dispersed bands and are more interested in their
own marital families than they are in their new
band as a whole. The men, however, are bound
by the strongest ties of kinship and mutual
interest in the band, as such, and in the particu-
lar territory within which it moves. Conflict
between the hunting band and individual fam- [578]
ily, then, is generally a conflict between men
and women, and, by enlargement, between two
or more bands—the band of the men and those
of the women involved.

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] P M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

[ARCHERS]

622 The elder settles numerous disputes, both
627 within and without his hunting band. Such dis-
613 putes mainly concern marital disagreements, Schebesta says. The elders often settle controversies by delivering speeches during the evening, leading frequently to noisy debates between the elders of different bands or lineages. Outside the lineage context, the elder is not in any way different from the others; there are none of the trappings of villager chieftainship. He delivers his decisions without hesitancy and is obeyed in the same way within his lineage. His power is limited, however, by custom and tradition as well as by context. He may neither ignore nor alter traditional practices.[1]

[171]

Relationship Between Bands

628 It has already been observed that any formal
613 relationship between bands is regulated by the lineage elders, according to Schebesta.

[1] Once again Schebesta's account is confused, and confusing, because of his failure to define clearly the kinship constitution of the hunting band. As the bands are, in effect, usually cognatic, and as descent is of little significance, his assumption that the band is a patrilineage and that authority is based on lineage respect naturally led him into difficulty.

[114]

[P. 185-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*.

P 628 [574]

P [582] [224]

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs.

P Z 648 186 Z [563]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]
000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

Legal System

671 421 There is virtually no evidence from which any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 621 628 The district hunted by the band, together with all the vegetable and animal food contained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is [224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 621 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

[ARCHERS]

75 Cuts, wounds, and sores are treated by rubbing the medicine, prepared with water or oil, into the wound. To cure headaches, rheumatism, and mental and other disorders, the skin may be scarified with an arrow and an herb rubbed into the wound. An effective though painful remedy against frambesia is widespread among the Mbuti. Mbuti and villagers both claim that it not only cures but prevents any recurrence of the affliction: Two species of vine are used, or, if the frambesia is malignant, a decoction is made with water and the earth of the nest of the ant (*ti'i*).

The Mbuti claim to know how to reduce fractures, says Schebesta.

Dysentery, diarrhea, and constipation are treated by enemas prepared from various lianas, barks, and peppers.

Various leaves and plants are applied or rubbed externally, without any scarification, against headache and stomach-ache, or inserted into tooth cavities.

759 Schebesta says that he has encountered no evidence of specialization in the field of medi-
75 cine. There never seems to be any need for one
• 628 band to apply for help or advice from another,
[P. 187-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p. 187- c]
nor do the archers seem to rely on the villagers for any medical help. 75 628

Rationalization

Speculation on problems of life and death are dealt with under Religious Life (p. 188). Here we can say only that Schebesta does not give a special account of legends or legend telling. However, from the legends that he quotes, and from those given by Joset (1948), it appears that among the archers this is an important means not only of reinforcing a system of values, or of commenting on individual behavior in the band, but also of rationalizing the strange and unknown. 538 82

Joset divides his collection of legends into four categories: (1) the Pygmy and his life; (2) animals: happy and unhappy relations between animals and Pygmies; (3) legends concerning the stars and sky; and (4) legends revealing individual psychological traits. Schebesta (1936b) says that legends tend to be spontaneous creations of individuals; there is no formal body of standard folklore.

[NET HUNTERS]

224 according to specific custom (details not given), after which a share may be sent to the villagers. Putnam says that the average catch for a day is half an antelope (the size of a goat) per man [281] (i.e., per family). Skins are stretched on frames, or staked out on the ground, for drying (Figs. 32–33).

224 426 Anne Putnam gives the hunting rules as told to her by one of the great hunters of the Epulu group. From these rules it appears that a net owner, if he lends his net to another, has varying claims according to the number of animals that fall into the net during any one day. The liver always belongs to the net owners, while the head, and a leg or legs if more than one animal is caught, go to the hunter. If an antelope gets caught in two nets, or escapes from one into another, the two net owners share it. If an animal becomes entangled and escapes without cutting the net and is subsequently caught, it belongs to the net owner. If, however, it cuts the net, then it belongs to whoever kills it.

224 621 554 628 Anne Putnam also gives the positions of net owners in the hunting circle of a large band of three combined hunting bands. Apparently, while the junior members of the two visiting bands tend to keep to themselves at each extremity of the line of nets, the main (host)

[P. 204-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 204-C]

group occupies the center, with the important hunters from all three bands occupying the most central positions. Figure 16 gives the plan of the camp, showing the separation of these three "bands". In fact they are more likely segments of the same band in the process of fission. 224 621 628 554

Net hunters do not use bows and arrows (Figs. 37–39) to any appreciable extent, and they are poor archers. Putnam, in his travels throughout the forest, found few really good archers. He says that they shoot arrows with great rapidity, but that only one out of five may 224 411

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 205-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

P
B
881
532

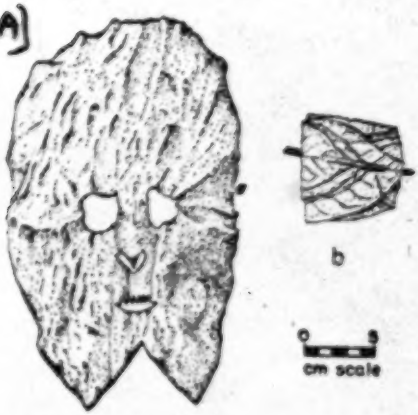

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

P
58
621

fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

P
58
628
613
000

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-A]

621 exogamy have been observed. When it is
581 between two bands, then the Mbuti prefer
582 them to be as far apart as possible. The trouble
628 they envisage in a marriage with a member of a
58 nearby band is friction between themselves and
574 the village patron of the incoming bride. He
174 will constantly assert every claim he has, or thinks he has, to her services, even to her children when she revisits her own band. As
628 far as the two Mbuti bands are concerned, such
583 a marriage would be on an exchange basis, thus maintaining the economic balance of each band.
[584] If the groom's band cannot find a suitable girl to offer, his mother's band may be asked to find one. There is always the alternative of compensation or service, or both. For compensation the help of the village patron is usually sought, and the marriage is arranged by him.
[585] Such marriages are usually subject, in the first place, to the normal Mbuti custom, which involves no ceremony other than a mutually agreeable exchange and a token offering of gifts, such as a few arrows.

[NET HUNTERS]

Relationships Between Bands

There is no account of formal relationships 628 574 between different bands of net hunters. Informal relationships are created through interband visits. These visits may be made by individual Pygmies or by whole families and may be occasioned by the desire (particularly among womenfolk) to see relatives or to seek a spouse, or by some dispute leading to ostracism, or by trouble between the individual concerned and his villager patron. The visits, according to Putnam, may become permanent but normally last only two or three months, which would allow for one or two changes of camp. These visits are important with respect to the practice of exchange marriage and lineage exogamy (which may amount to exogamy of the hunting band, though among the net hunters less frequently than among the archers) as an important way of allowing marriageable couples to meet and become known to each other's families. [584] [613] [184]

Occasionally two or even three bands join to form a single hunting unit. Under these circumstances each sets up separate but adjoining camps. If, as may happen though rarely, this association continues, the camps are moved closer to each other and finally become part of the same camp. In one of the final stages of the process of fusion, the two groups build their huts in the same clearing, but each as a distinct unit. Similarly, fission may be preceded by a gradual physical splitting of the camp. Each 628 476 361 [578] [621]

[P. 228-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

P 628 476 361 578 621 [P 229-A]

change of camp may thus reveal significant tendencies not only in interpersonal relations but also in the composition of the band itself.

Relationships Between Mbuti and Villagers

P 177 571 Z 563 571

Putnam had the advantage of being able to observe the changes in composition of the Epulu hunting band and its ties with neighboring villagers for more than two decades. As is stated above, the relationship between the net hunters and their villager neighbors is an individual and strongly personal relationship, as described by Schebesta (p. 185). The effect is that of an inherited relationship, but inheritance is not the basis. The effect is maintained only by the closeness of the personal bonds of loyalty and affection. If these bonds are weakened through any cause, there is nothing to stop the Pygmy from changing his allegiance to another villager. It may cause bad feeling between him and his patron, but it primarily affects the relationship between the two villagers concerned.

P [428] Z [628]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.229-C]

lage for any length of time, as when the villager needs help in the cutting of new plantations, then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly awaited by the villagers. P Z 535 177 571

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, when there is a case of poaching by one band within the territory of another, instead of one lineage head or "elder" consulting the other (the process described by Schebesta for the archers), the bands probably just inform the villagers involved and leave it to them to settle. P 628 648 Z 648

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, there is no question of any one Mbuti representing his lineage or band; such of the more important hunters as are available, and usually a number of the younger men and even older boys, come in a body to argue their case together. The villager is always at a slight disadvantage. While the Mbuti can easily move and find another village patron, it is not so easy for a villager to find more Mbuti. P 648 Z 648 563

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Little can be said of inter-band relationships as there are so few data. Neither type of band has any need to cooperate with neighboring bands for the hunt but may do so on rare occasions when there is a particular profusion of game. Among the archers joint hunting would be necessary in order to make use of the *begbe* beating technique. Among net hunters two or more bands might combine either when the individual bands fall below economic level or when a particular profusion of game requires more nets than are possessed by the single band. With the net hunters such association could become permanent, whereas with the archers it would never be necessary as the band is of such small optimum size.

The difference between the archers and the net hunters in their relationship with the villager tribes, as described by Schebesta and Putnam, is one of both degree and kind. We have seen that with their less efficient hunting technique the archers must rely more on vegetable products, and how, with the women's sphere limited to gathering, the women have more time and opportunity for gathering from the villager plantations. The less exhaustive and less noisy

[P 247-D]

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp
[628] site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[621] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material culture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the social horizon, particularly necessary in view of the preferred territorial exogamy. When the Mbuti say that they like to "marry far," they think primarily in terms of spatial distance, on the assumption that this will provide the necessary kinship distance. Thus territory is used, in the absence of a formalized kinship system, to express and maintain the necessary degree of exogamy. Territory is also used as the concept by which men and women define "home," and it is through territorial membership that any individual has such rights as he has. Above all, it is the territory which has bounds, not the band.

COMPOSITION

Both archer and net-hunter bands exhibit the greatest complexity in composition, particularly when large, but also sometimes even when fragmented into the smallest segments. The Epulu band, over the course of a year, was made up of twenty-seven patrilineages sharing seven totems, although the largest single camp contained only twenty-six family huts. Of these twenty-seven lineages, each of which has a name (possibly in imitation of village clan names) and a totem, only two are divided into more than one totemic group: the Puemi respect the leopard or the chimpanzee, the Bokelé respect the leopard or the buffalo or a rare antelope. The Puemi and the Bokelé alone, then, may be considered as clans, and even they only with reservation, for though each totemic group of the Bokelé (or the Puemi) claims to be related to the other through a distant ancestor, the ancestor remains unnamed and is never invoked, and it is admitted that intermarriage might take place. There is no record of such intermarriage, and certainly the lineage is exogamous. In the accompanying plans these totemic subgroups, then, are considered and represented as separate lineages.

For three large camps (over twenty huts[8]) made by the Epulu band within a twelve-month period, the following is the breakdown, giving the number of patrilineages and lineage totems represented in each camp, counting the husband, widower or rare bachelor hut-owner on the one hand, the wife or widow on the other, and counting only those living and present at the time:

[8] A hut is normally occupied by a nuclear family, but may sometimes be occupied only by a bachelor, widower or widow. Also, rarely, a married son and his wife may stay temporarily in the hut of either parents (more likely the parents of the son). By and large, however, a hut represents an economic unit owning no more than one net.

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [288]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities. 621 22 602 613

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather. 224 [462] [222]

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp. 224 621 166 224 166 621 628 [461]

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more 224 628 825

224 sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same
628 two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters.
825 Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain
[554] status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of
P the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The mo-
[221] ment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly
P exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the
[621] assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

P Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of
224 wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though
613 they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also
614 renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring
C even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends
[613] almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and
[614] erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can
[439] be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

P Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive
224 from individual allergies are associated with membership in the
613 patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception
614 those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-
262
825

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusu* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

131 bounded by Beni, Mambasa, and Irumu, more than sufficient for the
621 economic needs of any band, however large. The size of the band is
628 determined more by hunting technology than by territorial food-producing capacity, but each territory does provide, within itself, a means of regulating the internal movement of the band or its subsections.

621 Game, while not migratory in the wider sense, nonetheless tends to
224 move about from one part of the forest to another nearby part, as it
166 temporarily exhausts one area of supply after another. The game itself
131 is in this respect comparable to the band, which similarly is forced to move, not only as it gathers out an area but also as it hunts it out. The same topographical barriers that provide natural boundaries to the Mbuti also often provide natural boundaries to the game, and so in any one hunting territory there is a definite pattern to the movement of both Mbuti and game, the one following the other. The Mbuti may break the pattern either by eating village foods or by abandoning one section of their territory for another, for there may be several "game territories" within one hunting territory.

621 There are then general economic aspects of territory that influence
131 the movement and division of the hunting band, but they in no way compel it into one specific pattern or another. Far more important is the simple fact of the ample economic self-sufficiency of each hunting territory, and the fact that this is a factor recognized, appreciated and utilized by the Mbuti.

628 ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN HUNTING
224 BANDS
131

It is only extremely rarely that one band has any kind of economic relationship with its neighbors, and the nature of the relationship depends entirely on the context. As already observed, while there is a recognized custom of not crossing into another band's territory, this may be done if that band is nowhere in the vicinity. The likelihood of this happening depends on the nature of the boundary (how easily it may be traversed) and the nature of the quarry. It is unlikely that any but the most desirable game would be pursued. If such game is caught, however, then a share of it is due to the band in whose territory it was killed. While it would be unusual for one band to inform another of such good fortune, if discovered there is no hesitation at sharing in the prescribed way.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

The movement of bees seems to be somewhat less even than that of 628 game in the Ituri Forest, and it sometimes happens during the honey 222 season that one hunting territory may have a glut of honey while a 131 neighboring territory has a scarcity. In that case the less fortunate band will either poach, and hope not to get caught and so have to share, or else it will ask permission to camp on foreign territory. In the latter case there will probably be an exchange of residents between the two bands, the host band thus being able to insure its rights. (As [621] often as not, due to the composite nature of the bands, the en- [602] croaching band will have among its female or even its male members a relative, if not an original member, of the resident band. However, the loyalty of such individuals is divided, and is generally given to their present hunting band; otherwise undiscovered poaching would be impossible.)

The camps are generally as far apart as possible, unless the en- 621 croaching band is small, or a mere subsection that is tentatively seek- 628 ing a re-alignment with the resident band. Similarly with hunting, 224 joint hunting camps are exceptional, and to my own knowledge oc- 476 cur only if there is a common desire to hunt elephants which may be in one or both territories. The purpose of such joint hunts generally [439] involves village economics, in particular the supply of ivory to the villagers. In itself elephant-hunting demands only a handful of men at the most, and more than one dead elephant would be an *embarras de richesses*, to say the least.

It is not surprising, then, that there are no institutionalized means 438 of regulating economic relationships between bands. Such co-opera- 628 tion as does occur is completely outside the normal economic frame of reference. There is certainly no exchange of goods or food between bands, except insofar as a visiting family generally brings with it some meat, honey, nuts or mushrooms to share with their hosts. Each territory not only provides a sufficiency of food but an equally ample sufficiency of all the other material necessities of life.

The only true economic relationship that persists between bands 621 is concerned with maintaining each territorial band at its optimum 628 economic strength of composition. The overenlargement of one band and the diminution of another leads to a relocation of some of the families of the larger band in the territory of the smaller. Owing to the constant flux in composition, however, this is only a temporary relationship between two temporary populations, and does not in-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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volve any reciprocal rights or obligations, the increased efficiency of each band being the reward of each.

ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN BAND AND VILLAGE

This has already been dealt with to some extent, and has been seen to involve a question of mutual convenience rather than of economic necessity. What needs to be emphasized, perhaps, is that there can in effect be an effective economic relationship only between a territorial band and a territorial village, without regard to the composition of either. The territorial village is likely to be far more consistent in composition, moving less frequently, less far and less at random than the band, and above all following a clearly patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage. Any village, then, may be said to be in an economic relationship with any hunting band whose territory includes that village. In addition, it may have a relationship with other bands whose territories are sufficiently close to allow easy exchange.

The band is similarly in relationship with a village or villages according to territorial considerations. Within that band each individual will also have personal-exchange relationships with his villager *karé* brother, with his *kpara*, and with any other individual villager in the local village if neither his *karé* nor his *kpara* are there. He may maintain any, all or none of these individual relationships as it pleases him; there is no institutional means of compelling him one way or the other from either the band or the village. He decides entirely in terms of his own needs, those of his family and the general needs of the band. If he finds himself in conflict with the band then he either forms a subsection with two or three others or he goes to visit another band. Generally, however, a band tolerates complete individualism in this respect. The obligation to share, however, does not apply to village foods. Any Mbuti who does not enter into an exchange relationship with a villager, or who does not steal what he wants, goes without unless his relatives or friends voluntarily offer him of their own.

The decision of the individual Mbuti often shows rather more forethought than is shown or called for in his other economic activities. The probable length of absence of or from his *karé* or *kpara* is taken into consideration. If an Mbuti has a particularly generous exchange partner, he will, in that partner's absence, maintain at least nominal

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ridicule. That is, a man who displays himself as a great hunter, and boasts of his achievements too loudly, is somewhat distrusted, and any attempt on his part to use his reputation to gain more say than others will lead immediately to ridicule.

One other consideration determines the extent of influence of a man or woman in economic matters, and that is their knowledge of the territory. Thus, no matter how deserving of respect as hunters, a visiting Mbuti family who do not know the territory well will have little to say regardless of their kinship, age or other considerations. They will nonetheless be expected to take part in discussions.

It is not possible to talk of organization of economic relations with other bands, for such relationships are so rare and diverse. And insofar as the exchange relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers is an individual one, there is little call for organization or leadership there either. When there is call for a joint decision concerning the village, even if it does not directly concern hunting and gathering but, say, the desire of the villagers for entertainment for a wedding feast, or for harvest labor in the plantations, it is still treated by the Mbuti as a hunting issue and it is the same people, the younger married couples, who have the most say. It is made clear in Mbuti discussions concerning a projected move to a village camp that, for them, the village is regarded as another hunting ground. A move villageward of the whole band is to be considered in terms of the amount of energy and the nature of the effort to be expended, and of the consequent, prospective rewards.

The same pattern of organization and leadership pertains only in the making of the decision, however. From the moment of arrival in the village, the band ceases to operate as such and will only assemble for general discussion, in the forest manner, when contemplating a return to the forest, or if it is deemed profitable to organize a hunt for the specific intent of securing meat for the villagers.

It is only in the village, then, that the nuclear family can really be considered as a separate economic identity (this is particularly true of the net-hunters, rather less so for the archers). In the realm of forest subsistence the individual and the family are subordinated to the band or, perhaps better, become immersed in the band, for they almost lose their identity. Family membership is of no consequence in determining economic responsibility; age and territoriality are the more important factors. Any tendency toward charismatic leadership is countered by ridicule, and any persistence on the part of the hunter may lead to his being given the job of representing the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surp'us of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *ekami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *helele* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinema*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*ekami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*ekami a mu mukira*).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 12

Government: External

BAND TO BAND

628 621 *Marriage*

As already seen, the occasions calling for political relationships between one band and another in the forest context are minimal. Insofar as bands can be considered to exist only with respect to forest hunting territory, they cease to exist as political units when in the village, and there even the little interband relationship that pertains in the forest disappears completely.

628 584 574 571 561 There are basically only three areas of relationship, two of which might be considered formal, or institutional—marriage and trespass. The third, probably the most important structurally, is the interfamily visit. In all three areas there are no recognized or set patterns, each instance being conducted according to the context of the moment. But it will be seen at once that the relationships involved are once again along age lines. Marriage involves an interchange and a relationship between the elders of one band and the elders of another, between the youths of the one and the youths of the other. Trespass involves the hunters. Interfamilial exchange generally involves the older hunters, in my experience, or young married individuals who want on occasion to visit their parents and friends in their old band.

628 584 574 [591] If marriage is contemplated between two youths of different bands, it will be the result of their having met through interfamilial exchange, or while in the village. There will have been an exchange of visits between the individuals, and when their intentions are made known it is likely, but by no means inevitable, that the family of each will visit the other's band in turn, building their hut close to that of their child's future in-laws.

628 584 561 The propriety of the marriage will have been discussed within each band, primarily by the elders; there is no exchange of this kind be-

 628

tween the elders of the two bands unless there is some extraordinary 584
complication, such as the adamant objection of the parental age level 561
of one band or the other. If this happens, then two or three elders, male or female, come to visit the elders of the other band, and when the visit is over they will return, taking with them two or three elders to discuss the issue with their band. There is no privilege attached in such exchanges to either band because of sex; any privilege there might be depends upon the question of territory. Thus the band 628
where the young couple is expected to live and hunt, regardless of 591
whether their child is the bride or the groom, is considered as privileged, and consequently is to an undefined extent under obligation to the other band. However, as the question of residence is primarily an economic factor, depending on the relative sizes of the bands, it is generally settled to mutual satisfaction, and residence is not, in itself, a frequent cause of conflict.

Elders may be called upon to interact between two bands if the 628
balance of sister exchange is becoming disproportionate. However, 591
this too is essentially a question of economic balance and is only 583
called to count if a band needs to strengthen itself. Again the issue of locality is more important in determining the matter than is the issue of sex. That is to say, in Mbuti society "sister exchange" can also, under certain circumstances, be regarded as "brother exchange," although insofar as patrilocality is the more usual pattern, so is "sister exchange" more appropriate. However, a band that needs strengthening and has just received a bride for one of its members may conceivably demand that the other band execute the rest of the exchange and provide a groom for one of their girls. They can then insist that he come to live with them. The fact that they have gained by both marriages is excused because of their economic situation.

However regarded, the exchange system is so loose that it is easily 628
adaptable as a mechanism for maintaining hunting bands at economic 582
strength. To this end the hunters have some voice, but it is an issue 583
that is too clear-cut even to call for discussion, and once the issue [561]
is considered on grounds other than band size—i.e., the propriety of the marriage or exchange balance—it is in the hands of the elders. But even more is it all in the hands of the two individuals concerned, for although a serious depletion in the size of the band can induce hunters and elders alike to bring great pressure on its youths to marry, they cannot force such marriage. Interfamilial exchange, after all, is a perfectly simple method of increasing band strength, at least tem-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

582 583 porarily, and is considerably easier to arrange than a reluctant marriage. It can be seen, then, that the kinds of relationship existing between bands for the regulation of marriage are necessarily flexible. 628 More important, marriage between bands provides a formal relation- 581 ship between the nuclear families concerned and so provides also a 594 basis for interfamilial exchange between those bands. To have such 182 an exchange relationship, on a familial level, is of much more importance than wider political ties to a band which only on the rarest of occasions may need to act in concert, as a band, with the other band.

Trespass

621 224 131 Each hunting territory being economically self-sufficient, there is generally no need for economic cooperation. Boundaries are frequently natural features that restrict effectively the movement of both the hunters and the game, so trespass is also restricted. However, if following especially prized game, hunters will follow it across such boundaries with little or no hesitation. It is even said that if a band's territory is exceptionally unproductive, the band may move into a corner of its neighbor's territory, the furthest removed from wherever that band is camped at the time.

628 224 It is understood that in the case of pursuit of quarry a portion of the game will be sent to the resident band. It is equally understood that, if moving into someone else's territory, they should be notified and their permission sought. If either of these provisions is not maintained it may lead to friction, and a delegation of hunters from the offended band will visit the others in their camp, perhaps even staying with them for a few days. The question of who forms such a delegation is again largely an economic matter, for the members have to be drawn from the hunters, and the home band will obviously be unwilling to decrease its hunting efficiency to any significant extent. There is the stated possibility of a resort to fighting with wooden clubs; in one instance a few young hotheads suggested using spears, but this appeared to be more a figure of speech to indicate extreme anger, and was promptly rejected by the older hunters. I have, in any case, come across not a solitary instance of such open hostilities taking place between two bands. The visiting hunters are received with respect, and the trespassing hunters generally say that they intend to fulfill their obligations and, as a sign of good faith, offer to send out a hunt so their visitors can bring meat back to their band. If the host

If the host band insists that the others leave their territory, this will be done, but such action is rare, for it creates a barrier against interfamilial exchange. 628 224 [602]

If there is exceptionally good hunting in one territory and poor in another, and the bands are each small, they may temporarily join as one band. If they decide to cooperate in pursuit of a special hunt, this is achieved in much the same way that segments of a single band rejoin after the honey season. Indeed, during the honey season (among the net-hunters), each section of the band thinks and moves in terms of its specific section of the band territory, and if feelings run high between sections, infringement of section boundaries is considered just as much trespass as if it had occurred between two bands. In the same way that such segments, at the end of the honey season, gradually camp closer to each other, so two bands wishing to cooperate may approach each other. 628 224 221 621

Instances of cooperation, however, are even more rare than instances of trespass, and even though both may be regarded as formal, there is no special mechanism for dealing with them, and their influence in determining relationships between bands is negligible. 628

Interfamily Exchange

Although the above two areas of contact and interband relationship may be considered as formal, being institutionalized to at least some extent, there being a recognizable process of relationship though the outer form changes with the context, neither area is of as much effectiveness, in extent or degree, in determining interband relationships as the persistence with which families exchange visits. But such visits are so utterly unpredictable and circumstantial that there is not even the small amount of discernible process to be seen in the other areas. Whereas negotiations concerning betrothal or trespass at least involve recognizable elements of each band and act in response to a given stimuli, there is no saying when any given family, or how much of it, is going to decide to pack up and visit friends or relatives in another band. Nor do the families themselves generally express any other reason than that their "heart" wants it. No interference is offered by the rest of the band; indeed, there is generally no comment at all, unless their absence becomes prolonged beyond the duration of one camp—approximately a month. 628 602 574

The reasons for which a family might move out of one band and into another, for a temporary visit, are many and varied. Some have [621 591 594]

628 already been mentioned, and it should be reiterated that the freedom
602 of individual families to detach and attach themselves more or less at
574 will is of the greatest importance in the maintenance of bands at
621 optimum strength, this consideration overriding any other considera-
591 tions of residence, and apparently governing the system of sister ex-
594 change itself. But the band has absolutely no control over the nuclear family if it chooses to assert itself as such in this way. There are no direct bonds tying the family to other families, or to the band; the only influence the band can exert is between members of the same age group. This may result in only a part of the family moving, though when a family does decide to act in concert it usually does so despite any amount of opposition.

Whatever the purpose of the visit, whether it is in answer to a request to help swell the size of a small band, or whether it be part of an exchange of betrothal courtesies, a desire to see old friends and relatives, sheer whim, or of course displeasure with their own band, a family that visits another band is effecting a relationship between those two bands. Their very presence in the territory of another band entitles any member of the host band, regardless of kinship, to pay a return visit, then or at any time in the future.

628 To a certain extent even individuals visiting in the same way create
574 the same kind of relationship between their own bands and the bands they visit. There is no particular term that distinguishes bands related in this way, and the Mbuti all say that in effect they could always find an excuse, if they wanted it, to visit any band anywhere in the forest—"relatives (friends) are everywhere." But generally there are preferred areas of visitation. Cephu, for instance, was criticized for visiting with the band immediately to the west of the Epulu band. But there was no way of preventing him from doing this, nor even from inviting some of them into the Epulu territory. Generally the exchange relationship exists between bands removed several times,
[582] spatially. This corresponds to the stated preferential marriage pat-
tern, it being considered bad to marry into the immediately adjoining
628 bands. However, in case of trespass, if a dispute ensues, an exchange
594 relationship is sometimes claimed between families, and the dispute
621 is then channeled off in this direction, it being left to those families
[627] to effect some kind of settlement. This may result in the family belonging to the offending band staying behind and visiting with the others, temporarily swelling their hunting strength. Once again, however, the band has no control over the family, and a family seeing it-

self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
621 posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between
628 bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as
776 *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any
778 different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate
184 significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré*, *e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

value (though an individual generally knows and therefore feels at home in one territory more than in others) so much as a group value. The stated concern of the Mbuti is not to perpetuate lineage but to perpetuate the band, and bands are not only defined but named by territory. Individual camps are given specific names according to their locality. *Apa toangbe* is the camp under the *toangbe* trees; *apa* Lelo is the camp by the Lelo River, and so forth. It is significant that when referring to another band it is generally referred to by its current camp name, or the last camp name known, rather than by the more general name by which its whole hunting territory is known. This implies a recognition of the changeability of the composition of the band, and an emphasis on what the band is at any given moment, defined by the particular part of its territory it is hunting at the moment.

Practical considerations of territory are that birth in a territory conveys the right to hunt with that band throughout life, and it generally conveys a sentimental attachment to the territory that may well act as a stabilizing factor. Cognatic or affinal relationships may be utilized to acquire the right to hunt in other territories, but one then becomes a member, if temporary, of the band in which one is hunting.[4] But it is when one widens the concept of territory, so that it implies more than a mere area defined by boundaries, that the notion acquires its most fundamental importance. As a definable area it is of economic and political significance in providing the framework within which hunting by different bands can take place without danger of shortage or need for conflict; it is also of social significance in providing a symbol of band unity, and the promise of continuity. But the term used by the Mbuti for territory is the same word used for forest, *ndura*. Regarded in this light, territory assumes vastly added significance.

When an Mbuti says "This is our forest" ("*Nde ndura ndasu*"), he may be defining the territory of the band in which he is a current member, or he may be defining the Mbuti as against the villagers. Alternatively, if in the honey season among the net-hunters, he may be defining the territory in which his particular subsection of the band

[4] This again is an example of different degrees of kin relationship being recognized but not made explicit, because explicit recognition would alter the distance between the individuals and so disturb the *apua'i* relationship. Once in the new camp, the visitor is assimilated into the age-level system of that band regardless of the nature of his kin relationships. In giving his reasons for making the visit, either to his own band or to the band he is visiting, an Mbuti will not spell out the relationship but will most likely use the personal name, coupled perhaps with the appropriate generational term. The term alone would plainly not indicate clearly enough whom he was going to visit.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by 131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, [192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep- 778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

joining Masisi, there was not much sense doing that now, as everyone would probably be moving camp soon. Why didn't we all meet later somewhere near Apa Kadiketu?

Kenge and I returned, laden down with meat and protestations of friendship. Much the same thing happened when Masisi thought he would try similar tactics on Cephu. This time I went with Kelemoke, who had come to stay with us because he said he found Cephu's camp far too noisy. It was not much more than three hours away, and it was plain that Cephu had settled in well with his friends and relatives, because he was almost in the middle of a large and industrious camp. Everyone seemed to be eating well, and Cephu offered us food, which was unusual for him. He did not part with any meat—he had already heard of our haul at Ekianga's camp and asked why we had brought him none. I told him that Masisi thought it would be a good thing if he joined us and the others, and that he would get plenty of meat then. Cephu said he would think about it, but he was offended that we had brought him nothing.

Masisi pondered over these things for several days, and our evenings became interspersed with brief arguments between him and Mambunia and Kelemoke as to what they should do. Everyone was beginning to be hungry for meat again, and although Ekianga and Manyalibo had promised to send our nets back, they never did. We did not have enough people in our own camp to make a successful hunt. In the end Masisi made up his mind to steal a march on the others and get to Apa Kadiketu before they did. By this time we had been joined by a number of bachelors from both the other camps, and also by a third group of distant in-laws of Masisi, all of whom had learned that we were getting a great deal of honey.

On our way to Apa Kadiketu we heard news that brought matters to a head. We met Madyadya coming hotfoot from the direction of the village to warn Ekianga that a group of foreign Pygmies from the other side of the Epulu had invaded our territory and were steal-

ing all our honey to the east. Masisi immediately sent his son with 621
Madyadya to tell Manyalibo to forget the quarrel about the nets and 628
come and join him at once at Apa Kadiketu so that we could all make war on the other Pygmies together. He also sent Kelemoke with the same message to Cephu. We pressed on and built our camp in a hum of excitement.

Kenge saw that I was taking this all very seriously, and he led me to one side. "Old Masisi's head is unsteady," he said. "It has worms in it. He will fight only with words. Every year those Pygmies come into our land and we go into theirs. There is plenty of food; so long as we do not meet there is no fighting. If we do meet, then those who are not in their own land run away and leave behind whatever they have stolen. That is the only way we ever fight—we are not villagers."

But it was a wonderful fight of words, particularly when Ekianga 621
and the others joined us. There was so much disagreement that 578
Masisi said he was not ready to live in the same camp with them yet, and he removed himself to another camp about half a mile away. Cephu, still not sure which way the wind was blowing, camped between the two, and to one side, making a perfect triangle. For a whole week messengers were being sent back and forth. Eventually [628]
the invaders, presumably having had their fill of honey, retreated across the Epulu, declaring that never again would they enter such inhospitable territory.

But everyone was far too busy scouring the countryside and mark- 621
ing out new honey trees to be seriously bothered. It was strange to [222]
see how this familiar old camp took new shape. Any vestiges of old 621
huts were cleared away, except for the remains of the one where I 122
had lived, and that of Ekianga, both of which were made better and bigger. I did not take my old hut but moved to the far end, where Cephu had been, near to Moke. Ekianga and all his three wives, now on good terms with one another, were to the other side of me.

361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
621 There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts
361 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is
621 dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

• 622 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

[P. 336-A]

628 574 man, or even several men, may feel picked on, or in other words are unable to adjust themselves to the other members of the group in which they live. They will go on extensive visits to kinfolk in other bands, and some may never return. In this case they will [177] change their allegiance to new Negro hosts. Or they may have trouble with their Negroes and leave for this reason.

628 574 602 More frequently, however, a number of families will simply visit another camp, presumably because of the desire of women to spend some time with their parents, brothers, and other relatives. The camps are exogamous and the only chance a woman ordinarily has to see her own people is on such visits, during which the boys build up ties with their maternal uncles and [584] cousins. These visits, again, serve to establish relationships leading to marriage. Visits of this kind usually do not last more than two or three months, or the ordinary life of a camp site, but they serve to keep the pygmy world in a state or circulation, and to break up the monotony of the limited sets of relations possible among pygmies in a single camp and between pygmies and their specific Negroes.

595 582 **Marriage and divorce.**—The usual form of pygmy marriage is monogamy. One reason for this is the scarcity of women—many prefer to become second wives of Negroes and live in the ease of the village, thus avoiding the hardships of forest food gathering. 595 When a man does have two wives, one will live with him, while the other will live with her own kin, usually in a different camp, where he visits her on oc- [581] casion. Actually, the economic incentive to polygyny is absent, for whatever work the second wife performs benefits her own kinfolk only.

583 [582] Marriage takes place at or near puberty, and normally involves the technique of exchange. In its present

[P. 336-B]

855 There is a
597 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister
[768] will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta[8] describes one of the lat-
629 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

[P. 340-A]

585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

757 For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

755 177 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The *greatest single cause of mortality* in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

[P. 340-B]

[P.162-C]

For one thing it is often difficult to tell whether 174
a particular legend is of villager or Pygmy origin. Even from the remoter groups of Pygmoids in the central Congo, legends of origin among both villager and Pygmy agree that the Pygmies are the original "people of the forest." Verner (1902) refers to legends from the Wissman Falls area, told by both peoples, that give a purely practical account of how the Pygmies were driven before villager tribes invading their country, and how some retreated farther into the forest and others were captured and brought with their captors. Torday (1925b) gives a Luba legend attributing the origin of the Pygmies to Woto, Father of the Luba, who brought them out from the trees of the forest by singing. Torday (1925b) also mentions an interesting [648] •
custom on the accession of a Luba king, the ceremonial for which requires the Pygmies of the kingdom to come to the capital to act as bodyguard for the new king.

[ARCHERS]

[P.186-A]

622 leadership among the Mbuti except very rarely.
622 He himself discusses the lineage elders ("*Sip-*
613 *penältesten*," Schebesta, 1948, 332, 559) and
888 states that lineage authority lies with these
648 elders alone. Under villager influence these elders may assume the characteristics of a chief (cf. the "Sultani" of the Pygmies, mentioned by Geil, 1905). Encouraged in this by the villagers, who see a way of extending their authority, the lineage elders may appear to become headmen or chieftains of Mbuti bands, representing the band to the village chief.

622 As mentioned above, the authority of the
613 elder derives from his age, by virtue of which he
888 represents the lineage ancestors. Any offense
[769] against the elder is an offense against the lineage. He takes precedence in all matters: the best part of the game is his, whether or not he took part in the hunt; he presides at various ritual offerings; he is responsible for settling disputes with other bands or with villagers; he leads at the head of the dance. Succession by age is strictly observed. This much Schebesta (1952, 221–223) reports, but without citing examples in sufficient detail to enable us to make a valid comparison between different groups or bands.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]
[P.185-C]

Informal relationships occur through the custom of family visits to relatives in other bands, and, perhaps most important of all, through bands attending each other's dances. Here the Mbuti extend their social boundaries and find suitable partners for married life. There is no detailed study of inter-band relationships or of the precise implications of inter-band marriage. Joint hunting is rare, except for *begbe*. P 628 [574] P [582] [224]

Relationships Between Bands and Villagers

These relationships are essentially between the lineage head and the villager chief, according to Schebesta. Maes (1935, 138) writes that the villagers regard the Pygmies as beasts of burden and that the villager chiefs force them to act as porters and to help with the upkeep of the roads (a duty imposed on the villagers by the Belgians). Costermans (1937), however, agrees with the opposite opinion that the Mbuti, who undoubtedly stand in definite relationships to the villagers, accepting their patronage, do so only as long as they find it convenient. On the slightest pretext, they transfer their allegiance to another chief. The Mbuti, he says, do not recognize the authority of the villager chief, nor do they pay any attention to villager manners and customs. P Z 648 • 186 Z [563]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.211-C]

alliances change in this way it is a source of friction between the two village groups involved and was at one time a frequent source of intervillage warfare. 439 177

Prior to this trade relationship, however, Putnam stresses the importance of the place of the Pygmies as mercenaries, acting as spies and scouts for warring village tribes. From his inquiries during his first period of field work in 1928 he surmised that throughout the Ituri this had at one time been the major basis of the Mbuti-villager relationship. It necessitated the supply of food by the villager to the Pygmy, as the latter had no time to hunt and gather his own food. When the Belgians put an end to tribal warfare, there was no further need for the Mbuti as mercenaries, resulting in the present trade relationship. The difference between net-hunting Pygmies and those of Schebesta's account, in their relationship with the villagers, is that among the archers the relationship is band to village, a result of the Belgian bolstering of chieftainship, even where it did not exist, for administrative convenience. The village "chief" then chooses to work through a Pygmy "chief" 648 439 177 [174] [178] 648 184 177 571

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of his own creation. But among the Epulu net hunters, and other central and western groups, in which village tribal structure has not been so greatly affected, the relationship is still, in Putnam's opinion, intensely personal between individual and individual, or family and family. The superficial dissatisfaction manifest between Pygmy and villager over their trade relationship is a result of and symbolizes the present stratification with the villager at the upper end of the scale and hides the inner feelings of loyalty and affection that Putnam says exists between the two groups.

SOCIAL LIFE

Family Organization

For the most part the family organization among the net hunters is the same as that described by Schebesta for the archers, and, as with them, some of the women come from different bands and are strangers to one another. The net hunting camps are larger, however, than those of the archers, and it is seldom that a bride finds herself a total stranger in her new home. Further, because of the differences in hunting technique, cooperative feeling among the women of a net-hunting band is much stronger than that

[p. 211 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 229-C]

lage for any length of time, as when the villager needs help in the cutting of new plantations, then the Pygmy dance is a spectacle eagerly awaited by the villagers. P Z 535 177 571

Finally, Putnam mentions the fact that, when there is a case of poaching by one band within the territory of another, instead of one lineage head or "elder" consulting the other (the process described by Schebesta for the archers), the bands probably just inform the villagers involved and leave it to them to settle. P 628 648 Z 648

In disputes between villagers and Mbuti, there is no question of any one Mbuti representing his lineage or band; such of the more important hunters as are available, and usually a number of the younger men and even older boys, come in a body to argue their case together. The villager is always at a slight disadvantage. While the Mbuti can easily move and find another village patron, it is not so easy for a villager to find more Mbuti. P 648 Z 648 563

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ORIENTATION

There is little call for comment on this section. Despite their linguistic differences, it seems that the Ituri Mbuti form a broad cultural unit physically differentiated from other Pygmy or Pygmoid groups, notably the Twa of the Kivu area and the Tswa farther west. However, before any conclusion can be reached, we need more detailed studies, of the Pygmies of equatorial and western Africa in particular. 101

The hunting band appears to be the largest political unit, except in opposition to the villagers when, it seems, Pygmy bands may unite regardless of clan or lineage considerations. There is no evidence that, during the period when the Pygmies were used as mercenaries, they ever fought with one another at the behest of the villagers. 621 628 648

Despite Schebesta's assertion that *efe* is, in fact, the remnant of the original Mbuti language, linguists disagree on this point. Van Bulck (G. van Bulck, 1948, 1953; V. van Bulck, 1948, 1952) questions it. Professors Tucker and Meeussen (in conversation) indicate that the possibility of determining its correctness with any degree of certainty is remote. This attitude 197 114

[P.242-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.255-A]

P turn was free to return to his nomadic existence.
Z We can suppose that the present relationship
17 between the villagers and the Mbuti originated
439 in this way and not in economic dependence or physical subjugation. Whereas it was once a clear patron-client relationship, it now seems to have no such clear basis, either economic or political.

P There is, among both the archer and the net-
439 hunter Mbuti, a trade relationship with the
184 villagers, but this now appears to be economically artificial rather than necessary. Particularly among the net hunters, who are more nomadic than the archers, this trade relationship is little more than one of mutual
P convenience. By itself, trade does not provide a
Z sufficiently stable basis for Pygmy-villager
177 interaction. The spasmodic nature of contact
• 648 between the two peoples complicates the issue
P further. Also, because of their nomadic exis-
B21] tence and the loose structure of band composition, any Pygmy net hunter establishes relationships with villagers in different villages, quite possibly of different tribes. It seems that greater stability is precisely one objective that Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi* achieves, for this festival is common to the majority of the tribes in the area.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[p. 255-c]

shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling. 000

A Pygmy net-hunting band is powerfully integrated yet fluid, and its contact with alien societies is necessarily unformalized. Less well-knit bands, such as may be found among the archers described by Schebesta, may find it possible to enter into some kind of symbiotic relationship with the villagers, but not so an active, nomadic, net-hunting band. Some kind of relationship must be established because of the inevitability of contact. As the smaller, more powerfully integrated group, the Pygmies must make the move to fit into the larger, looser group. But there is no question of absorption; the smaller group preserves its identity. The *nkumbi*, and participation in or adoption of other villager ceremonies, provide the Mbuti with an opportunity both for establishing a place in villager society and for asserting their independent set of values by opposition. The antagonism that remains and is even heightened by this opposition is smoothed over to some extent by the secondary mechanism by which the two groups attempt to express their rela-

P 621 648 179 [184] Z [563]

P Z [439]

tionship - mutal trade

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 179 184 hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the P [575] [114] difference between Schebesta's account of the archer *toré* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P 829 648 186 Z 523 The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net [P 274-8]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 274-C]

hunters). Even in situations that do not directly associate the two groups, the Mbuti thinks in terms of his ethnic status. Thus, when the villagers were taxed by the administration and exemption was granted to all Mbuti, the point at issue among the Pygmy hunters when they discussed the matter was whether or not such exemption was a slight on the Mbuti, placing them somehow on a lower level than the tax-paying villagers. At least one Mbuti felt so strongly that he secured the necessary money and insisted on paying. The majority, however, compromised by saying that they were different people, so why should the same law be expected to apply to all?

The villager himself opposes the two worlds just as does the Pygmy. While he always tries to include the Pygmy in social, economic, and political fields, there is a rejection at the magico-religious level. In the *nkumbi*, the villagers seemed to be both aware of and unconcerned with the formal rejection by the Mbuti of villager values associated with initiation; the villagers failed to introduce their *molimo* into the ceremony, presumably because there were no villager boys present.

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For additional information on the question of Villager influence on the Mbuti, and Villager/Mbuti cultural differences, see also Congo-Kinshasa FO1, categories 101, 241, 105, 628, 361.]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[Author's general discussions of his approach to the problem of Village/Mbuti relationship, in which there is little presentation of specific economic, social or cultural data on the relationship, will be found in category 121.]

2: Turnbull

FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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[For additional information on Villager/Mbuti relationships in which interpersonal and/or kpara/kare (artificial kin) aspects predominate, see also 608, 571, 578.]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

114 rest-house or with other Europeans. Mr. and Mrs. Putnam had long established their own *bona fides*, and indeed fitted perfectly into the traditional village structure in this area, where a number of different 114 village tribes converge. Their friendship for me placed me on a par- 123 ticularly favorable footing with both the villagers and the Mbuti, and I knew that I could count on protection from any interference from other Europeans, administrators included, who might wish to visit me. (Naturally I established perfect accord with the central and local administration, who offered every co-operation, but I was particularly concerned that I should not receive "friendly visits," as it was the policy of both villagers and Mbuti, for different reasons, to keep Europeans out of the forest.)

[122] Having established my headquarters, building a somewhat larger but otherwise typical mud house on the fringe of the village where the Mbuti had their semi-permanent village camp (see Plan 1A, 1B), I paid my respects to the divers local village chiefs and head men, mostly of the Bira, Ndaka, and Ngwana tribes. At this time [164] the local Mbuti band was in the village, but a sudden epidemic of [165] stomach disorders, resulting in a number of unexpected deaths, caused them to leave for a prolonged hunting spell in the forest, taking me with them.

While the deaths, which included men, women and children, were most untimely and unhappy from a personal point of view, they achieved everything else that I could have wished for as an anthropologist. Prior to precipitating the flight back to the forest, they gave me an opportunity to study in the greatest detail the reaction to the death of an Mbuti in the village, both from the village point of view and from that of the Mbuti themselves. I at once witnessed what I 123 had seen on my previous visit when observing the *nkumbi* initiation; • 648 namely, the almost desperate attempt of the villagers to assert au- *177 thority over the Mbuti. In this case the attempt was made by con- [192] trolling the mourning and burial proceedings, claiming that the Mbuti had no ritual authority in this respect and were dependent on their *kpara* ("masters"). The villagers attempted to subject the Mbuti to the supernatural sanctions of village lore, and then they attempted to assert more direct political control by calling on their own ritual specialists to determine the cause of the deaths, and to search for the witch responsible. This will be described later (pp. 74 *seq.*); it is mentioned here to show how closely I was thrown into contact, at the outset, with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 sults I wanted I had no alternative. Other methods would have produced different, though not necessarily contrary, results.

However, there were inherent limitations in the technique followed, which involved close identification and integration between myself and the Epulu net-hunters. For one, by identifying myself 123 with the Mbuti, my relationships with the villagers were automati- • 648 cally worsened; the mere fact that I preferred to study the Mbuti rather than the villagers was ground enough for hostility. But being accepted by the Mbuti in their forest hunting camps was a privilege [122] denied to most villagers (though few would have wanted it), and learning to speak the village language with a strong Mbuti accent that made it almost unintelligible except to other Mbuti added further fuel to the fire. This all made it extremely difficult for me to see the Mbuti/Villager relationship from any but the Mbuti point of view, though I tried, at the end of 1958, to establish a better rapport with villages both in and beyond the Epulu area.

However, it was impossible for me not to take sides. Had I wished to work as an outside observer I am not even sure that it could have been done, as I do not think such an observer would have been tolerated for long in the forest camps. And as an outsider I would certainly have been denied familiarity with many aspects of Mbuti life, particularly the all-important *molimo* festival. In fact, as an "insider" I was able to observe the process of exclusion of the few outsiders temporarily admitted to a forest camp. But in any case I was quickly forced by purely practical considerations to take sides.

123 During the burial proceedings in the village, for instance, in the 648 first month of my stay, I was invited by both Mbuti and villagers to 764 take part. But whereas the villagers wanted me to stand by and watch the digging of the grave under villager supervision, the Mbuti wanted me to help out with the digging. By acceding to the latter wish I automatically lost my status among the supervisors, and in fact became unclean and had to ritually wash myself with the other gravediggers. And during the post-burial meeting of the men, when the villagers all argued among themselves as to which Mbuti witch had caused the death, I had the choice of listening on one side of the grave with the villagers or of standing on the other side with the Mbuti and being associated in this way with their mirth and their ridicule of what was, to them, an utterly nonsensical procedure. And when on one occasion a burial took place on the morning of the day that a wedding was to be held in a neighboring village, I had the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing.

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint.

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 361 628 754 C 628 609 754 tion between villages is due only in part to rivalry for territory. It is also due to suspicion of witchcraft and sorcery, a suspicion that seems to increase as the distance of separation decreases. This, of course, can also be interpreted as an expression of territorial friction, but it is conceived in personal rather than territorial terms, and is accompanied by a general dislike and mistrust of strangers.

C 361 765 P [361] Nor must we lose sight of the fact that whereas the Mbuti, even with their nomadism, in which hunting camps are shifted every month, have a strong sense of basic territorial permanence, the villagers have none, and this gives rise to further instability. To mention only one example, it is believed among the Bira that the dead should be buried according to a prescribed ritual, and that the grave should be cared for in a prescribed manner. The burial is always carried out but it is a constant source of conflict having to care for a grave that may be some miles away. Every time a village moves the villagers have to face the fact that they are abandoning their dead, to some extent, and they are unpleasantly reminded of the uncertainty of their own future. We do not know what the original burial practice was before the Bira moved into the forest; undoubtedly changes have been made, but they have not adequately met the new situation.

P *177 • 648 It is only in light of the relationship between each of these peoples and the environment in which they live that we can understand the relationship between the people themselves. It is in part ignorance of this factor that has led to the gross misunderstanding of Mbuti/Villager relationship, and indeed of Mbuti society itself. Before considering either the Mbuti or their relationship with the villagers, however, a certain amount of further ground-clearing is necessary.

MBUTI, BAMBUTI, BAMBUTI

P 101 A certain amount of confusion concerning the Mbuti arises out of conflicting terminology, some of it totally inapplicable or lacking in significance. First we have to be clear why we group together, under any one name, all the pygmy hunters of the Ituri Forest, even though they speak different languages and use different hunting techniques.

P 101 105 [144] Racially, they are clearly one people, quite distinct from any of the surrounding Negro tribes. They form a strongly, visibly distinct unit. Culturally, they are equally distinguished from their neighbors as a unit, being hunters and gatherers, and not cultivators, with a consequently totally distinct social structure. Differences in hunting techniques do not affect the basic structural unity.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 33]

CHAPTER 3

The Mbuti/Villager Relationship

THE QUESTION OF DEPENDENCE

Although we are primarily concerned with the structure of Mbuti 121
society, there are a number of valid reasons why we should first con- 648 •
cern ourselves with the relationship between the Mbuti and the villagers.

For one, this has been the area of greatest misunderstanding and this misunderstanding has consequently affected attitudes toward an understanding of the forest hunting and gathering life of the Mbuti even when apart from the villagers. It is widely believed that the Mbuti are subject to village authority, that they are a subordinate people. This belief rests on the assumption that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers, and the theory of dependence has been extended to political and ritual fields as well as economic. The exact degree of dependence is something that we have to examine carefully throughout our study, though we can only take it up specifically after we have considered the Mbuti in both the village and the forest worlds.

The notion of dependence has led to the theory that Mbuti cul- 121
ture, such as it is, is in itself derived from the superordinate village 177 *
culture, and we shall see that this is far from the truth. Even when we look at the Mbuti in the village world it is not hard to see the superficiality of his alleged acculturation, for the very willingness with which he adopts village institutions and falls in with village ways leads him inevitably into one contradiction after another, which contradictions are possible only because the institutions do not have the same structural significance for the Mbuti as for the villager.

The cause of the misunderstanding is largely that previous ac- 121
counts and investigations have been derived from experience of the 14
Mbuti in the village context, in almost complete ignorance of even

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the most general nature of the forest context and in absolute ignorance of the structure of the forest world. But this in turn leads to another reason for considering the village world first, for the universality of the misconception and its common cause are in themselves highly significant. The misconception, that is to say the notion of the Mbuti as a subordinate and dependent people is, although a myth in actuality, nonetheless a structural factor of the greatest importance, and it is the relationship of the Mbuti to the village world that leads to some of the most interesting elements in the over-all social framework of Mbuti society as it is today. It is not our intent to say what elements of Mbuti society are caused by their relationship with the villagers, but it is certain that many elements, such as the constant process of fragmentation, fission and fusion, take on special significance in light of that relationship. Even the most central religious institutions, sacred to the forest, appear to be in the process of adaptation, allowing for and encouraging a widening of the Mbuti social horizon, bringing about a wider sense of unity (both religious and political) than apparently existed before.

Ostensibly the relationship is based upon the economic dependence of the Mbuti on the villagers for food and metal. Both manioc and bananas (sweet as well as plantain) are grown throughout the Ituri region and jointly form the staple. Both foods are eagerly sought and consumed by all Mbuti, who in the forest have nothing akin to the banana or to the large manioc root. The small, sweet forest *itaba* root has to be grubbed for, and, as the Mbuti say, it is much easier to get manioc from the villagers. Other village foods consumed by the Mbuti are groundnuts, corn, rice and beans but, as for the villagers, they are supplementary. Any of these foods may be carried off to the forest camps and consumed there. Indeed in any village on almost any day one is likely to see a pygmy woman or two filling her carrying basket to capacity with such foods and returning to the forest camp. If the hunting camp is nearby, a regular supply line is maintained, and even forest food becomes supplementary in Mbuti diet.

When in the village the Mbuti also have access to luxuries such as palm wine, and to certain trade goods; tobacco and second-hand clothes are the most important such items.

Having no knowledge of metalworking,[1] the Mbuti are without a

[1] A few Mbuti prisoners were taught by the Belgian administrator at Mambasa how to hammer arrow tips as part of his campaign to "liberate" the Mbuti from their dependence upon the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

ing an ever-present, ever-accessible sanctuary of independence, then we are left with a situation which, if anything, is rather the reverse of what it is normally stated to be; for we find that the villagers have far more need of the Mbuti than the Mbuti have of the villagers.

Here we have to look briefly at the historical genesis of the relationship, which began with the invasion of the first non-Mbuti tribes three or four hundred years ago, and continued until the invasion reached its climax in the nineteenth century. The Mbuti found themselves caught between a number of warring tribes, and according to legend (also according to what one might reasonably expect) each isolated hunting band found it convenient to attach itself to one or another group of villagers. The villagers, on their part, needed the Mbuti as guides, scouts and spies, and, as related today by both sides, employed them as such, feeding them in return. When the situation became more stable, and notably when the last vestiges of open hostility were suppressed by the Belgian administration, this original relationship came to an end, neither side having any absolute need of the other. The Mbuti, however, had developed a strong taste for plantation foods and maintained their demands on the villagers. To this day, if a villager does not accede to such demands his plantation is simply raided and he has no recourse. Recognizing the difficulty of making an effective claim for theft, the villagers continued to supply food at request, but attempted to secure certain services in return.

We have already mentioned the attitude of the villagers toward the forest as a hostile place, and a place that they people with evil spirits. One of the services that they have tried to elicit from the Mbuti, then, is the supply of forest necessities such as saplings and leaves for housebuilding, bark for clothmaking (now almost obsolete among all the villagers), and meat and honey. The longer a village is in existence, the more scarce these supplies become in the immediate vicinity, and the villagers are mostly loath to venture far into the forest. However, plainly, as with the Mbuti, it is a question of convenience rather than necessity, though the Mbuti say that the villagers could never be successful as hunters, being far too clumsy and slow.

This is all largely a matter of historical conjecture, but it helps in providing a sense of direction, and in indicating that the onus for maintaining a reasonable degree of reciprocity is all the time upon the villagers, not upon the Mbuti. For today the villagers are still unwilling to go into the forest, and the Mbuti are still their major source of meat, honey and building materials. But there is, today, an addi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

tional factor that increases the degree of necessity and dependence on the part of the villagers. By "today" I refer to the period of Belgian administration, for which we have historic record. During this period additional demands were made by the administration upon the villagers; notably, able-bodied men were recruited into the road gangs for building and maintaining the thousand-odd miles of road that cross the forest, linking the widely separated administrative posts; and it was also demanded of the villagers that they produce certain specific crops in excess, and cultivate other new crops, particularly cotton, in addition. The food surplus was used to feed immigrant laborers, the cotton to produce some revenue in an otherwise highly unprofitable region.

These demands thus increased the amount of plantation work that had to be undertaken by each village, and at the same time reduced the labor force available. Penalties for failure were severe, and the villagers naturally turned to the Mbuti for help. Equally naturally, the Mbuti declined to help, except when the nature of the work suited their convenience and the rewards were adequate, and a long struggle began that continued right up to the time that independence somewhat altered the situation.

From the villagers' point of view, their relationship with the Mbuti, which had begun to prove rather tiresome and unprofitable, quickly became a matter of acute anxiety. Instead of regarding the Mbuti merely as parasites, which is effectively what they were, the villagers began to regard them as indispensable to the new village economy. From the Mbuti point of view, however, the situation had not changed. The forest was still there as a sanctuary to which they could retire with impunity at, literally, a moment's notice, and the village was still a place where they could relax, enjoy luxury foods, wine and tobacco, in return for a minimum amount of service. Being a practical people, however, they responded, to a token extent, to the new demands for service, in the form of plantation labor. But it was not to their taste, and it proved highly detrimental to their health. The villagers in many cases realized this and compromised by using the Mbuti mainly to maintain guard over the plantations, so they would not be affected by the unaccustomed sunlight or exercise, and only in emergencies asked them to actually work in the fields.

Such emergencies, however, became more and more frequent as administrative demands upon the villagers were increased. The cotton crop became the major issue, and the time of the cotton harvest was

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the one time when, above all others, the villagers needed the help of the Mbuti. And that was precisely the time when the Mbuti were least available, for this work[1] was least to their taste, and beyond a certain point even the Mbuti cannot be bribed.

THE NEED FOR CONTROL

In 1957, and again in 1958, Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe found himself in difficulty over his cotton harvest. Of all the tribal chiefs in the Ituri, Kachui was one of the most powerful and one of the most influential. He had the advantage of a government-supported police force at his disposal, but on both occasions when I was at Bafwakoa at the time of cotton harvest he was without his usual retinue of Mbuti parasites. He had his sons deployed nearly to the Epulu to the east, and halfway to Wamba to the north, in an effort to learn the whereabouts of "his" Mbuti, but to no avail. He even used me in the hope that I would be able to discover at least one hunting camp, and I was led to where a few Mbuti maintained a plantation camp, living in the shade of the forest but acting as guards against raids on the plantation by monkeys, baboon and elephant, on the strict understanding that they were not used for work in the cotton fields. Although I was known there, and would normally have been taken straight to the hunting camp, all knowledge of the whereabouts of their fellows was denied. It may indeed have been that the band had broken up and gone in different directions to join neighboring bands that were less pressed, or it may simply have gone far off into the depths of the forest where it could never be found. None of Chief Kachui's threats or exhortations was of the least avail.

At the same time, Chief Kayumba of the Mbo, just across the Ituri River, was having the same trouble, and I saw some seven recently deserted village camps with not a single Mbuti to be found. Kayumba did not conceal the fact that he had constant difficulty of this kind, never being able to rely on the Mbuti to be on hand when he wanted them, and at other times being surrounded and consumed by them. Hamadi, one of the two major Bira chiefs, and probably the most unscrupulous, generally maintained a retinue of Mbuti in village camps, but as far as I could assess it was a floating population that seldom worked on the plantations. Chief Lupao of the Lesé at Nduye complained of being without Mbuti when he needed them, and this was true on the one occasion when I was at Nduye at the

[1] [i.e., harvesting cotton -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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tree and the Mbuti alleges that the villager stole the stem by trickery, leaving him only the leaves, so that the villager was able to replant the trees and grow more, but when the Mbuti planted the leaves they just withered and died.[8] It is seldom that the Mbuti deny possession of the stolen goods; what they deny is the act of stealing. But whatever the fact, and however judgment is given, the essential point is that there is no mechanism for enforcing that judgment. Judgment being given by a villager is in my experience without exception against the Mbuti, and orders restitution of the property, or service in lieu. If the Mbuti complies, however, it is merely because in his own estimation it is expedient to do so. If he feels that he has exhausted the goodwill of the injured villager he will simply leave, and thenceforth deal with another villager. If any attempt is made to inflict physical punishment on an Mbuti, or to imprison him, then the whole band will initiate reprisal raids on the plantations of the individual who brought the complaint. This seldom happens, because villagers seek other means for achieving some measure of control over the Mbuti, and it is with those that we shall now concern ourselves.

[8] See Appendix I: "The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 *
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[p.44]

CHAPTER 4

The Notion of Hereditary Ownership

P C 121 648 C [186]

A superficial glimpse of the Mbuti/Villager relationship in any village might well tend to confirm the belief that the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for the very principles of their social organization. This is the claim of the villagers, the more sophisticated of which use a popular description of the Mbuti as "*les gens sans culture*." The Mbuti themselves will readily admit it, and investigation will, up to a point, confirm it. But we have already witnessed one contradiction; namely, that if the situation is one of superordination, and one of total cultural dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, then the villagers would have and be able to exercise some form of political control, and they do not. Indeed there are only the most tenuous political mechanisms for relating the two groups, such as the supposition that each hunting band has a headman or chief (entitled *capita* or *sultani*) who is answerable to the village headman. The villagers accord the Mbuti headman due respect, not far different from the respect they would accord a junior headman of another village, and hold him responsible for the behavior of his band. But even supposing that the Mbuti headman had any actual authority over his band, we have seen that the villagers are incapable of enforcing their will by taking either retributive or restitutive action against the band or the *capita* for fear of reprisal, and because of their very real need for the continued, if minimal, service of the Mbuti and their fear of losing even that.

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The Mbuti *capita*, in any case, is merely a village creation and carries no authority whatsoever and little influence among members of the hunting band. The other Mbuti accord him his title when in the village, or even when in the forest, if discussing a village problem. They use him as a convenient link who can also serve as a scapegoat. Through their "chief" the other Mbuti are freed of many of the cares and considerations involved in their relationship with the village, but

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the position is by no means always popular, and there are instances of dispute as to who should fill a vacant position as *capita*. Usually it is an Mbuti who has a highly developed taste for village foods, tobacco, wine and hemp. Most frequently he fills a dual role, also being the hunting band's clown, an important figure in the settling of internal disputes, again essentially a scapegoat. He will convey to the hunting band the wishes of the villagers, and discuss with the band the questions of food exchange or supply of labor. Among the net-hunters this is about as far as he will go, any decisions after that being taken by group discussion. Among the archers, however, the *capita* may go further, translating the villagers' demands into more practical terms, and suggesting how the band can best effect a compromise. He may even allocate specific tasks to specific individuals or families, but if he is heeded it is with notably bad grace, and again only because those concerned deem it expedient. The Mbuti headman has absolutely no authority in the band, even in its village context.

The greater importance of the *capita* among the archers is related to the fact that, unlike the net-hunters, the archer bands are for the most part of the year fragmented into smaller sections, each virtually independent of the other. There is, then, a greater need to co-ordinate their response to village demands, as the villagers take advantage of the fragmentation by attempting to exploit each section simultaneously. Among the net-hunters, whose bands are much more closely knit, and hunt throughout most of the year as large co-operative units, the only function the *capita* serves, from the point of view of the band, is as an intermediary, little more than a message bearer. Certain *capita*, however, among both archers and net-hunters, acquire great renown among their fellow Mbuti by the success with which they cheat the villagers. This indeed is the only way in which the *capita*, as such, can acquire any prestige at all among his own people.

The major inconsistency of the system lies in the fact that it conflicts directly with a much more subtle means by which the villagers seek to gain control over the Mbuti. Being familiar only with tribal systems of a formal nature, whose organization rests upon the principle of patrilineal descent, the villagers can only conceive of Mbuti society in the same way. Not finding a chief or headman, they impose one, likening a hunting band to a village. They use him in much the same way they would use their own headmen. But the imposition of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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this institution implies also the imposition of the principle of the patrilineal, patrilocal unit. Perhaps at one time it was; it now certainly is not.[1]

Finding political relations difficult to maintain and enforce, and although they still continue to attempt to deal with bands as one village would deal with another, through the *capita*, the villagers then look to interpersonal relationships as a means of acquiring their ends. They impose the village kinship system upon the Mbuti, keeping as accurate an account of the growth of an Mbuti family as they do of their own, and they ally the resultant Mbuti "clans" to village clans. It is easy enough to visualize the origins of the system, when hunting bands found they had to side with villages, the villagers mistaking (or perhaps correctly taking) the bands for unilineal-descent groups. In this way the relationship between the two groups would be hereditary and self-perpetuating. But the band today is not a unilineal-descent group, and may be comprised of a score or more lineages. Thus a village that is a kinship unit, recognizing the senior male-lineage representative as its headman, finds itself in relationship with a band under a *capita* who may only be remotely related to other male members of the band, by affinal or consanguineal ties. The band itself, consisting of different clans, evidently owes its allegiance, under the village system, to different villages.

On the one hand, the village claims to "own" the band, recognizing the *capita* as its representative. On the other hand, as a lineal unit the village claims a hereditary relationship with another lineal unit, and de facto dissociates itself, perhaps with the major portion of the band, and involves itself in politico-economic difficulties with the neighboring villages who may claim the other portions of that band.

The villagers claim to be saviors of the Mbuti, to have freed them from the necessity of living in the forest like animals, and they justify their claim to ownership in this way. If the Mbuti band were indeed a stable, localized patrilineal unit, then some effective basis for a relationship between the two groups along these lines might persist; but given the cognatic and fluid nature of the contemporary band, the notion of hereditary ownership seldom tallies with effective economic relationships. Consequently there are continuous disputes be-

[1] This is not to say that one could not find a band that, at one time of the year or another, is not in effect a patrilineage. It is, rather, to say that lineality would in such a case not be the essence of band structure, but incidental.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 5

The Notion of Supernatural Control

THE VILLAGE SUPERNATURAL

We have already seen something of villager participation in Mbuti marriage arrangements, but only from the aspect of kinship. From this point of view the villagers hope to be able to control, to some extent, the movement and residence patterns of the Mbuti, and to support the myth of hereditary ownership. From another point of view, however, villager participation in the marriage of their Mbuti necessarily introduces the Mbuti to the village magico-religious system, through the ritual that consecrates the marriage as well as through the absorption of the Mbuti, in this way, into the village kinship structure. It might also be pointed out in passing that as far as the villagers are concerned, marriages between their Mbuti are of as much political importance as their own marriages, in regulating relationships between one village and another, one segment of the tribe and another. Insofar as our primary concern is with the Mbuti, however, this political aspect does not directly concern us here.

Marriage is only one village ritual adopted by the Mbuti, and in considering any such adoption we have to keep in mind the structural aspects of ritual in the village social system and, in particular, the relationship between ritual and kinship. It is in light of structure that the villager side of the Mbuti/Villager relationship is comprehensible, the attempt to include the Mbuti within the village framework being an attempt to secure some measure of control over them. That is not to say that the motive of control is necessarily responsible for the inclusion, but it is certainly openly acknowledged by villagers and has some bearing on their attitudes.

At the same time we must be aware that on the Mbuti side there is the knowledge that the villagers are seeking to gain control. There is a considered element of risk involved in accepting certain institu-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1966) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tions, even in the strictest village context, but it is outweighed by what at first seems little more than a lively desire to have all the advantages of village life with none of the disadvantages. Again, it is only through an examination of the interrelationship of the institutions adopted by the Mbuti, and their relationship with the indigenous Mbuti social system, that we can arrive at any true understanding of the apparent process of acculturation.

The attempt by the villagers to assert supernatural control is structurally the most significant, for it involves elements with which the Mbuti have no institutionalized means of dealing. Political pressure the Mbuti can counter by changing allegiance; economic pressure can also be countered, by reverting to the always available pure hunting and gathering economy; as we shall see in the next section, pressure through absorption into the village kinship system is repelled quite simply by the maintenance of an opposed kinship system. However, the Mbuti have no magic with which to counter magic, no witchcraft or sorcery with which to counter witchcraft and sorcery. They do have belief with which to counter belief, but it is part of the belief of both Mbuti and villagers that in a war between the gods, no man can safely predict the outcome. It is in this situation that the villagers do manage to effect some extent of control, but it is also in this context that they come up against the ultimate bedrock of opposition.

Let us look at the various ways in which the magico-religious life of the villagers impinges upon that of the Mbuti, and the extent to which it exerts some measure of control over the hunters and gatherers. Fully recognizing that a clear division of the subject matter is difficult, if not impossible, to make, we nonetheless have to attempt such a division for the purposes of discussion. There is a great deal of overlapping, but nonetheless at the extremes, in this case, the division used here between magic and religion is legitimate.

By magic I refer to activities involving, on the part of the African, villager or Mbuti, a conviction in the pragmatic relationship between a cause and an effect which, in terms of Western science, is not demonstrable. The term in its usual sense has meaning only as far as we are concerned, for as far as the Africans here are concerned, magical activities are as scientifically valid as any other. They may not always be able to explain the exact way in which the effect is related to the cause, any more than everyone who drives a motorcar can explain the mechanism. Indeed, the corresponding term "medicine"

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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excellent effect. They flaunt themselves in public, to the increased dismay of the villagers.

The villagers regard the appearance of menstrual blood as a disaster, and as the inauguration of a time of great danger for the girl, her family and, by extension, the whole tribe. She is considered as unclean, and is rigorously secluded and abased. Her family has to undertake a series of purification rituals ending in a feast (the part of the ceremony for which the Mbuti solicit "help"). They also have to discover the cause of the blood, which is believed by the Plains Bira and still by a number of the Forest Bira to be due to intercourse. The girl is questioned as to who caused the blood, and she names the youth on whom she has set her heart. He may acknowledge the blame, whether or not he ever had intercourse with her, and can then resolve the unclean situation by marrying her. If his wishes are otherwise he can deny her accusation and she will have to try elsewhere. The girl's parents will guide her accusations as they think necessary, but the actual extent to which the village *elima* leads thus directly into marriage seems to vary. Sometimes it is sufficient to secure admission of guilt and payment in lieu of marriage. But the villagers seldom try to follow an Mbuti *elima* through its full course; their major concern is that the impurity of the *elima* girls should not touch them. The provision of the final feast gives them an opportunity, which they do not always take, for supervising the ritual purification of the girls by bathing, the cleansing of the *elima* house, and the ritual disposal of all clothing and bedding and utensils used by the *bamelima*. The latter they do generally supervise, as the Mbuti are notoriously loath to part with perfectly good clothing or bedding for such *bulé* reasons, and will try to avoid having them destroyed.

If anything, the *elima* sets the villagers and the Mbuti apart, rather than offering any means for drawing them closer together. This is perhaps because while the *nkumbi* involves the village ancestors and is in honor of them, and secures their blessing, the village *elima* involves malevolent spirits more than it involves the ancestors. And as far as the villagers are concerned, evil spirits emanate from the forest. The *elima* offers no opportunity to the villagers for placing Mbuti girls under the control of the ancestral spirits; at the most, it offers them a responsibility for freeing them from contamination by the evil spirits. They sometimes voice the opinion that the Mbuti are in league with those spirits emanating from the forest, and rigorously avoid any contact with an Mbuti *elima*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatural sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *lolo*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1966 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ble situation, retaining at all times the village position of superiority over the Mbuti. But it is a myth which at the same time satisfies the needs of the Mbuti, affording them precisely the freedom of which the villagers seek to deprive them, enabling them to rationaline the situation in their own favor and to their own advantage. We shall shortly see how this takes place.

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CHAPTER 7

Flux and Instability

Not yet having examined the forest context, we cannot completely dispose of the question of economic dependence or interdependence. At the moment, it appears that the Mbuti do not need the villagers except for luxuries which may in time become necessities, and it equally seems that the villagers do not need the Mbuti except as laborers on the plantations, in particular with the cotton harvest, and this is a very recent need introduced by Belgian administration. The most that one can say about the economic aspect of the relationship is that it appears to be one of mutual convenience. The villagers *could* hunt (and in areas where there are few or no Mbuti, they do) but they prefer not to go into the forest if it can be avoided. The Mbuti *could* live successfully off the forest at their indigenous level of technology, but trade with the villagers makes life that much easier.

If we look carefully at daily life in any village, the economic aspect of the relationship fades even further into the background. Mbuti can occasionally be seen bringing in from the forest meat or other forest products needed by the villagers, such as the *fito* saplings and phrynium leaves for their houses. More often they will be seen helping with odd domestic chores, such as fetching water or firewood, house-building, or guarding plantations. Mbuti women help the village women pound manioc and to thresh and winnow the locally grown dry rice. They also help the village women carry loads of plantains to and from the market.

But mostly, if any Mbuti are to be seen at all, they will be seen lazing on the *baraza* of their *kpara*, being fed and offered ends of cigarettes, or bribed with liquor to put on a dance that all the villagers will come to watch. Such dances are wild and erotic, accompanied by anything from one to three or four drums, never by song.

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

P 685 648 571 121 It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

C 648 571

P [361] [621]

P 829 648 571 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

P [224]

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

P [825]

C 439 648 121 Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

2: Turnbull 8-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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we have already seen that in place of system and control there is, apparently, only flux and instability that militate *against* system and control.

By flux I refer to the fact that the Mbuti appear to adopt village institutions but not the village system of interrelationships. In this way there is a disconnectedness in the village context of the Mbuti that enables both sides to refer to whichever institution is convenient at the moment to establish a relationship of the moment. Thus an Mbuti may be asked to help one villager on the ground of their *karé* relationship, and expected by another to help because of the hereditary *kpara* relationship. Considerations of simple economic exchange between the same Mbuti and still other villagers may override either of the above considerations at another moment. Thus the Mbuti has a number of possible ways in which he can link himself with the village and the villagers, at different and distinct times. The converse also applies, and if a villager finds his hereditary claims ineffective he may call on other Mbuti because of the *karé* relationship, and so forth.

In view of the nomadic nature of the hunting band and, as we shall see, of its composition, this "system" of flux is the only one that could possibly pertain. But it leads inevitably to instability because of the consequent lack of any one system of control. In the same way that the Mbuti can hop from one conflicting set of relationships to another, so he can hop from one system of control to another. By Mbuti rejection of the total village system and by what proves to be an opposition of a totally different set of values, the villager ultimately is denied virtually all control, and the Mbuti similarly is denied any absolute security in his relationships with the villagers.

However, the loss of control is more serious to the villagers than is the loss of security to the Mbuti, and it is also more complete, for the villagers are themselves bound by the supernatural sanctions through which they vainly attempt to impose control upon the Mbuti. The whole situation is incompatible with the notion of economic interdependence, yet there is no denying the actual relationship between the two groups of people. Nor can one deny that within a framework of flux and instability, the relationship is persistent, so there must be some system. If that system is so evidently unrelated to economic factors, we have to look elsewhere for its focal point.

There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist be-

In Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04 ●
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

P C 121 ● 648 There are not all that many basic relationships that can exist between two peoples in a context such as this. Apart from one of symbiosis, implying interdependence, there could be political subjugation, such as existed, say, between the Tussi and the Hutu. But that is plainly not the case here. The villagers themselves admit their inability to exert physical force to bend the Mbuti to their will, for the Mbuti always have the ultimate escape of flight to the sanctuary of the forest. The villagers are completely unequipped to pursue the Mbuti into the forest, and never attempt it. They are incapable of even finding the Mbuti if the hunters wish not to be found. And, as we have seen, there is no effective political mechanism for maintaining any kind of political relationship, let alone one of superordination/subordination.

C 563 121 P ● 177 121 Another possible relationship would be one of assimilation, such as occurred among the Ganda of East Africa, where two different peoples merged, as did their two different economies. At the present there is no question of actual assimilation, but the existence of linguistic and institutional similarities certainly indicates an interchange of ideas, at least. But it is, at the moment, an interchange of outward forms only, and not of the accompanying systems and structure. And while a great deal of intimacy is expressed, in action as in word, between the two groups, there is also a great deal of expressed opposition, and sometimes hostility.

C 563 121 P ● 177 582 121 The intermarriage between Mbuti girls and village men and the attempted absorption of the Mbuti into the village kinship system may be considered as steps toward assimilation, but if so they are very tentative and preliminary steps, and as such need not concern us here. Indeed we shall find that there are other indications of the reverse process, of separation. There is no question of physical separation in the sense of the expulsion of one group by the other, but a perfectly valid alternative relationship left to us for consideration is one of ideological separation accompanied by a mutually accepted territorial separation—a form of indigenous apartheid.

P 166 ● 177 182 This in fact seems to be the case, for in common conversation, as in action, both groups distinguish the village and the village people from the forest and the forest people. The Mbuti effectively are the only group to cross the territorial boundaries, and the ideological boundaries remain inviolate on both sides. When the Mbuti cross into the village world they leave the forest behind them, and with it they leave their forest social system. Forest values cannot be so easily left

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sleep in the *baraza* of the villagers rather than in the village camp). The nuclear family is further disrupted by the fact that a wife may well seize the opportunity of being in the village to leave her husband and visit her own *kpara* in another village.

Men and women of quite different ages who would normally, in the forest, be separated for most aspects of daily life may find themselves thrown together. Young and old are quite likely to find themselves eating together on the same *baraza*, helping to build the same house, even joining in the same erotic dance. Sex differentiations that pertain in the forest do not necessarily pertain in the village, where, for instance, Mbuti men do the housebuilding, not the women, and where the women are most effectively the "hunters" and food producers.

It is only, as stated, when the two worlds of the forest and the village impinge upon each other that the Mbuti in the village camp show any sense of identity as a unit. Those who belong to the same hunting band will then cluster together around the same campfire, and if the issue involves a return to the forest, then quickly the village camp begins to assume, so far as possible, the composition and characteristics of a forest camp. Forest relationships between individuals and families are gradually reestablished, and at the same time village relationships are gradually abandoned. This inevitably meets with concerted opposition on the part of the villagers, who offer threats and bribes to maintain the precarious and temporary relationship just established. But with no effective means of control there is nothing they can do but accept the departure of "their" Mbuti with as much good grace as they can muster. Those who are wise make presents of plantains and manioc. Those who do not are likely to have their plantations robbed.

The imminence of a mass return of Mbuti to the forest is frequently marked a night or two before it takes place by the singing in the village camp of hunting songs or, on special occasions, of the lesser *molimo* songs, late at night when all the villagers will have retired. This is a sure sign that the forest world is asserting itself, for forest songs are generally considered as sacred, and not to be profaned by performance in the village. They would never be sung in the true village, and only in the Mbuti village camp when they wish to convert the context to a forest context. The forest, it must be remembered, is physically always within sight and, perhaps more important as far as song is concerned, within earshot. It may, indeed, be no more than

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

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C 648 121 177 mand that they come to some kind of terms and establish some kind of mechanism for dealing with the threat that each feels.

P 648 121 *177 We have seen how the villagers attempt to deal with the situation by asserting control over the Mbuti through the adoption of the Mbuti into the village social system, thus placing them under the supernatural sanctions of village society. We have also seen that the Mbuti evade such control, though we have not exactly seen how, for at the moment the success of their evasion seems to lie in the rejection of system, in a flux and instability that alone would lead to chaos. In examining the forest society of the Mbuti now, however, we shall see how this flux and apparent instability is in fact a structural factor, and that while the villagers are constantly attempting to absorb the Mbuti into their village social system, the Mbuti have evolved a social system of their own which, while still permitting their traditional hunting and gathering existence, takes this new village factor into consideration and, so to speak, by opposing, ends it. For the Mbuti forest system seems almost expressly designed to run counter to the village system, and, by opposing it at every point of possible structural contact, it makes any structural relationship except one of opposition quite impossible.

P 648 621 121 178 Thus in examining the forest system of the Mbuti we have to remember that the same institution may well have a double function; the one of maintaining cohesion with the forest world, the other of maintaining opposition with the world outside. And insofar as the invasion of the village tribes is relatively recent, this is a system that is still evolving. All the more so because the successive waves of the invasion, followed by the advent of the Arab slave traders and finally by the arrival of the Belgians, have all wrought sudden and drastic changes in the nature of village life and on the village settlement pattern. There may indeed be some institutions that are newly evolved and the purpose of which is directed primarily at maintaining the relationship of opposition between forest and village. Others are in the process of adaptation, notably the Mbuti *molimo*, where the forest system of values has its deepest roots and where, consequently, their opposition to village values must be most forcefully expressed. And some institutions appear to be in a state of atrophy.

P 178 121 We are, then, very clearly going to be studying a society in the process of change. The structure that will emerge, involving a disconcerting lack of emphasis on kinship, is not necessarily or even probably characteristic of hunting and gathering societies, and should cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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exchange with his partner's next of kin. If his partner is within a day's walk or two he may visit him briefly, bringing a suitable gift of meat with him. Even on returning to his *kpara's* village, an Mbuti may maintain exchange with a generous villager elsewhere.

There is no system of equivalents, only the obligation to reciprocate. Indeed it is doubtful if we can really even talk of it as theft when the Mbuti raid a plantation and carry off what they want, back to the forest, without leaving anything for the villagers, whom they may or may not even know. The villagers recognize their need of the Mbuti if they are to be spared the necessity of going into the forest themselves. They also recognize that the territory, even that on which the village and plantation are built, was formerly, and in a sense still is, all Mbuti territory, and that they therefore have special privileges. When a raid takes place, the established villagers assume that a reciprocal presentation of forest foods, other forest products, or of service will be made at a future date.

On the village side, *karé* and *kpara* relationships may well operate and persist over long periods of time if the individuals are wise and just. If they are not, then the same relationships, in village society, afford an institutional means of regulating the situation with any other villagers with whom the Mbuti may take up. Among the Mbuti no such considerations or mechanisms pertain.

In the latter days of Belgian administration, when increasing demands were made upon the villagers to produce certain cash crops and to supply labor, the villagers found themselves in correspondingly greater need of Mbuti labor to help them with their plantation work. Demands would be made of a whole band to come and camp near the plantation for several weeks on end, to help with the sowing or the harvesting. The demand would be made by the village chief or headman to the appointed "*capita*" or "*sultani*"[8] of the Mbuti band. Once notified, the band then decided the matter by common discussion, any dissenters being free to leave and go their own way without any attached stigma. The considerations involved in arriving at a decision were entirely practical and material, and a decision always stood ready to be reversed at a moment's notice if it was found not to be in the favor of the band.

The work entailed on the plantation in no way involved groups comparable to those formed in hunting or gathering activities; consequently in the village a different set of interpersonal relationships

[8] These terms derive from the Belgians and the Arab slave traders, respectively.

exists among the Mbuti, and mutual obligations that exist in the forest are no longer practicable and so are no longer considered as binding. Generally there is a fractioning into individual family or even smaller elements, each individual or family having a villager exchange partner. However, some villagers with larger and more productive plantations, or with other assets (such as the blacksmith), may attract a number of Mbuti who thus form a temporary co-operative group while in the village. Any such bonds formed are purely of the moment and in that context, and are shed immediately on return to the forest. For the moment, however, they are real and binding, falling under village sanctions and even to some extent subject to village jurisdiction. To this latter, however, the Mbuti only submit so far as it is convenient. In a case of inter-Mbuti dispute in the village context, the litigants are likely, for personal and individual reasons, to accept villager arbitration. In the case of a dispute between an Mbuti and a villager, however, it will be the convenience of the band that is considered as well as that of the individual.

ECONOMIC AUTHORITY

Such organization as exists for economic purposes arises in direct response to the immediate demands of the present context. It is constant only as long as the context is constant, and any continuity derives from contextual continuity, not from any hardening of traditional arteries or inherited patterns of leadership or behavior. The only structural aspects of the economy that persist in other realms are those related to the principles of territory and age.

Ecological and technological considerations determine the general pattern of subsistence activities, hunting and gathering; this pattern is modified according to the desire of the Mbuti for village luxuries or to the pressure put upon them by their villager neighbors. As any of these considerations changes, so does the pattern. There is no attempt to control or dominate either the geographical or human environment.

Insofar as organization is in the nature of a response, then, leadership is minimal, in the economic realm. All major decisions are taken by common consent, as in other realms of Mbuti life. Men and women have equal say, hunting and gathering being equally important to the economy. Young married couples and youths have the most to say, being the most active hunters and gatherers, but while ability as a hunter carries some weight, too much ability may lead to

554 The various fields in which we can speak of authority fall into three
121 main categories—economic, ritual, and legal. In the first two, by authority is meant prominence of activity and participation in discussion in what is, generally, a normal situation. In the last category, legal, the situation is abnormal, one of dispute, and by authority is meant prominence in the settling of that dispute. Nowhere does it have any validity unless backed by common assent. Yet it is more than mere influence, for in each field certain classes of individuals are recognized as having the right and ability to interpret the pleasure of the forest.

554 Table 8[1] indicates the distribution of this "authority" throughout
56 the band. It will be seen that it is evenly divided between the sexes
[562] and among all adult age levels; only the children are not accorded any authority except among themselves. Further, authority is located at one age level or another or with the nuclear family, with few exceptions. For the life crises (excluding birth), authority is divided between the youths and the elders. Youths and elders also share responsibility for the camp while the hunt is away, even if some of the hunters remain behind.

554 There are many examples of Mbuti who have appeared in the role
[648] of leader vis-à-vis the village, but as their authority was nil in relation to forest life, they need not concern us here. Their only function in the forest, other than their normal role as hunters, was to communicate the wishes of the one group of people to the other.

554 The only individual who might be recognized as occupying a special
156 political position in the life of the hunting band, on any ground other
522 than age, is the camp clown. He is usually a hunter, and his position
626 is unofficial, depending on his abilities as an actor and a clown. He
627 is not appointed, and there is no special name for him or his position. However, every band seems to have its clown. His function is to act as a buff between disputants, deflecting the more serious disputes away from their original sources, absolving other individuals of blame by accepting it himself. Frequently he will end a dispute simply through the use of ridicule, and although such ridicule may be taken as a form of judgment, the essential point is that once again its objective is to divert attention from the source of the dispute and also to divert blame from anyone who is clearly in the wrong. The major concern of all, except possibly the prime disputants, is that the dispute shall be ended, and frequently by creating or reviving another, lesser dispute the clown brings the disputants into the same frame of mind.

[1] [see page 330-- Analyst]

157 particular asset in the hunt. This was his world. He had little or no in-
[595] terest in the village.

Njobo, on the other hand, was excellent at dealing with the village and seemingly enjoyed it, for brief periods. He was much closer to the Nambikwara, who "delights in responsibility" and who "finds enough reward in those burdens that their fellows shy away from" (*ibid*).
554 Although his wives were successive, it is worth mentioning that his
156 penultimate wife, mother of his crippled son, was not remarried and
593 was still considered by all, including Njobo, as his senior wife. Although she lived with her natal band, she sometimes visited Njobo (particularly when he was in the village), and he also visited her, at which times they acted in all respects like man and wife. Njobo refused to allow her to live with him in the forest hunting camps.

156 Njobo's father, Biyonga, had not been outstanding in any way. He
554 had been dead a number of years, and nobody seemed to remember
555 him for any particular qualities.[1] Njobo, on the other hand, was
157 among the finest hunters, and unique in having killed, single-handed,
[224] four elephants. He had also participated in successful communal elephant and buffalo hunts, and apart from being a hunter of the utmost courage, he was also a man of the utmost integrity. He possessed, in abundance, all those qualities the Mbuti admire most except a good singing voice. He himself was modest, and usually self-effacing in the hunting camp. He came to the fore in relations with the village, and
[648] frequently acted as "headman" of the band in that respect. However,
156 if ever he spoke too loudly in camp, he was either shouted down or
152 laughed at; ridicule he accepted and even welcomed. I only heard him
554 make a retort once, when reference was made to his son's inability to walk without a stick. He said, "It is never good for one man to talk too much, particularly if he is right. But if an Mbuti has something to say, what else can he do?"

156 Njobo had no brothers, but his sisters had produced a number of
604 children, several of whom, married and single, were members of the
596 same band. The only sister who was in the band was a widow, and her children were elsewhere. She acted as mother to all her nephews and nieces, among which were two youths, cousins to each other, and each recently married. When Njobo was away from the band for a

[1] Although there was a general reluctance to mention the dead by name, or even to talk about them, there was no rigid prohibition. It was a question more of there being no particular occasion for such mention. If Biyonga had been exceptional in any way, it would certainly have arisen sooner or later in ordinary conversation, and equally certainly in response to questioning.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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renown, the man with a troublesome trio of wives, himself a frequent cause of friction in the camp. Shaking his finger at Ekianga, Moké said, "And that is a man, completely clean. He pleases my spirit [*roho*] very much."

After the evening meal Moké stood in the middle of the camp and pointed to the hearth of each great hunter and male elder in turn, naming them, and saying, "This is my man, this is my hearth, for it is his hearth; but it is not Asuku's." He even pointed over to Cephu's camp, and included Cephu. He then went back to his hut, leaving Asuku at the central fire with two elders.

Despite this display of disaffection, however, Asuku remained on. He had not only been pointed at, but named in public, and another had been named as good while he had been named as bad—a double disgrace. Ridicule, after this, was pointless, and although everyone wanted to be rid of Asuku, their respect for Njobo, coupled with Njobo's continued absence, prevented them from doing more than ignoring the offender as far as possible. After some three months, however, Asuku began to frequent the village for long periods. Although this meant he was at least not in the camp, which was thereby much improved, the hunters found this the ultimate insult and disloyalty. When he refused a summons to return to the hunting camp, old Moké once again stood in midcamp, an honored position from which any Mbuti, young or old, is free to claim the attention of everyone. He said that since now Asuku had become a villager, he was no longer an Mbuti, no longer "ours"; he belonged far away, very far away indeed. Pointing to the central fire in the section of the camp that included Njobo's wife and three great hunters, and divers others both related and unrelated, he said, "This is a matter of the forest. This is our hearth. It is Njobo's hearth. It is not Asuku's hearth. He belongs in the village or completely and absolutely far away."

There were murmurs of assent from everyone, and Moké looked around to each individual hearth, asking, "Is my spirit [*roho*] right?" Agreement was unanimous, though subdued, and Moké simply said, "*Asi-to*"—"It is finished." The next day word was sent by a youth to Asuku's father, in the territory of Effundi Somali, a few miles on the far side of the Epulu. I was told that the youth simply gave a verbatim account of what had happened. Asuku never returned to the Epulu band, and left the village, returning to his father's territory.

His cousin, Mbaaka, was not such a stranger in the band, but soon after his marriage, and some six months after the Asuku episode, he

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, 627
though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain 578
behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from 252
Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Tening- 152
bengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually 578
her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and [626]
was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad 224
and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His 578
cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody 224
should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was 626
reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they [578]
moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had [821] been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and dis- [152] comfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move [166] wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur- [648]

224 626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of
[821] friction).
[152]
[166] There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur-
[648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten-
621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par-
221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old
578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came
593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja.
152 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and
291 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing
621 it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young
[224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some
593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute
621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said
166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being
626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem-
[221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

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754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly [156] the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

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self being maneuvered into an awkward situation may suddenly leave altogether and go somewhere else. Neither lineal seniority nor political authority (chieftainship) are ever even mentioned in any attempt to influence a family's movement. When Manyalibo and Masisi, who shared the same grandfather (Manyalibo being the lineal elder), fell out and moved into separate camps, it was Masisi who took the initiative, and although Manyalibo claimed that Masisi ought to respect him because of age, he never suggested that Masisi was subject to his authority. He even stated openly that Masisi had the right to move wherever he wanted, but that it was not good for "brothers" to separate.

Thus interfamily exchange can only be regarded as a direct relationship between two families which, if they happen to be in separate bands, creates a relationship between their respective bands allowing for further such interchanges. Such bands respond to each other's needs with regard to optimum economic size, occasionally cooperate, and possess an additional mechanism for the settlement of interband disputes concerning trespass or marriage exchange.

BAND TO VILLAGE

In examining relationships between the band and the village we find the same distinction, only more clearly made, between formal and informal relationships that are the most effective.

But whereas even latent antagonism between bands is minimal, there is considerable latent antagonism between band and village, manifest not only in opposed systems of economic exploitation but also in opposed systems of values. Open conflict would bring advantage to neither group, and we have to think, in view of the lack of necessary economic interdependence, of the exchange in connection with this antagonism. It does indeed offer each group ample opportunity for insulting the other, though individual exchange relationships sometimes remain amicable, and even intimate, for considerable lengths of time.

The outward objective, at least, of the general Mbuti/Villager relationship is one of economic exchange, for mutual convenience. There are a number of formal levels at which such exchange, and the necessary associated negotiations, may be conducted, using a corresponding number of media:

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1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

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Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

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throughout his life. It is also a question of friendship with the villager, but for him the relationship is further compelled by his belief in his own tribal lore, a compulsion not felt by the Mbuti. The Mbuti sometimes exploit this relationship with a *karé* as they may also do with their *kpara* for whom they feel no friendship, knowing that the strength of tribal lore, and the fear of supernatural sanctions upon themselves, will bring at least a grudging response.

Although essentially an individual relationship rather than a band relationship, failure on the part of an Mbuti to respond to his *karé* is considered by the villagers as a violation of village law, and can be made into a lineage/lineage or a band/village issue, but with predictable lack of success because of the absence of any effective agency of control. However, the attempt is sometimes made, and the band may at least be held responsible, in violation of *karé* brotherhood, for the actions of one of its members.

None of these formal relationships, then, brings about much effective economic exchange, and the political relationship is correspondingly ineffective. The mechanisms for political relationship are there, but their use is made impossible by the whole process of flux in Mbuti society. At the best those mechanisms are taken up and used momentarily when it is found to be mutually advantageous.

Individual Economic Relationships

There is, however, the last level, that of the nuclear family to the nuclear family, by which the band relates to a village. This is the effective level at which the bulk of economic exchange takes place among the Epulu Mbuti, and among most other net-hunting bands I have seen. In view of the flux that characterizes Mbuti society, it is indeed the only level that could provide any realistic basis of relationship.

It may not even necessarily be a family-to-family relationship. Individual members of the Mbuti family may go their own way and relate as such to village individuals. But once formed, these relationships are likely to remain fairly constant, for as long as the Mbuti family is hunting within that territory, or within reasonable reach. Several such attachments might be formed by the Mbuti, though generally not more than one in any one village. This leads to effective economic exchange but it provides no basis whatsoever for relating the band to the village, and it offers the villagers no more opportunity for control than they already have; namely, the fondness of the Mbuti for village luxuries.

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa, bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

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Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 131 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the • [648] [192] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 602 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 778 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also represents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

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Let us look, then, at these same structural elements, having just considered them in their forest context, and place them in a village context.

1. THE TERRITORIAL BAND, while in no way lessening the efficiency of the hunting band, and while still preserving band unity through the concept of territory and the use of an age-level system, presents to the village system only disunity and flux. The flux that is a natural part, it seems, of the seasonal fission and fusion of all Mbuti bands renders it next to impossible for any form of village authority to be exerted over the Mbuti, either as bands or as individuals. The preference of the Mbuti for marrying into distant bands, and of thenceforth maintaining an exchange of visits and even of membership with these bands, directly counters the authority of the villagers, which is based on localized lineages and is therefore itself localized. The Mbuti are as likely as not to exchange visits with each other over distances that exceed not only the territorial limits of the clans of the village tribes but even of the tribes themselves, between which there are no political relationships except hostility. In view of the lengths to which the Mbuti carry the joking relationship, if it can be called that,[6] it is not surprising that they find it convenient to maintain their bands in such constant and otherwise unnecessary flux. The Mbuti constantly raid village plantations, openly ridicule the villagers, and steal from under their noses, unless the villagers are particularly generous. I have not met a single villager, even among those most popular with the Mbuti, who has not complained of being "eaten," and complained at the same time of the impossibility of applying legal sanctions over tribal boundaries.

2. AGE divides the hunting band into significant horizontal sections crosscutting all lineal considerations.[7] The emphasis on age is con-

[6] The Mbuti in their own parlance regard the village as a place to hunt and eat. They say "in the forest we hunt, in the village we hunt" (*subandura su wendi, subananji su wendi*), also, equally frequently, "We eat animals, we eat villagers" (*Sule banyamu, sule Batubanji*"). Hunting calls for trickiness, cunning, using tactics appropriate to the game, often imitating it and assimilating, temporarily, its personality. Such tactics in the village include bringing in a certain amount of meat as bait, performing some service, and occupying a generally subservient position. When asked why he forced his son to take part in the *nkumbi* initiation at the hands of the villagers, one father said, simply, "When we hunt elephant we cover ourselves with elephant dung" (*Su wendi bambongu su pati mavi nda'bo*).

[7] Turner (1957), following Gluckman (1954), finds among the Ndembu, a society that is mobile and fissionable, also lacking the more formal political institutions, an essential crosscutting of opposed groups. He also found, as we have found, that (Turner 1957, p. 289) ". . . links of kinship and of political and economic co-operation *per se*

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C 563 ing the Mbuti, are not only trying to subject the Mbuti to the authority of village supernatural sanctions but are also trying to assimilate from the Mbuti some of the spiritual power they believe to reside in the forest.

P *177 105 621 • 648 The ultimate nature of the relationship between the two people cannot be determined until further studies have been made of similar situations from both the Mbuti point of view and, a major need at the moment, from the village point of view. For now, it seems sufficiently clear that the general nature of the relationship is one of opposition, and that Mbuti society, in response to the demands of the situation or by fortuitous chance, meets it with an organization based upon the C [621] very antithesis of village organization. Against political centralization it offers complete decentralization and diffusion of authority. Against a sedentary, patrilineal, patrilocal village it matches the nomadic, nonlineal, territorial band. The vertical village kinship system is countered by a horizontal age-level system. Village values are directly opposed by forest values. And within itself Mbuti society uses these same principles, in a state of almost perpetual flux, to maintain a P C [181] cohesion fully as powerful as that found among the villagers. Instead of looking to the more conventional structural principles for the source of unity of Mbuti society, we have had to look rather to values, and it is in terms of values that the over-all society, of Mbuti and villagers, has its ultimate being and significance.

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

P 123 177 521 women gathered around, chattering away gaily and asking for news of the village.

C 648 439 177 P 123 177 439 The girls were Amina, daughter of an important BaBira subchief, and her cousin. Her father was hoping, she said, that she might be allowed to stay for a few days and bring him back some meat. She obviously knew the Pygmies well, because without waiting to be asked she distributed the plantains. She said she would keep the manioc flour until the meat began to come in. Apparently she was well liked, because as soon as people heard of her presence they came over to shake her hand, in the manner of villagers, grasping each other's wrists. Kenge told me all about her, and said that her father was one of the least animal-like villagers. He asked me which of the two girls I thought looked the more attractive. I said Amina, without a doubt. She was the most beautiful girl I had seen in a long time; the BaBira are by no means noted for their good looks. Amina was tall and a warm brown in color. She carried herself with the inborn grace of Bantu women; her eyes were deep and thoughtful; her expression was kind and gentle. Yes, she was certainly the more beautiful of the two. Kenge nodded thoughtfully and changed the conversation.

P 123 177 P 123 177 C 832 [576] That night I sat up late with the men, and when I went back to my hut I was surprised not to see any bachelors sleeping on the floor as they usually did. But three logs were placed beside the bed and were glowing cheerfully. I sat down on the edge of the bed and found, as I had expected, that Kenge had curled up in my blanket. He was considerate enough, on such occasions, not to take my blanket onto the floor, but rather to take half of the bed. So I crawled in beside him and was about to say something when I realized that the body beside me was considerably taller than Kenge, and very differently shaped. It was Amina.

P 123 177 648 C 648 123 It was a difficult moment, but I could see the whole situation at once. I had become the center of a nice political maneuver. The

P 123 177 648 C 648 123

chief had sent his daughter to win the Pygmies, not by her gifts of plantains and manioc flour, but by winning me. The Pygmies, anxious to get what they could out of the situation, liking Amina anyway, but having some consideration for me, got Kenge to find out which of the two girls I preferred. That, evidently, was to be the limit of my choice in the matter. I confess I was glad I had chosen Amina, but I could see all sorts of difficulties arising if I were to take advantage of the situation. No doubt the chief had in mind the considerable bride-wealth he could demand should, by any chance, his daughter bear a mulatto child. Still, it was good of him to send his prettiest daughter.

C [583]

I considered for a minute or two and then said, "Amina," very quietly. It had begun to rain, and I half hoped she would not hear me. It would be a terrible disgrace to her—and to me—if I turned her out, but I wanted no part of a lengthy and costly dispute over bride-wealth. But Amina was by no means asleep. She laughed lightly and made fun of my KiNgwana name, which means "the long one." So I said, "Amina!" once more, a little more sharply, still trying to think what a supposed gentleman and scholar should do in such circumstances. But Amina was not helping. She just snuggled closer and said, "Yes, tall one?" Then in a moment of inspiration I simply said, "Amina, the roof is leaking." And with masculine authority I added, "Get up and fix it."

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Without a word she got up and started searching for the leak, pulling at the leaves until a steady trickle of water came down, splashing on the floor beside the bed. By the time she had repaired the damage and checked the whole roof with womanly efficiency I was asleep—at least so I pretended. With a sigh she pulled the blanket from me and also went to sleep—or perhaps she too was pretending. But it was a solution, if a chilly one. My last thoughts that night were that Kenge would at least have left me some of the

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this area. It was named Eboyo, and the villagers belonged to the BaBira tribe, predominant in the southern and central Ituri. Here there were two chiefs—the traditional chief, Sabani, and the government-appointed chief, Kapamba. Kapamba's job was to see that the right crops were planted, harvested, and marketed to the Belgian government, and that the taxes were collected and paid over. The Belgian policy was largely to let the people in this rather difficult and unprofitable part of the Congo live as they had always lived. The only stipulations were that they should live peacefully, and that in addition to their own small plantations they should cultivate more ground for crops which would both help to feed immigrant labor forces, such as the road gangs and the workers at Station de Chasse, and be of commercial value to the Belgians in the world market for such products as cotton, palm oil and groundnuts.

Kapamba was not a popular figure. He was small and pathetically ugly. His hut was at the very far end of the village, behind a large hillock on the top of which stood his baraza. Only his close relatives and a few Pygmies lived near him.

In the village proper, Sabani's house was in the center. Sabani was a sly old man whose father had married a Lese girl, from the eastern edge of the forest. Sabani changed his tribal affiliation to suit the convenience of the moment, and the Belgians found it impossible to deal with him, so they appointed Kapamba in his place. But Sabani was still the real power in the village, and the real authority. He was also the chief ritual authority for miles around, and he was a frightening sight when painted and dressed for his role of witch doctor at the time of the nkumbi initiation ceremony. Even on other occasions when he wished to be formal—such as the visit of a Belgian administrator—he was no less inspiring. Ragged trousers came down to within a few inches of feet that were barely covered by ill-fitting shoes, slit where they pinched so as to be more comfortable. An old khaki tunic covered his bare chest, and on his head he wore

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P 609 177 P [822] it had a railway, which aroused his deepest curiosity. He could not think why the trains were limited in their movement by the iron rails, and could not turn wherever they wanted to. There was something about this restriction of freedom that bothered him. I took him to see a football match between the workers of a local brewery and those of a large combine store. Just before the match we had been drinking palm wine in a small African bar, and found it much stronger than the wine made in the forest. So Kenge rooted happily for what he called "Men of the Beer," but why people should spend the afternoon kicking a ball back and forth was as puzzling to him as were the captive trains.

C 609 648 574 [754] P 177 • 648 We spent only a few days in Paulis, branching out from there along the northern limits of the forest. Then we turned eastward and made our way across and down into Lese country. The BaLese are considered to be arch-sorcerers and witches, and it was with great reluctance that Kenge agreed to stay in the village of Chief Lupao, near Nduye. It was several miles off the road, and by accident or design it was empty when we got there. Fires were still smoldering and smoking, but there was no other sign of life. The chief's baraza, a huge edifice with a thatched roof, stood open in front of his house; the fire had been recently made up, but nobody came out to greet us.

Kenge was getting more and more nervous, and I was on the point of giving in to his repeated requests to leave and find a more hospitable place to stay, when a young man appeared and wandered idly toward us. He stopped some way off and stood there looking at us. This was a completely new situation to me, as in every other C [184] village, even where we had been total strangers, we had been almost embarrassed by the hospitality of the people. I waited to see if the man's curiosity would get the better of him, but after a while I gave up and went over to talk to him. Kenge refused to move from the safety of the car, and stood there with his hand on the door, ready to lock himself inside at a moment's notice. For him this was a

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FOREST HORIZONS

For him this was a foreign world indeed, for these were not only villagers, but villagers who had a name for devouring corpses. C 609 648 574 [266] 8 179 648

I made little headway with the young man, who continued to chew on a stick while he avoided giving any direct answers to my queries as to where Chief Lupao was. He questioned me in turn, and when I had assured him that I was not a missionary, or a government agent, or a plantation owner looking for forced labor, he wandered away—still chewing. He called back over his shoulder that he would try and find his father, the chief. Kenge was speechless with indignation because we had not been invited into the baraza or offered water to wash with. He said that even villagers did that much for strangers, however unwelcome. He was more unhappy than ever.

Eventually Lupao's son returned and said that his father would be back soon from his plantation, and we could sit down in the baraza if we wanted to. With that he walked away and once more we were alone. By now it was too late to think of going anywhere else, so we entered the baraza and sat down on a couple of logs near the fire. After an hour a small crowd of old men and children had gathered around and were staring at us silently and speculatively. Any time either of us tried to talk with them they just shook their heads. Kenge was beginning to be more impatient than afraid, and he demanded that someone go and fetch water for us to wash with, asking the bystanders what kind of savages they were to let their guests stay unwashed and unfed. The chief's son looked at Kenge coldly and asked him what tribe he belonged to. Kenge replied without hesitation that he was not of the village, but of the forest—he was a Pygmy. The young man nodded and said, "So I see!" And still no move was made to fetch us any water.

Just then Chief Lupao came out of his house. An extremely surly and untidy old man, he did not try to disguise the fact that he had been sleeping, and not in his plantation. He greeted us in an offhand way and asked what we wanted. I explained that we wanted C 622 574 186

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had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere. For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

THE WORLD BEYOND

Our last stop was outside Mambasa, where the local administrator in a fit of well-meaning but not very far-seeing zeal was "liberating" the Pygmies from the villagers. He did this by cutting down clearings along the roadside and setting up villages for the Pygmies to live in, so that they could cultivate plantations that would provide additional crops for the government to collect and market. Kenge was immensely amused at the thought of being liberated. He said the Pygmies would still go to the Negro villages. Why should they work on their own plantations when they could steal from real villagers? 648 199 361

We accompanied the administrator, a fat and jovial man, hospitable and friendly, who genuinely liked the Pygmies. But he could not be made to believe that what he was doing was wrong. He had called various groups of Pygmies down to the clearings and talked to each group, explaining that the government would supply them with all the necessary tools for cultivation and give them the seeds to plant. In time, each Pygmy village would have a baraza, like the Negro villages, and a schoolhouse, and the important ones would have their own dispensaries. He then asked in a democratic way if they wanted to come and join the plan. They all shouted yes, to a man, and the administrator turned to me with a victorious smile of pride. He then commanded the villagers he had brought with him to distribute beans to each Pygmy, with instructions as to how and where to plant them. The Pygmies all lined up, and as soon as each had received his share he rejoined the end of the line. When they were caught out and taken off the line to their allotments to plant the beans, they listened gravely and began to work. Half an hour later most of the beans were being cooked for lunch.

The plan was doomed to failure for several reasons. For one, the Pygmies are not able to stand the direct sunlight and become ill outside the shade of the forest. They also become ill because they have no resistance, as the villagers have, to the kinds of disease they are open to in a sedentary life. Water which the villager can drink with 648 199 361 147 164

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impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

[829]

177 439 648 Before the Belgians stopped intervillage and intertribal warfare, the most important single duty of the pygmy was to act as scout and intelligence agent in the forest. As soon as he became aware of a raiding party crossing the boundary of his host's territory he would hotfoot it to the village to give warning. This eternal vigilance on the part of the pygmy was probably of more value to his hosts than the meat that he brought in. Now that the need of this has ceased he is fulfilling only half of his contract; the Negro, who still provides plantains and manufactured objects, is still fulfilling all of his. Still both are satisfied.

177 439 361 621 648 Ordinarily, the pygmy keeps inside the territory of his Negro hosts. Individuals and small family groups may go outside to visit relatives in other bands, but this causes no disturbance because the visitors turn in their game to the hosts of the kinsmen whom they are visiting. This constant milling about evens up on the whole, and the number of pygmies in any band at any one time is about the same. There are occasions, however, when the hunters of a band may have a strong reason to pass beyond the landmarks which designate their hosts' territorial boundaries. If there is a lot of game just over the border and no pygmies there to catch it, the pygmies will tell their Negroes, who tell the Negroes owning that part of the forest. An agreement will be made between the two groups of Negroes, and the pygmies will be allowed to take the game, provided that they pay a part of it to the owners of the forest, and another part to their own hosts. This kind of economic treaty, therefore, brings the pygmies of a given band into contact with two groups of Negroes, and may initiate new relationships.

177 574 When the pygmy camp is close to the Negro village, some of the pygmies

[P. 323-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 186-A]
000 the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

Legal System

671 421 There is virtually no evidence from which any conclusions can be drawn about the legal system of the Efe archers or even of the nature of the sanctions that uphold social behavior. Schebesta (1941, 275 ff.; 1948, 533 ff.) points out, however, that, though the Mbuti function at one of the lowest known stages of economic development, they recognize both private and collective ownership and there is a definite property law.

421 621 628 The district hunted by the band, together with all the vegetable and animal food contained in that district and also raw materials used in Pygmy technology, is the collective property of the band. All members of the band share equal rights. Alien bands are tolerated only to the limit that the resident band desires to extend hospitality. The boundaries of the various territories, generally well known to all, are considered inviolable. If an animal is [224] hunted across a boundary and killed there, it belongs to the band in whose territory it was killed. If the neighboring bands are on good terms, they usually share the spoil.

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 627 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

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Mbuti

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

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Closer to an indigenous system of pun-
627 ishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo*
[765] society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

681 There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against
684 the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender
688 will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat
765 is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu
533 Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

627 The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon
578 the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

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The Giver of the Law

CEPHU HAD COMMITTED what is probably one of the most heinous crimes in Pygmy eyes, and one that rarely occurs. Yet the case was settled simply and effectively, without any evident legal system being brought into force. It cannot be said that Cephu went unpunished, because for those few hours when nobody would speak to him he must have suffered the equivalent of as many days solitary confinement for anyone else. To have been refused a chair by a mere youth, not even one of the great hunters; to have been laughed at by women and children; to have been ignored by men—none of these things would be quickly forgotten. Without any formal process of

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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224 156 620 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [858] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight. 627 681 [685]

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention. 684 835

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned [412] [152]

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

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754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [427] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

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Mbuti

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten • [683] to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

*177 754 [192] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [836] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [684] [177] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

In the absence of any "elder," it is difficult at first to understand the legal system and how it functions. From the examples cited, however, it appears that one of the first rights of every Mbuti is the right of self help, but because of the nature of the band in which he lives it is unlikely that any serious dispute will remain restricted to the original participants and left to them to settle. Such can happen, and has, but usually the dispute is widened, involving more and more of the others and, finally, the whole band itself, until a settlement is reached. 627 508

Thus in a case of incest between members of the same lineage, the first act on the part of the girl's family was to pursue the boy, threatening him with knives and spears and driving him from the camp. There, they said, he could die. He would get no shelter and no food. Returning from this chase, they promptly tore down the house of the boy's "father" (actually his father's brother, with whom the boy was staying). As far as the offended family were concerned, the matter was finished, but the "father" thought otherwise and threatened to take counteraction. At this point, while the womenfolk on the girl's side were making the usual demonstrations of grief (throwing themselves on the ground and beating themselves) and the men on both sides were brandishing spears, knives, and bows and arrows, the dispute degenerated into the practical consideration of where the houseless "father" was 627 684 [152]

[P. 230-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.231-A]

627 to sleep and how he was to rebuild his house.
684 His wife, who would normally have undertaken this task, was sick. He was offered hospitality for the remainder of the night by other relatives, and early in the morning the offended family were themselves assisting him to rebuild his hut. During this dispute no mention was made of the fate of the transgressor.

621 This particular band was composed of two
627 major segments. The dispute was confined to
684 one segment and almost exclusively, though not quite, to the two families concerned. Other
[613] members of that lineage came forward only to appease and compromise.

The other segment, separated by a few hundred feet (the band was in the process of fission), listened eagerly to the dispute, making comments among themselves, mainly to the effect that the boy was a fool to have allowed himself to be found out and deserved to be beaten. When the pursuit of the boy led through their part of the camp, they hid. The older men carefully shut themselves up and refused to take any part in the proceeding.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 Younger men, regardless of family or lineage
627 ties, brought food to the transgressor, who
• 684 stayed outside the camp for two days. His reappearance on the third day caused no excitement on either side. This must not be taken as a full account of the incident. Undoubtedly a great deal is not known about how the settlement was effected, but it is useful to show with what informality a serious transgression can be dealt with.

571 The intimate nature of a Pygmy camp is stressed by Putnam. Even in the middle of the night, when people are inside their huts, a conversation at one end of the camp can be clearly heard at the opposite end. Thus, even a matri-
578 monial squabble may well become enlarged
627 until it involves the entire band. Matrimonial
[593] disagreements and allegations of flirtation and of selfishness or dishonesty in the division of the meat are frequent causes for dispute. Dis-
[626] putes may be resolved entirely by self help, which may involve a fight or a beating, by public abuse or ridicule during the group dis-
578 cussion, by ostracism, or exile. The group dis-
626 cussion, mainly among men but with comments
562 hurled at them by their wives, is the main regulatory mechanism. Both Schebesta and Putnam agreed that the part played by the women, who do not participate directly in these

[P 231-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 231-C]

gatherings of the men but sit outside their huts, listening and making loud comments, is not insignificant. In the early stages of a dispute among the net hunters, a woman may take a leading part on behalf of whichever member of her family is involved, but not when the dispute becomes the topic of these evening discussions. 578 626 562

Apart from the driving of the incestuous youth from the camp, there is no record of even temporary forcible exile from an Mbuti band. Individuals who offend the group are, however, ostracized and induced to go elsewhere. 627 684

Whatever the dispute, and at whatever level it takes place, the entire band is concerned in its settlement. If it is settled in its early stages, it may be assumed that it is with the approval of all. As long as a single voice is raised in disagreement, the dispute continues. Even over a question of hunting, or of moving camp, it may take several days, says Putnam, to reach a decision.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Closer to an indigenous system of punishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo* society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight.

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention.

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned

684 their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all
835 manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over
[152] and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to
835 live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what
627 he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the
[153] forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684 •
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857]
by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593]
burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] [593]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602]
the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

835 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that
• 684 they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon,
684 Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though
626 he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years
[554] later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The
[157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor;
[181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them-
[522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who
578 had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.168-A]
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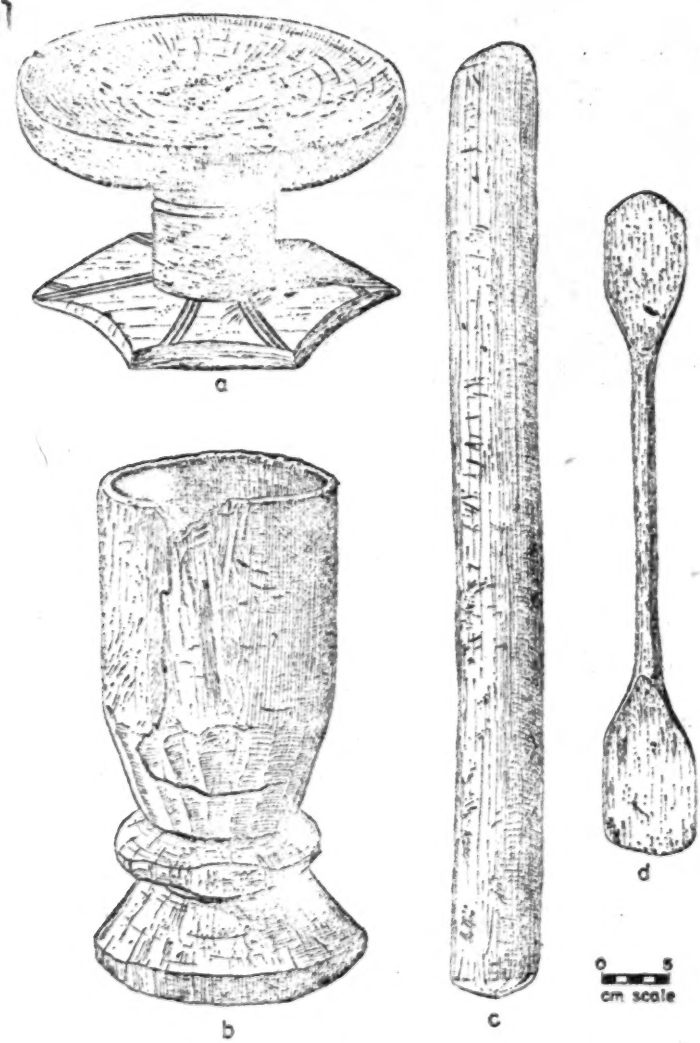

[426]
[685]

FIG. 4. Household utensils carved from wood, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Stool. b. Mortar. c. Pestle. d. Stirrer. Throughout the Ituri the Mbuti frequently borrow or steal wooden utensils from the villagers. These may be found in hunting camps close to villages.

[ARCHERS]

422 Certain objects that by their nature are col-
222 lective property, however, are considered to be-
long to the finder. This applies mainly to vegetable products, a honey tree, a termite nest, or a nest of grubs or caterpillars. All who help in the gathering are due their share of these products, but the major part goes to the finder.

422 All personal objects made or acquired by an
[423] Mbuti are private property. Thus not only the utensils, but the homestead itself, is the property of the wife, who may, if she wishes, pull the hut down as a gesture of defiance. Weapons belong to men; clothes, to each individual. These objects can be disposed of in any way, at
[685] will. Petty pilfering is considered as theft, and theft is both forbidden and punished; but Schebesta does not describe any system of punishment.

428 With regard to succession, generally the brothers or the sons, says Schebesta, inherit from a father; sisters and daughters, from a mother.

000 Schebesta (1948, 533) argues that, as the
[P. 186-B]

[P.186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948,533) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 627 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards find that they receive no share when game from the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does not share any of her gathering products with others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and above all those suspected of sorcery, who are considered the worst types of antisocials, are punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp, and left to die if they are not executed by some means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta cites neither examples in detail nor enough cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He seems, however, to be generally in accord with what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, except with regard to the position and authority of the elder and the alleged "system" of law and punishment.

613 689 626 [685] [754] [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

802

There is little information on division of time and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives the result of his work among five Mamvu-

[P. 186-D]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But whatever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for
136 granted in any part of the forest, except possibly that small triangle
137 bounded by the three roads joining the administrative centers of Mambasa, Irumu and Beni (Map 4),[1] where the roads and the heavy concentration of foreign settlements, coffee plantations, hospitals, missions and mines have considerably affected the natural resources
311 and the natural patterns of game migration. There is no economic
166 need for trespass. Each territory is large enough for a band to roam
131 within it for year after year, never twice occupying the same camp site, never exhausting its supplies of food or the materials needed for
[628] shelter and clothing and the rest of the minimal Mbuti material cul-
[621] ture.

628 All of which is not to say that boundaries are not crossed. They
224 are crossed, either when hunters commit trespass or when individuals
• 685 or families visit relatives in other bands. In the case of trespass, a
131 band of hunters may pursue game across a boundary stream, particularly if it is one of the more prized animals. An elephant would almost certainly be pursued, but it is understood that the band whose territory is so violated has certain rights to the spoils. Such trespass is considered excusable under these conditions. Generally, however, a band will never hunt near its boundaries if the neighboring band is in the vicinity of the same boundary.

628 The only cases of uncondoned trespass known to me are rare in-
222 stances when a band has found itself short of honey during the brief
685 honey season, and has invaded its neighbor's territory and actually
131 set up temporary camp there. This was considered inexcusable only because permission was not first sought.

628 If trespass is rare, boundaries are being crossed frequently for the
166 approved purpose of visiting relatives, consanguineal or affinal. In-
574 dividuals or whole families sometimes wander in this way until they
131 are several territories distant from their home territory. By "home territory" an Mbuti would mean the territory in which he most habitually hunted, and in which he has established certain claims to honey or bark trees. He would be unlikely to attempt to define it in terms of clan or lineage concepts; that is, he would refer to the territory rather than to the band. This habitual exchange of visits is, in fact, the major social communication that exists between one band and another, but it also has a secondary economic significance: a band that becomes too large for convenience may split, a part of it going to join another band that has perhaps fallen below the optimum economic size. The major purpose of interband visits is the extension

[1] [see page 319 -- Analyst]

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [165] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

• 685 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *wazi-wazi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

someone's hut.[5] The woman would be roundly criticized, and maybe 685 157
named. Pepei was either ridiculed or caught by other youths and given a mild thrashing with a thorny branch. But that did not stop Pepei, and at one time he was becoming such a nuisance that there was considerable discussion as to how to deal with him.

One morning a leg of meat was found missing from a rack where it 685
had been smoked in readiness for a visit to the village. The owner of 157
the rack had been one of Pepei's most outspoken critics, Makubasi, 578
a son of old Tungana. Pepei, incidentally, was a discriminating thief, [251]
and he was generally tolerated because his thefts frequently operated [627]
as unofficial sanctions against people who had incurred public disapproval for some reason or another. However, Makubasi was a highly [554]
respected member of the band, and Pepei had overstepped himself by committing a theft that could not be construed as a mark of disapproval of some mild misdemeanor on someone else's part, but that was plainly an act of personal vengeance. Instead of thrashing him, [627]
Makubasi simply pulled down his meat rack, tumbling it into the fire below and burning it along with what was left of the meat. It was a dramatic gesture, and although his wife was seen to sneak some of the meat out of the fire before it was consumed, it was an effective move.

Makubasi's mother collected all the meat she and Tungana had, 685
brought it over and threw it on the ground in front of Pepei's house, 627
saying it was a gift for animals and insects, and for Pepei to eat it if 578
he wanted. This was too much for Pepei, who started crying and [152]
saying how terrible it was to be an orphan. Everyone ignored him and for the rest of the day not a word was spoken to him. The meat lay rotting outside his hut, where it remained until consumed by animals and insects.

That evening, again at dark, a peace offering of cooked food was 627
brought to Pepei by Sau, the old "witch" from whom he most fre- 431
quently stole. Thus did Sau, like Masisi, restore harmony and *ekimi* (quiet) to the camp.

[5] The acknowledgment of theft as a crime might well be taken in support of Nippold's (1954) contention that, together with other hunters and gatherers, the African pygmies, and the Mbuti in particular, have a highly developed sense of private property. It is a debatable point, and largely a semantic problem, and if labored too much only obscures the essential structural fact that regardless of the extent to which property is "privately" owned (and if it is, where are any corresponding patterns, let alone laws, of inheritance?), the obligation to share is an important recognized value, recognized in practice (cf., constant reciprocal prestations). There is frequent show of reluctance, but 685 157 421 [114]

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[621] [156] [6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

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29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing. 578 648 578 152

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin. [264] [534] [765] [533]

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered. [301]

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention. [593] [372]

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest. 578 152 593 [626]

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

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Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled. [177] [183]

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had [224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket, [462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or [186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti [183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

*177 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source 186 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in 436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling [621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and 186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for [753] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village [514] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some [224] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc- 439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

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593 578 persistence in sleeping with Amabosu's sister despite her having just given birth to a child. She evidently felt shame for her brother, but whatever the reason she did not fight back. This only enraged Amabosu further so that his beatings grew to the point where Amaloku was bruised and lame and perpetually in tears. After a week of this 593 the band was well aware of the underlying cause, but it was nonethe- 578 less concerned for the restoration of good relations between Amabosu 622 and his wife. Being outwardly a domestic squabble, nobody interfered, and the camp was silent. The silence was very real, as it can be when the Mbuti get moody, and it settled on the whole camp the moment each beating began. Masisi tried to create minor disputes about hunting, in the hope that Amabosu and his wife would join in, but they were not to be drawn so easily. Even when one very real [685] dispute raged beside them (Pepei having stolen some meat from Sau, Amabosu's mother) they maintained a sullen silence that overcame the band as soon as Pepei had been dealt with by a sound beating.

It was not until Amaloku, in an effort to run away from Amabosu, tripped and fell by Tungana's hearth that the camp had its chance. [252] As she tripped, Amaloku scattered several logs from the fire, upsetting a piece of meat that had been roasting over the coals, casting it into the ashes. Old Tungana let out a yell and his wife slapped Amaloku hard. Amaloku wailed as she had never wailed before, whereupon Masisi and Manyalibo, both great hunters, went to the middle of the camp and jointly denounced Amaloku as a troublesome girl who should be sent back to her people. She had been badly taught, be- [372] cause no Mbuti ever treats fire like that, or throws food into fire. She was no good as a daughter, no good in camp, and evidently no good in bed because she was still without child.

This utterly unjustified and personal attack brought out not only Amabosu but also Ekianga (Amaloku's brother, the basic cause of all the trouble) in common defense of the weeping girl. Masisi and [372] Manyalibo put up a good argument, for it was indeed considered bad to accidentally step into a fire, and the camp was soon in an uproar with the sister-exchange section uniting in defense, supported largely by the youths. The hunters, with the exception of Ekianga and Amabosu themselves, allied with Masisi and Manyalibo. Finally old [198] Tungana stopped everything by whistling and then making one of his rare speeches. It was to the effect that everyone was behaving like [186] villagers, so he might as well go to the village and stay there. He called to his wife to pack her things, and grumbling loudly he grabbed his

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[Information on begging and stealing of food from villages, since the practice is not regarded as a crime or symptom of Pygmy indigence but something the villagers simply tolerate, will be found under 177]

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156
226 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he
68 would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [858] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy
627 life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operat-
681 ing as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight. 627 681 [685]

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention. 684 835

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned [412] [152]

578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

• 685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

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himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health.

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

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dered out into the middle of the village, where he played with the 585
children. The next thing I knew he had disappeared again, and I 177
was told he had stolen one of the villager's bicycles and gone off [685]
down the road to Katala.

The Pygmies were obviously going to have nothing further to do with the villagers, and I felt sorry for Maliamo who had come and sat down beside them in the baraza. Feeling that I was in some way [123]
responsible, I asked if it was proper for me to offer them some palm wine. This eased the situation slightly. Munyunga and his friends stayed and drank their beer and palm wine, while Masisi and Moke did their best to pacify them by offering to have a meal cooked. But they said no, all they wanted was to drink. Only two Pygmies came to join them, and then only to see if they would be offered any leftovers. But Munyunga was not parting with a drop, even for Maliamo, who continued to sit uncomplainingly by his side. When the beer and palm wine were all finished, Munyunga still stayed —angry, surly, and very drunk indeed. Occasionally he called for more to drink, or asked where his new hat was, but nobody answered him. The few people that were in the village just went their way as though there were no visitors at all. Moke was fast asleep outside his hut, and Masisi was fashioning a new bow, never so much as glancing at the baraza.

It was beginning to darken when the villagers left, saying that the Pygmies were a lot of animals who didn't know how to behave, and that if Maliamo did not bear Kenge any children it would not be *their* fault.

As soon as the unwelcomed guests had left, the whole atmosphere 585
changed. Pygmies appeared unexpectedly from all directions, crowding around Maliamo to greet her. She went to the little hut that had been given to her and Kenge and began cooking. Kenge appeared, as if by magic, laughing and telling how he had met Mu-

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Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

000 the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

C 563 A few years later I was with Ausu in the forest when we were returning from a hunt. We were up above the Lelo River, where the P 177 forest was clear of all undergrowth. Ausu saw something move 439 among a heap of leaves, and we found a baby okapi lying there. The [136] mother okapis leave their young, covering them with leaves, when they go in search of food. Knowing that the Station de Chasse was anxious to have a small live okapi, Ausu picked this one up and P brought it back to camp. We took turns in carrying it over our shoul- [482] ders, as although it was only a few days old it was both heavy and frisky.

We eventually got it safely to the Station de Chasse, and anticipating some kind of trouble I asked the director to arrange to pay the reward directly to Ausu. Five hundred francs was the standard sum offered for a live okapi, but only if it survived for a week. We returned to the forest, and Ausu regaled the camp with stories of what he was going to do with the money, the equivalent of about ten dollars. Manyalibo asked him if he was going to give any to André. The suggestion raised a storm of protest; André was universally disliked by the Pygmies. But Ausu said that he would give him some, and eventually it was decided to give the chief two hundred francs out of the five hundred.

The very next day a delegation arrived from André's village with P a letter from André to me. It said that he had heard Ausu was to C be paid five hundred francs, and would I see that it was all paid over • [686] to him as Ausu was his Pygmy and had refused to work for him for several years. I sent back a reply saying that the Station de Chasse made their payments direct to the person who caught the animal, and that Ausu had offered to pay André two hundred francs. For the next few days we had a series of notes and delegations, pleading, C cajoling and threatening. Finally André said that if Ausu did not [694] give him all the money, he was going to bring a charge of theft

Closer to an indigenous system of pun-
627 ishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo*
[765] society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

681 There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against
684 the most serious offenses. One is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender
688 will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat
765 is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu
533 Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

627 The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon
578 the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

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that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
• 688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
539 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
518 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards find that they receive no share when game from the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does not share any of her gathering products with others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and above all those suspected of sorcery, who are considered the worst types of antisocials, are punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp, and left to die if they are not executed by some means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta cites neither examples in detail nor enough cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He seems, however, to be generally in accord with what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, except with regard to the position and authority of the elder and the alleged "system" of law and punishment.

613 689 626 [685] [754] [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

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There is little information on division of time and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives the result of his work among five Mamvu-

[P. 186-D]

593
578 was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he
152 fell flat on his face.
[536] That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

593 At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the
578 camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to
152 support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his
621 brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same
626 relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both
• 689 camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

578 Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged
626 rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restor-
576 ing peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our
836 hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an
[152] attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her, waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the forest, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

578 whole camp and by making so much noise that all the animals would
• 689 be frightened away, spoiling the next day's hunting. The Pygmies have a saying that a noisy camp is a hungry camp.

685 Some misdemeanors are very simply dealt with. A Pygmy thinks
[186] nothing of stealing from Negroes; they are, after all, only animals, as seen by Pygmy eyes. But among themselves theft is virtually non-existent. For one thing, they have few possessions, and for another there is no necessity for theft except through laziness.

685 Pepei was such a lazy Pygmy, and he was always stealing from
159 the Negroes. But out in the forest he was forced to work for his food,
[589] to build his own hut if he wanted one (he was a bachelor but liked having his own hut, sharing it with his younger brother), and he had to make his own bows and arrows and hunting net, and to cook his own food. This was hard on Pepei, and although he meant no harm he could not resist slipping around the camp at night, taking a leaf from this hut and a leaf from that, until he had enough to thatch his own hut—which he made by acquiring saplings in a similar manner. Food used to disappear mysteriously, and Pepei had always seen a dog stealing it. But finally he was caught in the act by old Sau, Amabosu's mother, who was a very strange and frightening old lady. Pepei crept into her hut one night and was lifting the lid of a pot when she smacked him hard on the wrist with a wooden pestle. She then grabbed him by the arm, twisting it behind his back, and forced him out into the open.

Nobody really minded Pepei's stealing, because he was a born comic and a great storyteller. But he had gone too far in stealing from old Sau, who had lost her husband and was supported by her son
685 Amabosu and his wife. So the men ran out of their huts angrily and
159 held Pepei, while the youths broke off thorny branches and whipped
627 him until he managed to break away. He went running as fast as he could into the forest; he cried bitterly and wrapped his arms around

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

as a unit of Mbuti hunters sharing and recognizing a common hunting territory.[2] No matter what group the band falls under, the definition holds. The territory is clearly defined by natural boundaries, though the law of trespass depends somewhat on the location of the home band within its territory at the moment of trespass. The boundaries, though fixed, are under certain circumstances capable of penetration without causing offense. 621

The composition of the band is fluid, to say the least, and does not follow any clear unilineal or cognatic descent system. Throughout the forest, the bands are in a constant state of fragmentation as well as in a constant process of fission and fusion. Members of any band are quite likely at any moment to leave and join another band, temporarily or permanently, for any one of a number of reasons. In-law visiting is common, and permanent attachments to the band are sometimes accomplished this way. But at the same time, with each successive, monthly change of site, the hunting camp also shows another stage in the over-all process of fission and fusion along recognizable lines of structural cleavage. At certain times of the year, different for net-hunters and archers, the band splits up into a number of smaller sub-bands, all still hunting within the same over-all territory, but as independent units. [611]

It has generally been stated, sometimes citing the apparent lack of an Mbuti language as an example, that the Mbuti are a people without a culture of their own, adopting the culture of their villager neighbors just as they adopt their language. A superficial look at a hunting society, with its lack of easily recognizable social institutions, might seem to confirm that opinion. There is no chieftainship, no council of elders, but sometimes an individual who assumes the villager title of *sultani* or *capita*. There is no legal system supported by effective or formal supernatural sanctions. There is an evident lack of any kinship system except an apparently slavish imitation of the villager clan and lineage system, whereby certain individuals related through the principle of patrilineal descent recognize a common ancestor and symbolize their unity by the respect of a common totem. Any attempt to integrate this system with other institutions, indigenous or adopted, 621 177* [622] [623] [69] [68] [613]

[2] Throughout, except where otherwise specified, I use the term "band" in this sense of a unit that is primarily territorial. It is essentially composed of peoples bound together by bonds other than lineage. Insofar as affines are an important part of any band, and affinal relationships as important in most respects as lineal relationships, the band cannot even be defined as cognatic or bilateral without qualification stressing its ad-hoc nature. [602]

224 156 620 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [858] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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tree and the Mbuti alleges that the villager stole the stem by trickery, leaving him only the leaves, so that the villager was able to replant the trees and grow more, but when the Mbuti planted the leaves they just withered and died.[8] It is seldom that the Mbuti deny possession of the stolen goods; what they deny is the act of stealing. But whatever the fact, and however judgment is given, the essential point is that there is no mechanism for enforcing that judgment. Judgment being given by a villager is in my experience without exception against the Mbuti, and orders restitution of the property, or service in lieu. If the Mbuti complies, however, it is merely because in his own estimation it is expedient to do so. If he feels that he has exhausted the goodwill of the injured villager he will simply leave, and thenceforth deal with another villager. If any attempt is made to inflict physical punishment on an Mbuti, or to imprison him, then the whole band will initiate reprisal raids on the plantations of the individual who brought the complaint. This seldom happens, because villagers seek other means for achieving some measure of control over the Mbuti, and it is with those that we shall now concern ourselves.

[8] See Appendix I: "The Legend of the Mbuti Plantation."

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[VET HUNTERS]

1. A Pygmy who had been visiting another band returned to his own camp and reported that a cousin of his had died. A wailing, suddenly started, was taken up, mostly by women but also by men and children, all over the camp. It lasted for 10 minutes and was repeated several times during the evening for five minutes at a time. Everyone went to sleep as usual; there was a final wail on waking the next morning. 763

2. A newborn infant (son of one of the most important hunters in the band) died at night. Only its father and mother wailed. Early in the morning the parents dug a pit in the house and buried the baby, wrapped in a small mat, with no ceremony. The next morning the couple dismantled the house and, using the same material, rebuilt it on the other side of the clearing. That night the father danced as usual. 763 764

3. An old Mbuti woman died while visiting the village. She was the mother of three of the male members of the band. Most of her relatives were with her when she died, and they wailed. When the news was received back in the hunting camp, such of her relatives as remained there wailed. Only one of them, one of the great hunters of the band, left to attend the burial. 763

4. There was an epidemic in a hunting camp, 763 731 165
[P 222-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.223-A]

763 and two people died. After burial and wailing,
• 731 camp was broken. On the march to another site a
165 woman who had not contracted the illness died, although she was not "ready to die." Within two weeks a woman gored by a buffalo (an extremely rare occurrence) died from her wounds. Following this last event, there was a consultation, and it was suggested that the band should disperse as there was some strong influence at work.[1] However, the dispersal did not take place.

763 5. A very well-liked hunter died while in the
[754] village. There was some talk that a half-paralyzed Pygmy, also a member of the band, had put a curse on him; but this in no way impaired the friendship between the accused and the children of the deceased. When the Pygmy was dying, his son wanted to take him back to the forest but was persuaded to let him die in the village in peace. His family and friends were present; those in the hut wailed occasionally, those outside were busy cooking. When he died the wailing broke out anew, and relatives started coming into the village from the forest. His villager patron could not come, so he sent his brother, the headman of a village a few

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788
involves them in any significant change of 182
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224] hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184] steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731 •
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena. 731 821 [823]

As might be expected therefore, such ritual as exists is most often connected with the storm and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. However, cult practices are far less common, and he mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offerings may be thrown into the undergrowth, though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or 788 [821] [778] 788 782

[P. 237-D]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[165] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
*177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
• 93 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

539 828 577 888 539 828 577 888 732 [776] [682] 539 577 888 732

[P 264-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 265-A]

539 about cripples that just happened to disappear
577 or who suddenly just "died completely."

888 There was once a Pygmy named Butuwa. He was
732 in the forest, and was sleeping with his wife, children, and old mother. His mother had no legs. In the middle of the night Butuwa said to his wife: "Mother is sleeping soundly; get the children together and let's go away." So they quietly picked up their belongings, and, together with their children, they crept away. They walked and walked and walked.

Early in the morning the old woman woke up. She said: "Where is everybody? Oh! They are a bad family, they have gone off and left their legless old mother to die. I will follow them." So saying, she stood on her head and walked and walked and walked until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She was very angry with them for having deserted her, and told them how bad they were to have left her alone in the forest. That night they all went to sleep together.

In the middle of the night the Pygmy said to his wife: "Now mother is really asleep; get the children together and let's go away." So they collected the children, picked up their belongings, and stole away. They walked and walked and walked.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and
577 she was very, very angry to find that her family had
888 deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she
1132 walked and walked and walked, until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She told her son how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son went off into the forest and gathered some honey. And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

Bazi

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825

3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

[P. 265-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting 732 and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

become spirits, but there is no evidence of the old or crippled actually being treated with anything but a care and respect that, judging from appearances, derives more from affection and a sense of responsibility (not unmixed with a certain amount of rare forethought) rather than from fear. 732 734

HUNTING TECHNIQUES

The iron tools available to the Mbuti since the inception of their relationship with the village tribes have not, apparently, tempted them to develop their hunting technology. They do not dig pits or make traps, nor do they erect spear-falls, techniques employed by the villagers. To make their traditional technology more efficient, however, the Mbuti do use iron blades for their spears, axes, knives and arrow blades. The spear blade makes the hunting of elephants much easier, though old Mbuti assert that they used to kill elephants with fire-hardened wooden spears. The knives and machetes undoubtedly make the cutting of leaves, saplings and vines much quicker and easier, and the honey ax affords simple access to beehives deep within hollow branches or tree trunks. The arrow tip is used more by the archers than by the net-hunters, it seems, but both groups rely primarily on poisoned arrows. The bows of neither group are large or efficient, accuracy is made doubly difficult by the limited vision of the forest environment, and hunters often aim at a sound or a movement of leaves rather than by sight of the actual quarry. With the poisoned arrow even a light graze will bring down the quarry, whereas with the metal-tipped arrow direct impact on a vital spot is essential. Even so, so chancy is Mbuti archery that throughout the forest the practice is to hold a handful of arrows in the hand that holds the bow; this enables them to be drawn and fired with remarkable rapidity. Naturally many are lost, but the loss of a poisoned arrow is of far less economic significance than the loss of a metal tip. 224 411

Traditional hunting techniques include archery, net-hunting and spear hunting, and occasional snaring (usually by youths, sometimes by old men). Nets vary in length from one to three hundred feet, and are about four feet in height. Seven small nets, together with beaters, might form a circle of over one hundred yards in diameter. Any area smaller than this would be impractical, as the game would be scared away before the nets could be set up and the beaters get in place. Even seven nets of average length would only form a circle barely two hun- 224

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P. 231-D]

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otherwise would have followed him without question, but Masisi was 222
adamant. He said he was going anyway; whether anyone else came 621
or not did not worry him. His cousin, Manyalibo, was in a quandary. 578
Morally he was bound to support his relative, but he was tempted 177
by Ekianga's idea of getting the best of both worlds. Visions of both meat and honey won, and he announced that he was going with Ekianga.

Masisi with the true Pygmy sense of drama said that Manyalibo 222
was a disgrace, and that as everyone else obviously wanted to behave 621
like villagers he would go off on his own. In a loud dramatic voice 578
he commanded his wife to pack her belongings. Within an hour or so they set off, followed by their two children, Akobo and Ageronga. There was some discussion after they had left, and Njobo's sister, Teningbenge, and her son Maipe, decided to follow Masisi. With [734] •
them went Masamba, Njobo's wife; Njobo himself was still in Bunia with his son, Nyange, looking after the boy who was being treated for severe tuberculosis of the bone. The next to follow them was old Asofalinda, who said that she wanted nothing to do with her brother Ekianga. If Ekianga intended to waste his honey season hunting, he could do so without her. This somewhat counterbalanced Manyalibo's desertion of Masisi, and everyone thought it a great idea. She packed her few things together and set off, still denouncing
Ekianga as a fool. She carried her crippled little daughter on her side 734
and her bundle slung over her back. Lizabeti was a pathetic child whose hip had been diseased since birth. She had never walked but had spent her ten years of life crawling around on her buttocks, dragging one withered leg after her, using the other leg and her two hands to swing her body along as she vainly tried to follow other children in their games. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, himself with a leg twisted by infantile paralysis, went limping after Asofalinda,
shouting that he would come and help her carry Lizabeti. As he 621
left, clutching a spear in one hand, he told me that Masisi would

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

all we could carry to bring back for dinner. The hill was ringed with streams, each one fresh and clear until it reached the swamp.

On the way back, having made a complete circuit, we were just nearing the camp when I noticed a huge old tree, one of those with great buttress roots joining the trunk some fifteen feet above the ground. It was completely dead, standing up white and naked among all the greenery, its lifelessness seeming all the more pitiable in the midst of such luxuriance. Most of its branches had already come crashing down, and only one or two jagged stumps were still jutting out from the main body. Kenge gave it a critical look; then peered in the direction of the camp a few yards below. "It should just miss our house!" he said quite seriously.

As a matter of fact it did. One night we were awakened by a sharp cracking sound, followed by a loud groan. This was repeated, and after a while a number of Pygmies, each with a flaming brand in his hands, stood out in the clearing, listening. "It's not going to fall yet," they said, and went back to sleep. Kenge had not even bothered to get up, but I could not sleep. I must have laid there for a couple of hours, listening to cracks as sharp as a rifle going off, and the intermittent groaning. Then the groaning got louder and more continuous, and in a flash Kenge was up and outside, yelling at me to follow. Just as I cleared the doorway the old tree came down, slowly and reluctantly, clutching at all the lesser trees that stood in its way. They were living, and it was dead, but it smashed its way on downward to the ground. The tremendous din of its collapse was followed by a light pattering of broken branches and twigs, and then silence. Kenge said, "You see, it did miss our house." So it had, by no more than six feet.

For the first day or two I noticed the children playing in a vine swing that they had rigged up for themselves, and I watched the crippled Lizabeti as she eyed them longingly. Several times, when the other children had gone scampering off into the forest I saw her

pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself 824 524 almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what 734 strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why 734 Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better 481 with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. 123 "What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most [152] truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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sense, and she must not refuse. Did she want her child to die like other cripples who had been unable to fend for themselves?

Reluctantly she agreed, but Lizabeti, as soon as I reached for her, burst into tears and dragged herself back into the farthest corner of her mother's hut. Masisi started to go in after her again, but Kenge called to him to leave her alone, and handed his crutches and those we had made for Lizabeti to the eagerly waiting children. Soon it was the most popular game in the camp. Even Masisi and Maipe tried "walking on one leg." I saw Lizabeti's tear-stained face peering from the door of her hut to watch.

The next morning Asofalinda came over to me and said that Lizabeti wanted to try this new game, but if she fell once she would never be allowed to try again. Not a soul left the camp that morning; they all wanted to see what would happen. Between us Kenge and I lifted the girl, who was bravely trying not to cry, and put the crutches under her arms. We showed her how to hold them with her hands at the sides, and how to take the weight off her good leg and swing it backward and forward. The greatest difficulty was getting her to trust that leg enough to move her crutches on in front of her. But little by little, moving one crutch at a time, she got more confidence. I went in front to catch her if she fell, and Kenge held her lightly around the waist from behind. Lizabeti began to walk. Kenge let go, and then, as she realized that Kenge was not even holding her, that she was actually walking upright, like the other children she had watched from the ground all her life, her face became contorted with fear and she stumbled. Kenge caught her just in time. He swung her high into the air with a triumphant shout to drown her wails of terror, and all the children joined in, laughing and chanting their congratulations.

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We had almost completed a circle of the camp, and I looked over to see if Asofalinda had noticed Lizabeti start to fall. I was just in time to see her bury her face in her hands, her whole body shaking as she

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

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Pygmies F04
Mbuti

[Information on begging and stealing of food from villages, since the practice is not regarded as a crime or symptom of Pygmy indigence but something the villagers simply tolerate, will be found under 177]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

• 75 Cuts, wounds, and sores are treated by rubbing the medicine, prepared with water or oil, into the wound. To cure headaches, rheumatism, and mental and other disorders, the skin may be scarified with an arrow and an herb rubbed into the wound. An effective though painful remedy against frambesia is widespread among the Mbuti. Mbuti and villagers both claim that it not only cures but prevents any recurrence of the affliction: Two species of vine are used, or, if the frambesia is malignant, a decoction is made with water and the earth of the nest of the ant (*ti'i*).

The Mbuti claim to know how to reduce fractures, says Schebesta.

Dysentery, diarrhea, and constipation are treated by enemas prepared from various lianas, barks, and peppers.

Various leaves and plants are applied or rubbed externally, without any scarification, against headache and stomach-ache, or inserted into tooth cavities.

759 Schebesta says that he has encountered no evidence of specialization in the field of medi-
75 cine. There never seems to be any need for one
628 band to apply for help or advice from another,
[P 187-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187- C]
nor do the archers seem to rely on the villagers for any medical help. 75 628

Rationalization

Speculation on problems of life and death are dealt with under Religious Life (p. 188). Here we can say only that Schebesta does not give a special account of legends or legend telling. However, from the legends that he quotes, and from those given by Joset (1948), it appears that among the archers this is an important means not only of reinforcing a system of values, or of commenting on individual behavior in the band, but also of rationalizing the strange and unknown. 538 82

Joset divides his collection of legends into four categories: (1) the Pygmy and his life; (2) animals: happy and unhappy relations between animals and Pygmies; (3) legends concerning the stars and sky; and (4) legends revealing individual psychological traits. Schebesta (1936b) says that legends tend to be spontaneous creations of individuals; there is no formal body of standard folklore.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] [751] •

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 881 177 P Z [535]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1963 FO4 Pygmies FO4

[NET HUNTERS]

Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.218-A]

B
411
751
881
P
881
177
751

FIG. 46. Initiation whip, *mbeke*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 *
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

But here we may note a significant difference in attitude to magic, or curative activity. Childbirth is a time which is thought of by both Mbuti and villagers as being attended by the possibility of danger, at least. The Mbuti think in terms of physical danger, and they have precautions that they take in the diet and behavior of the expectant mother before birth, and apparently effective knowledge of midwifery, including recognized ways of dealing with difficult births. After birth there are known cures for any weakness the infant or mother might show. What is lacking, among the Mbuti, is precisely what is dominant among the villagers: a felt need for protection against the supernatural.

A village mother and child will both have, according to how wealthy the family is, a number of potions to drink (which may or may not have medical significance, but are thought of as being protective) and divers charms to wear. The protection is thought to be necessary against *unknown* dangers. The difference between the two peoples is in the extent of this unknown. An Mbuti infant will have a vine bracelet or belt tied to it almost immediately after birth, and a small piece of wood or two will be fixed to the vine. It is stated that the vine and the wood convey to the child the health and strength of the forest. There is no apparent concern for any supernatural dangers, and no precautionary steps taken.

From the village point of view the lack of such measures involves the child and possibly the mother in great danger, and out of self-concern as much as out of concern for the Mbuti, the villagers proffer charms in abundance to expectant mothers and newborn children. However, the need is only felt by the villagers, not by the Mbuti.

This is precisely the difference we find when we seek other situations for which only the villagers have a cure—they are situations in

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 [621] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [564]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
751 of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast,
[847] and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.232-A]

278 411 their arrows but seldom achieved the same effect. The ingredients were known to him, and he concluded some special skill was used in the actual preparation. There is no mention of antidotes to these poisons.

278 Putnam knew of the existence of effective medicine among the net hunters, but no details survive in the notes. Anne Putnam's notes, however, mention a number of cases in which she observed the use of indigenous medicines and treatment.

• 752 757 During a fight a boy was knocked unconscious by a blow from a piece of wood. He was immediately propped up; the main concern seemed to be to prevent him from lying flat on the ground. Even when semiconscious, the boy was not allowed to lie down. This possibility seemed to frighten the Pygmies more than anything else, and for a while no other treatment was given. Then some incisions were made on his chest, and a leaf was applied.

757 Against toothache a certain leaf (not identified) is chopped fine and mixed with water. This mixture is poured from a leaf cup down each nostril.

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

128

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 536 177 157 811

[P 232-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ence and natural life. There is no practical cause—the cause itself is supernatural. I include various *rites de passage* under religion because such rites involve a thoroughgoing belief in the supernatural. The nature of the supernatural, however, varies greatly as seen by Mbuti and as seen by villagers. Both peoples, however, do have a belief in the supernatural; that is, scientifically nonexplicable powers that are invested in another class of beings, without form or substance, which we call *spiritual*. It is belief in these spiritual beings that is the essence of what we here call religion.

CURATIVE MAGIC

As indicated above, we are not here in the least concerned with acts, of either the Mbuti or the villagers, simply because they involve an assumed but scientifically false connection between cause and effect. We use the term "magic" as a translation of the native term, which groups together divers curative activities in the belief that all are equally scientific. Thus the penicillin that cures a sore is magic just as much as the antelope horn that cures a spell of bad hunting.

In trying to assess how far the village world impinges on the forest world in this respect, then, we have to see what situations there are for which the Mbuti have no cure and which they wish to cure, and for which the villagers do have a cure. Or, indeed, we must look to see if the reverse situation exists.

When I say there is little magic in the forest world of the Mbuti, I mean that there are few curative activities, and for the very simple reason that there are relatively few situations that require curing. For most Mbuti who have reached adolescence the life expectancy is good, as is the expectancy of good health. For most minor physiological disorders the Mbuti seem to have effective remedies, some of which are cited in Appendix II together with details of the botanical identification of the plants, wherever I was able to be sure, or reasonably sure, that these were the only plants used. Such remedies cover not only the mild fevers, aches and pains, and sicknesses that may come the way of the Mbuti, but they also cover accidental injury such as may be incurred by falling on a spear, by being attacked by a wild animal, bitten by a snake, stung by bees, or by falling from a tree, breaking or twisting an arm or leg. Such injuries, however, occur remarkably seldom.

For these particular curative activities the Mbuti are acknowledged

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

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[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

757 824 [833] IMPOTENCE IN MALE: *tededasi* (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and the ashes rubbed into light incisions made above the penis.

teba (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and if the penis pains, the ashes are rubbed into incisions in the skin of the penis itself.

757 752 824 TOE ROT: *apatekaka* (hippocrateaceae)
Leaves are roasted and rubbed into incisions.

FOOT SORES: *ikengbe* (ochnaceae)
Stem of plant is warmed over a fire, then blown through, so that the juice enters the sores.

ikengbe (convolvulaceae)
Same as above.

HEART PAINS: *banga bamemé* (compositae)
Leaves are pounded, soaked with water, which is drunk when it becomes red.

HEMORRHOIDS: *amekulu* (beilschmieda spp.)
Stem is roasted, the ashes rubbed well into the buttocks around the affected area, and left on. Repeated after three days.

TOOTHACHE: *amabulubulubu* (tiliaceae)
Leaves are pulped to a juice, diluted with water for a child, funneled through a leaf into the nostrils. Said to afford instantaneous relief.

manganza (leeaceae)
Berries are roasted, crushed, and the ashes rubbed into incisions on the jaw.

OPEN WOUNDS: *ndindimia* (connaraceae)
The bark of a twig is carefully shaved, and the juice blown through the twig into the sore or wound. The bark is then packed into the wound to stop bleeding and to prevent dirt from entering. After three days the bark is removed and a fresh application is made, using less bark shavings to allow the wound to close gradually.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well, and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé-*
[784] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[262] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[953] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[961] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[778] To this belief that the clan ancestor de-
cended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe,* the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

MAGIC

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[p. 192-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 834

Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do 578
that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and 589
Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted 581
desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It 589
was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké 581
had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill 753
that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but [577] it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are counte- 836
nanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately [578] descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become en- 836
raged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, 578
Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

685 34. During a hunt Ekianga's unmarried niece, Ekimanji, had [224] charge of his two spears and lost these together with her own basket, [462] full of meat. Her story was that she was standing about, waiting for the rest to join up after a beat, when she had to answer a call of nature. She went a few yards away, and on return found the two spears and the basket gone. She called out, and Masalito, who was nearby, came running over. She asked him to stand there while she went and searched, which she did. She could find no traces. He also searched, and neither could he. It then began to rain and they returned to camp.

The next day the hunt went back to the spot and searched all over but found nothing. They even repeated the hunt in the same spot, casting the nets and beating toward them. Nobody offered any suggestions as to what could have happened, other than that they must have been taken. Not a single individual was hinted at directly or [186] indirectly. One of the hunters suggested it was a villager, for Mbuti [183] don't steal, but everyone knew that no villager was anywhere about in the forest during the hunt. However, the explanation, weak as it was, was better than none and, if not accepted, it was certainly not denied. The matter was not mentioned again.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THE VILLAGE

578 35. It might be thought that the village would be a common source *177 of dispute. Far from being so, the village most frequently occurs in 186 436 disputes as above, as a means of ending a dispute without settling [621] the blame on any Mbuti and thus hastening the process of fission. Even money is assimilated into the forest pattern of distribution of food, insofar as it is ever brought into the forest (see 29, above). The only real dispute over money in my records was because the money was received for a spear which had been stolen from one villager and sold back to another, and it was difficult to assess the correct apportionment of the "game" (a hundred francs) between the "hunters."

*177 The village, however, was often being blamed for ill health, and 186 with frequent justification, for sanitation, which was no problem for • [958] the Mbuti in the forest, was a major one in the village. The village [614] also frequently took the blame for poor hunting, particularly if some [204] individual or some group in the band (e.g., the women who did not beat) seemed to be genuinely to blame.

*177 One dispute of major proportions, and one of the few which oc- 439 casioned direct action, did, however, have its cause in the village. The

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
• 953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Agerongo were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

684 835 [152] their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 835 627 "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die [153] of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 156 177 753 754 C 754

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

P 177 754 C 563 754

The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

P 177 159 754 C 563 754

It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was

[ARCHERS]

The lineage defends itself equally against antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards find that they receive no share when game from the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does not share any of her gathering products with others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and above all those suspected of sorcery, who are considered the worst types of antisocials, are punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp, and left to die if they are not executed by some means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta cites neither examples in detail nor enough cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He seems, however, to be generally in accord with what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, except with regard to the position and authority of the elder and the alleged "system" of law and punishment.

613 689 626 [685] [754] [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

802

There is little information on division of time and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives the result of his work among five Mamvu-

[P. 186-D]

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

[a 191-D]

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [173]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.223-A]

763 and two people died. After burial and wailing,
731 camp was broken. On the march to another site a
165 woman who had not contracted the illness died, although she was not "ready to die." Within two weeks a woman gored by a buffalo (an extremely rare occurrence) died from her wounds. Following this last event, there was a consultation, and it was suggested that the band should disperse as there was some strong influence at work.[1] However, the dispersal did not take place.

763 5. A very well-liked hunter died while in the
[754] village. There was some talk that a half-paralyzed Pygmy, also a member of the band, had put a curse on him; but this in no way impaired the friendship between the accused and the children of the deceased. When the Pygmy was dying, his son wanted to take him back to the forest but was persuaded to let him die in the village in peace. His family and friends were present: those in the hut wailed occasionally, those outside were busy cooking. When he died the wailing broke out anew, and relatives started coming into the village from the forest. His villager patron could not come, so he sent his brother, the headman of a village a few

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 223 - C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] • 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P. 231-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *uda* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulozi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulozi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *lozi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulozi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled. 761 754 888 [192]

In legend the *lozi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *lozi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *lozi* is not seen at his (or her) 761 754 266 [773]

[P. 240-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

261 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself
754 awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing
22 him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

261 This belief seems associated with death and
754 with people who are near to that particular
197 crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 The Putnam material does not support any
114 theory of a celestial God such as that described
[184] by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers. 538 771 [328]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There 538 789 182 [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

[P 270-D]

[P.291-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
789 adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case. There is no common explanation of death or illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The nearest approach to standard mythological rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

[76] [154] [154]

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4 *
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa PO1

is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative*, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

Zi Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti considers the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, and he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government *station de chasse*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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tion de chasse. This curse, which was of leprosy, was never lifted, to my knowledge, and caused some uneasiness among the Mbuti but mainly anger. So far it has not been effective, either in obtaining the money for André or in bringing leprosy to the Mbuti.

The other case involved the headman of the nearby Ngwana village, who claimed that three Mbuti from the Epulu band had taken a sack of rice from him and had promised meat in return but never sent it. He allegedly employed a sorcerer to curse the Mbuti to death if they did not send the meat. Within a matter of three months all three had died. Two died evidently of stomach disorders that might have been due to or aggravated by poison, which is sometimes used by the Ngwana; the third man died a long way off in the forest under conditions that would make it unlikely that the death was due to poison, though quite likely it was due in part to fear. All three were young and healthy.

P 754 *177

There were almost certainly other instances that I did not hear of, where it was claimed that sorcery had actually been used. There were innumerable instances when it was threatened, and also innumerable instances of accusations of witchcraft involving Mbuti. In fact, talk of village witchcraft and sorcery was among the major topics of conversation in forest camps, particularly just prior to and following a visit to the village. Although the Mbuti had no beliefs of their own concerning the manipulation of such supernatural powers, and although they were reluctant to believe that it was more than either a hoax or, as most of them put it, the mere stupidity (*mbafu*) of the villagers, it nonetheless occupied their thoughts. The death or sickness that inevitably followed a curse, happening sooner or later to someone in the same family, was generally accepted by the Mbuti as coincidental no matter how hard the villagers tried to relate it to the curse; but the occasional exceptional instance, such as that quoted, when the three Mbuti died within three months, was enough to cause serious doubt and fear.

P [521] P [186] [192]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

754 578 11. Sau was the mother of Amabosu, who had exchanged sisters with Ekianga. Sau was regarded by the villagers as a dangerous witch, a role she filled with zeal and which the Mbuti found useful in two ways. It provided them with a scapegoat in the forest just as it was a handy excuse for any misadventure in the village. In either situation the latent dramatic possibilities appealed enormously to the old lady's histrionic susceptibilities. One day Sau asked the wife of Mbaaka, a [535] nephew of Njobo, for some food. She was refused. That night she did a little dance in front of Mbaaka's hut, her usual way of showing [224] her displeasure. The next day, on the hunt, Masisi's son was about to run in bare-handed to catch a sharp-toothed *sindula* (chevrotain), but Amabosu persuaded him to take his spear. He did so, and then collided with Mbaaka, spearing him in the side.

There was actually some bad feeling between Amabosu and Mbaaka, and in case this was brought up (making it seem that Amabosu had deliberately caused his injury) the discussion of the incident was quickly turned to the refusal of Mbaaka's wife to give Sau food. She thus became the prime target for blame, with Sau acting as a secondary scapegoat, being criticized for dancing her "bad 578 dance" outside Mbaaka's hut. In case anyone should take it too se- 522 riously, Manyalibo promptly started making fun of Sau's dance, flap- 626 ping his hands to imitate Sau's pendent breasts. This was taken up by the children, who would not be content until Sau herself gave a demonstration.

626 That evening several hunters stood in midcamp[6] and said what a 683 good camp it was, and commented on the good hunting. No further 648 word was said about the spearing, except in the village, where the 571 respective *kpara* went to the tribunal to effect reconciliation (between 608 themselves) and blood payment. Amabosu's *kpara* agreed to pay sixty [186] francs to Mbaaka's *kpara*, Masisi's *kpara* paying only forty. This news caused great hilarity in the camp, and the comment that villagers were 626 animals, always "eating" each other. Between the Mbuti themselves I 683 could find no evidence of blood payment of any kind, though any incident involving the drawing of blood is bound to provoke discus-

[685] [157] [42] failure to share in time of need is considered a far greater crime than is petty (i.e., individual) theft.

[6] The importance of the "midcamp" position is that it defines the viewpoint of the [621] person talking. An individual talking from his own hearth talks as an individual. If he [156] talks from midcamp he is taking a band rather than an individual point of view. Similarly the *kumamolimo* is central, but more restricted in area and viewpoint, being used as a vantage point to discuss with the whole band matters pertaining to the *molimo*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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CHAPTER 13

Magic, Witchcraft and Sorcery

MAGIC

To separate the world of magic from the world of religion is perhaps a dangerous pursuit, and not always profitable. In this instance it is done because we can thereby achieve a significant contrast between the world of the village and the world of the forest. By and large the village world is full of magic, witchcraft and sorcery, leaving little room for what might be considered the more spiritual, or religious, aspects of belief, faith or even hope, and certainly none for worship in the sense of devotion.

The forest world, on the other hand, is remarkably lacking in the former elements, and filled with the latter. But there is an overlapping and, necessarily, a meeting ground where any further overlapping is rejected and which becomes an area of conflict. The Mbuti have their own very simple forms of magic, but no witchcraft or sorcery, which they utterly reject. However, when faced with it in a village context, they are forced to come to terms with it and they have learned to turn these village institutions to their own advantage, in much the same way that they accept other village institutions such as the *nkumbi* initiation.

Increasingly one is aware of a curious ambivalence in the Mbuti attitude toward the village. This is not surprising in itself, when two opposed societies are in such close juxtaposition. But the vehemence of the Mbuti denial of witchcraft and sorcery seems at odds with the meekness of their acceptance, however nominal, of village domination in the village context. The answer lies mainly in the Mbuti attitude to the unknown, an attitude that is optimistic but open. In the realm of the known they can afford to be vehement, and they are perfectly aware of the social values of an institution such as witchcraft, and make use of it without accepting the belief. Similarly with the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end.

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done.

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise.

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to

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P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 621 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P *177 than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

754 [182] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

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for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

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cannot offer absolute sanctuary, for each one of these villagers brings with him *akami* and, even worse, the threat of witchcraft and sorcery. In the last resort, then, the only recourse of the Mbuti will be to learn to master these arts themselves, unless in time they learn to discern between the possibilities of the one as a legal mechanism and the practical ineffectiveness of the other as a physical threat.

In other areas of the forest, where the village tribes are less afraid of the forest, living and hunting in it themselves, as well as cultivating, the attempted exploitation of the Mbuti has been no less and its general pattern and degree of success have been similar, but there has not been the same attempt by villagers to assimilate the Mbuti. This seems to be true not only in the northern part of the Congo, but also further west and in the Gabon.[11] But while in those areas the hunters may not be assimilated into the village system to the extent of being admitted to initiation, they are also, it seems, more ready to accept village beliefs such as those in witchcraft and sorcery, and are evidently more dependent upon the villagers in other respects. However, these areas need considerably more investigation before any useful comparisons can be made. Here it is sufficient to stress that in a situation where the village cultivators are afraid of the forest and unwilling to move freely within it and exploit it, and perhaps correlated with that fact, the Mbuti maintain a form of social organization based on recognizable principles that plainly have a dual function—the maintenance of internal order and the maintenance of separation and distinction from the villagers. In such a situation, the Mbuti adopt only the outer form of the village social organization while in the village, in a form of joking relationship between the two groups. The joking relationship and the dual function of the Mbuti principles of organization effectively counter all attempts of the villagers to effect an institutional subordination of the Mbuti. The value systems of the two people are in complete opposition, and this reflects the whole nature of the relationship between them. The ultimate attempt of the villagers to assert supernatural authority over the Mbuti, while derided by the Mbuti as *bulé*, or empty (but malevolent), might be a cause of Mbuti willingness to undergo the *nkumbi* initiation, as a means of acquiring power through assimilation of like power, to combat this authority.

On the other hand it might be argued that the villagers, in initiat-

[11] Information on the relationship of the pygmies of the Gabon to the village cultivators was supplied by Mr. Leon Siroto, from unpublished field notes.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [154] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to 578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp [583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

P 156 177 753 754 C 754

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could not leave the initiation camp, and he slept on the wooden initiation bed beside the boys, moaning and tossing in his fever. When he recovered he said that he had been bewitched, that the villagers were trying to kill him. He even attacked his brother Masalito for having broken just about every rule in the book.

P 177 754 C 563 754

The Pygmies practice no sorcery or witchcraft, but they know it is rife among their neighbors and they have seen enough of it in action to be uneasy about it. Aberi was one of the few who really believed in it, and who knew what real fear was. He knew fear not only of being bewitched, but of being accused of witchcraft; for his wife, Tamasa, the kindly woman disfigured with yaws, was frequently accused by the villagers. The villagers felt that anyone cursed with such a dreadful deformity must be evil. On several occasions I heard Pygmies accuse old Sau, the mother of Amabosu the young singer, of being a witch. But although they used the village word, it had a different meaning. They were merely accusing her of making trouble. They sometimes said the same thing of other old people who were, as old Pygmies often are, strong-minded and obstinate.

The villagers, however, believe that one can be possessed of a substance which gives one supernatural powers and compels the use of them to harm others. Sometimes it works in such a way that the witch may not even be aware of what he or she is doing, and various forms of divination are used to test suspects. The only time the Pygmies think seriously about witchcraft is when they are in the village, or when villagers visit them in the forest. A single villager visiting a forest hunting camp can bring his evil with him, but when he departs it departs with him.

P 177 159 754 C 563 754

It was curious that Aberi, the one who feared this evil most, should apparently die by it. He used to tell a story of how one night in the village he had been going to the latrine when he was caught from behind, as if by a hand clutching at his shoulder. But there was

nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

P 177 159 754 763 C 563 754

the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."

Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

P 177 754 C 563 754

If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said nothing.

P 177 764 C 563 761 764 [754]

Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiating. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother. *We* do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187-A]

802 speaking archer bands in the northeastern part of the Ituri, near Gombari. He finds the only common characteristic to be the habit of counting in pairs and the use of the term "many" for anything over five. Finger signs for numbers up to five and a separate sign for 10 are used also by the Mamvu villagers. Thus 15 arrows would be "many times two arrows and one." Some of the examples that he gives show either the disinterest or lack of skill of these archers in exact numeration—such as the woman who for totals of four and seven arrows (the article used by Maes for his tests) gave, respectively, the numbers 40 and 10.

278 824 The use of effective poisons is well attested. Geil (1905), who reported reliably on other aspects of the life of Efe archers, mentions their knowledge of antidotes. Schebesta (1941, 65) denies having come across these. He (1941, 228 ff.) does, however, give details of various effective medicines prepared from forest plants. In [755] some instances these medicines, or the methods [757] of application, have magical significance. They seem unable to cure such afflictions as certain types of fever, leprosy, advanced dysentery, and gout.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *tebvo* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755]
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

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is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative*, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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ence and natural life. There is no practical cause—the cause itself is supernatural. I include various *rites de passage* under religion because such rites involve a thoroughgoing belief in the supernatural. The nature of the supernatural, however, varies greatly as seen by Mbuti and as seen by villagers. Both peoples, however, do have a belief in the supernatural; that is, scientifically nonexplicable powers that are invested in another class of beings, without form or substance, which we call *spiritual*. It is belief in these spiritual beings that is the essence of what we here call religion.

CURATIVE MAGIC

As indicated above, we are not here in the least concerned with acts, of either the Mbuti or the villagers, simply because they involve an assumed but scientifically false connection between cause and effect. We use the term "magic" as a translation of the native term, which groups together divers curative activities in the belief that all are equally scientific. Thus the penicillin that cures a sore is magic just as much as the antelope horn that cures a spell of bad hunting.

In trying to assess how far the village world impinges on the forest world in this respect, then, we have to see what situations there are for which the Mbuti have no cure and which they wish to cure, and for which the villagers do have a cure. Or, indeed, we must look to see if the reverse situation exists.

When I say there is little magic in the forest world of the Mbuti, I mean that there are few curative activities, and for the very simple reason that there are relatively few situations that require curing. For most Mbuti who have reached adolescence the life expectancy is good, as is the expectancy of good health. For most minor physiological disorders the Mbuti seem to have effective remedies, some of which are cited in Appendix II together with details of the botanical identification of the plants, wherever I was able to be sure, or reasonably sure, that these were the only plants used. Such remedies cover not only the mild fevers, aches and pains, and sicknesses that may come the way of the Mbuti, but they also cover accidental injury such as may be incurred by falling on a spear, by being attacked by a wild animal, bitten by a snake, stung by bees, or by falling from a tree, breaking or twisting an arm or leg. Such injuries, however, occur remarkably seldom.

For these particular curative activities the Mbuti are acknowledged

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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C 789 which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and vil-
C 789 685 lagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they
P 157 789 685 might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

P 224 789 439 *177 For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter
C 439 789 sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if
P C [754] these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

C 789 821 [776] [755] [192] Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The
P 789 821 776 765 Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

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much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
[578] them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6 shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

A [see page 328 -- Analyst]

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
751 of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

757 For most of his bodily ills the pygmy can find a local remedy. Gastric disorders and diarrhea plague them rather frequently. For these the universal cure is an enema (enemas are even used to produce abortions). Any pygmy, apparently, can give an enema to any other pygmy, but as a rule it is the women who give them to their husbands, children, and female friends. The instrument is a long reed with a gourd gummed on one end; the operator thrusts the other end into the patient's rectum and holds up the gourd end. The gourd is filled with various vegetable decoctions used in solution; these include the *tebvo* liana for diarrhea and *gorogoro* bark for stomach upsets.

755 179 When a pygmy is suffering from some mysterious ailment which he and his fellows are unable to cure and which seems to be magical in nature, he will go to the village of his Negro hosts and beg the local witch doctor to cure him by sucking out "disease objects," by cupping with horns, or by the use of herbs.

165 The greatest single cause of mortality in the pygmy community is falling from a tree. When a pygmy falls from such a height, he has no real chance of survival, for there are seldom branches below him. The second most frequent cause of death is falling branches. As the pygmy camp is always constructed in the primary forest itself, never in a clearing, a branch falling in a windstorm may hit a house, killing four or five people at once.

[P. 340-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187-A]

802 speaking archer bands in the northeastern part of the Ituri, near Gombari. He finds the only common characteristic to be the habit of counting in pairs and the use of the term "many" for anything over five. Finger signs for numbers up to five and a separate sign for 10 are used also by the Mamvu villagers. Thus 15 arrows would be "many times two arrows and one." Some of the examples that he gives show either the disinterest or lack of skill of these archers in exact numeration—such as the woman who for totals of four and seven arrows (the article used by Maes for his tests) gave, respectively, the numbers 40 and 10.

278 824 The use of effective poisons is well attested. Geil (1905), who reported reliably on other aspects of the life of Efe archers, mentions their knowledge of antidotes. Schebesta (1941, 65) denies having come across these. He (1941, 228 ff.) does, however, give details of various effective medicines prepared from forest plants. In [755] some instances these medicines, or the methods of application, have magical significance. They [757] seem unable to cure such afflictions as certain types of fever, leprosy, advanced dysentery, and gout.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *teboo* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755]
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.232-A]

278 their arrows but seldom achieved the same
411 effect. The ingredients were known to him, and he concluded some special skill was used in the actual preparation. There is no mention of antidotes to these poisons.

278 Putnam knew of the existence of effective medicine among the net hunters, but no details survive in the notes. Anne Putnam's notes, however, mention a number of cases in which she observed the use of indigenous medicines and treatment.

752 During a fight a boy was knocked uncon-
757 scious by a blow from a piece of wood. He was immediately propped up; the main concern seemed to be to prevent him from lying flat on the ground. Even when semiconscious, the boy was not allowed to lie down. This possibility seemed to frighten the Pygmies more than anything else, and for a while no other treatment was given. Then some incisions were made on his chest, and a leaf was applied.

757 Against toothache a certain leaf (not identified) is chopped fine and mixed with water. This mixture is poured from a leaf cup down each nostril.

[NET HUNTERS]

854 Newborn infants are scarified on the stom-
304 ach, chest, and leg, and the wounds are
757 treated with herbs, often mixed with goat manure if the net hunters are near a village.

757 The Mbuti in this area claim to have a method which they have practiced for a long time for the treatment of paralysis. Examples given, however, describe this treatment as being given to villager or Pygmy children by villagers. The treatment can also be given to an adult. For paralysis of the legs, it consists essentially of standing the patient in a pit, filling it, and stamping the earth down hard. Only the upper part of the patient's body, which is continually washed with warm water, is left above ground. The stem of the *atumba* (a small plant resembling a dandelion) is cut and cooked with manioc and rubbed into a light incision in the affected limb. The patient may be kept in the pit for four hours a day for a week; each time he is taken out he is washed with warm water. It is claimed that after this treatment the patient will be able to walk, however crippled he was beforehand.

A similar treatment is reported for sprained back or arm. The patient is laid flat in a shallow pit. He is covered from knees to chest with a mixture of earth and leaves, about one

[P 232-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 232-C]

inch thick, packed tight. The top layer of dry leaves and kindling are soaked with oil and set on fire. The fire is kept going for about four hours, then the patient is taken out and hot leaves are applied. This treatment may be followed by hot baths, scarification and insertion of herbal medicine into the wounds, and resting on a bed, but none of this is said to be absolutely necessary. 757

A young man, given to being seized with trembling fits, is calmed by having incisions on his stomach rubbed with a black powder. A liquid is poured down his nose from a leaf funnel.

A certain type of bark, *ikanya*, extremely poisonous, is used to procure an abortion by making a decoction from it and giving it to the pregnant woman to inhale. It appears that even inhaling the dry bark might be effective, but is not certainly so. 847 278 824

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ence and natural life. There is no practical cause—the cause itself is supernatural. I include various *rites de passage* under religion because such rites involve a thoroughgoing belief in the supernatural. The nature of the supernatural, however, varies greatly as seen by Mbuti and as seen by villagers. Both peoples, however, do have a belief in the supernatural; that is, scientifically nonexplicable powers that are invested in another class of beings, without form or substance, which we call *spiritual*. It is belief in these spiritual beings that is the essence of what we here call religion.

CURATIVE MAGIC

As indicated above, we are not here in the least concerned with acts, of either the Mbuti or the villagers, simply because they involve an assumed but scientifically false connection between cause and effect. We use the term "magic" as a translation of the native term, which groups together divers curative activities in the belief that all are equally scientific. Thus the penicillin that cures a sore is magic just as much as the antelope horn that cures a spell of bad hunting.

In trying to assess how far the village world impinges on the forest world in this respect, then, we have to see what situations there are for which the Mbuti have no cure and which they wish to cure, and for which the villagers do have a cure. Or, indeed, we must look to see if the reverse situation exists.

When I say there is little magic in the forest world of the Mbuti, I mean that there are few curative activities, and for the very simple reason that there are relatively few situations that require curing. For most Mbuti who have reached adolescence the life expectancy is good, as is the expectancy of good health. For most minor physiological disorders the Mbuti seem to have effective remedies, some of which are cited in Appendix II together with details of the botanical identification of the plants, wherever I was able to be sure, or reasonably sure, that these were the only plants used. Such remedies cover not only the mild fevers, aches and pains, and sicknesses that may come the way of the Mbuti, but they also cover accidental injury such as may be incurred by falling on a spear, by being attacked by a wild animal, bitten by a snake, stung by bees, or by falling from a tree, breaking or twisting an arm or leg. Such injuries, however, occur remarkably seldom.

For these particular curative activities the Mbuti are acknowledged

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

But here we may note a significant difference in attitude to magic, or curative activity. Childbirth is a time which is thought of by both Mbuti and villagers as being attended by the possibility of danger, at least. The Mbuti think in terms of physical danger, and they have precautions that they take in the diet and behavior of the expectant mother before birth, and apparently effective knowledge of midwifery, including recognized ways of dealing with difficult births. After birth there are known cures for any weakness the infant or mother might show. What is lacking, among the Mbuti, is precisely what is dominant among the villagers: a felt need for protection against the supernatural.

A village mother and child will both have, according to how wealthy the family is, a number of potions to drink (which may or may not have medical significance, but are thought of as being protective) and divers charms to wear. The protection is thought to be necessary against *unknown* dangers. The difference between the two peoples is in the extent of this unknown. An Mbuti infant will have a vine bracelet or belt tied to it almost immediately after birth, and a small piece of wood or two will be fixed to the vine. It is stated that the vine and the wood convey to the child the health and strength of the forest. There is no apparent concern for any supernatural dangers, and no precautionary steps taken.

From the village point of view the lack of such measures involves the child and possibly the mother in great danger, and out of self-concern as much as out of concern for the Mbuti, the villagers proffer charms in abundance to expectant mothers and newborn children. However, the need is only felt by the villagers, not by the Mbuti.

This is precisely the difference we find when we seek other situations for which only the villagers have a cure—they are situations in

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
• 757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

[P. 313]

MEDICAL TREATMENT

The following list represents only a third of the total number of [757] 824 treatments noted; for the rest it was not possible to obtain exact identification of the plants used. Only the general identification is [122] given below of the treatments cited here, the full details being lodged with Smith, Kline, & French, who generously supported the project.

HEADACHE: *amongolo pepé* (menispermaceae)
Leaves are pounded and rubbed into forehead.

doré (violaceae)
Seeds are pressed, and the juice is lightly rubbed on the forehead.

sungusungu (orchidaceae)
Leaves are roasted, then rubbed into light incisions in the skin of the forehead.

KNEE ACHE: *amakokosu* (uragoga pedunculari)
Stem, leaf and bloom are roasted, then rubbed into incisions on knee.

tapha (strychnos icaja)
Leaves are roasted and applied to incisions.

SORE THROAT: *kasa* (mapana bieleri)
Leaves are wrapped tightly around the throat.

EYE INFLAMMATION: *manoka* (manotes pruinosa)
Leaves are rubbed well between the hands, then put into a leaf cone. A little water is poured into the cone and allowed to drip into the eye.

STOMACHACHE: *amasobo* (violaceae)
The bark is stripped from young shoots, the core being pounded and roasted. The ashes are rubbed into incisions made over the afflicted area.

apisikalukba (araceae)
Leaves are pounded, water added, warmed, and drunk.

karama (dracaena maculata)
The leaves are pounded with salt, mixed with water, the concoction drunk. (The juice of the pounded leaf, without salt, is also put in the eyes of children "to make them see well.")

ebambu (annonaceae)
Bark is cut into small pieces, water is poured over it; when the water is red, a small quantity is drunk.

757 IMPOTENCE IN MALE: *tededasi* (rubiaceae)
824 Leaves are roasted, and the ashes rubbed into light incisions made
[833] above the penis.

teba (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and if the penis pains, the ashes are rubbed into incisions in the skin of the penis itself.

757 TOE ROT: *apatekaka* (hippocrateaceae)
752 Leaves are roasted and rubbed into incisions.
824 FOOT SORES: *ikengbe* (ochnaceae)
Stem of plant is warmed over a fire, then blown through, so that the juice enters the sores.

ikengbe (convolvulaceae)
Same as above.

HEART PAINS: *banga bamemé* (compositae)
Leaves are pounded, soaked with water, which is drunk when it becomes red.

HEMORRHOIDS: *amekulu* (beilschmieda spp.)
Stem is roasted, the ashes rubbed well into the buttocks around the affected area, and left on. Repeated after three days.

TOOTHACHE: *amabulubulubu* (tiliaceae)
Leaves are pulped to a juice, diluted with water for a child, funneled through a leaf into the nostrils. Said to afford instantaneous relief.

manganza (leeaceae)
Berries are roasted, crushed, and the ashes rubbed into incisions on the jaw.

OPEN WOUNDS: *ndindimia* (connaraceae)
The bark of a twig is carefully shaved, and the juice blown through the twig into the sore or wound. The bark is then packed into the wound to stop bleeding and to prevent dirt from entering. After three days the bark is removed and a fresh application is made, using less bark shavings to allow the wound to close gradually.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

763 She looked up at me with eyes that already had a bluish film over them and caught hold of my hand. She said she wanted to die near her son and was glad to be back again. She agreed to take some white man's medicine, and the dispenser from the Station de Chasse was sent for. This was quite a departure, as this family had always resisted more strongly than any the use of modern medicine.

Ekianga was almost beside himself. Gray-haired Asofalinda, no longer stiff and rough, but full of kindness, tried to comfort her younger brother, but she was too full of grief herself. She knelt on the ground beside her mother and wept. The old lady was the only one who seemed fully in control of herself, though the room was filled with wailing men, women and children. When the dispenser came she flickered to life with a burst of her old flame and slapped feebly at him with a bony hand as he pulled gently at her bark cloth to give her an injection, telling him to mind what he was doing. I felt her wince as the needle went in, but she continued looking up and smiling her old sweet smile. She was among her relatives and her friends, and that was all she wanted; she knew the injection would do no good. She held onto me so tightly that I couldn't leave until she finally dozed off; then when her grasp relaxed I quietly left and went out into the sunlight. Everyone was sitting around morosely, almost angrily. Even the little children, whom I had seen playing contentedly through other funerals, were quiet, holding onto their mothers in a frightened way. Everyone was watching Ekianga's fine wooden door, waiting for the end, waiting for old Balekimito to die for ever.

It was only a matter of hours. She never woke up.

The demonstration of grief that followed was no mere formal expression ordained by custom; it was something very real and disturbing. I have seen death in a Negro village where the atmosphere was one of fear—fear of sorcery, of the power of evil that had been unleashed. Here it was quite different. It was not a feeling of

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

585 628 many new faces, and no doubt this in itself laid the groundwork for future matchmaking. For a month or so after marriage she would work for and with the other women of the camp, and then set up housekeeping on her own.

Illness and Death

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[P. 340-B]

basket with two legs of antelope as a gift for Kapamba's wife. The camp watched the chief leave with few regrets. They had only allowed him to stay because he had brought a quantity of food with him.

Manyalibo's wife returned two days later with her basket full to overflowing with delicacies from the village. She had told Kapamba that she did not want to stay longer without her husband, so he had no option but to allow her to return.

Manyalibo's son-in-law, Ausu, was even more of a renegade. His "hereditary master" was André, the chief of a powerful Islamic village just beyond Eboyo. André's father, old Effundi Somali, had been a child when Stanley brought his relief expedition through the forest to rescue Emin Pasha. He used to tell stories of the dreadful wars that were fought in those days, and of the trail of destruction that Stanley had left behind him. While the old man was alive André had worked as head cook at Camp Putnam, but now he was chief in his father's place.

Part Bira and part Ngwana, André inherited all the traits of the latter. In his dealings with Europeans he could be charming and helpful; he could also be cunning and crooked. With other villagers he was proud and avaricious, and he had a supreme contempt—which he could disguise whenever it suited him—for the Pygmies.

A few years earlier, when Ausu had been hunting forest pig, a boar had charged him and wounded him badly, ripping his stomach and one leg. André had taken Ausu into his own house and cared for him, nursing him for months until he was well again. This was done under the guise of friendship, and I have heard André tell the story many times to illustrate how enlightened he is. But I have also heard Ausu's comment that André had done no more for him than he would have done for a valuable hunting dog. A Pygmy is not unresponsive to genuine kindness, and Ausu would not have left André soon after recovering if there had been any such kindness in the act. But he left and refused to return under any circumstances.

P
123 it was wide and strangely smooth, but flowing in spate with all the
484 majesty and power of a river twice the size. Kenge said we would wait for the others there, so as not to shame them in front of Kaweki
P
[515] by arriving first. He went to the water and washed himself. He disapproved of my refusal to do the same, but I was too tired even to sit down. I just propped myself up against a tree and waited. It was not much more than fifteen or twenty minutes later when Kelemoke and Hari came into sight, the one trotting quietly behind the other, apparently as fresh as when they had set out. They feigned surprise at seeing us, and said they had stopped to hunt on the way and had thought we would be in the camp by now. Kenge retorted that he was sorry they had caught nothing—we had been waiting two hours, maybe three or four, in case they were lost. We moved on, and in a few minutes, by-passing the falls, we came once more to the banks of the Itoro, and into Kaweki's camp.

C
It was a mixture of Negro village and Pygmy camp. The clearing
177 was only some twenty yards across; on one side was Kaweki's house,
361 built in the rectangular shape of a typical village house, but with
342 walls hung with leaves instead of packed with baked mud. At right angles to it was another hut, long and low, the eaves coming right down to the ground so that the entrance gaped in a great triangle. We dropped our bundles on the ground and went into Kaweki's hut, calling from outside that we had arrived. The hut was divided into
C
[353] two by a leaf screen, the outer half being a kitchen with a drying
[251] rack for the fish. The rack was full, and a fire underneath did double
[417] duty, cooking food and smoking the fish. On the far side of the
[354] screen Kaweki lay on a bed of fresh leaves. A young Pygmy girl
P knelt beside him, gently massaging his chest. She was Hari's sister.
C
571 Hari greeted her, then went to Kaweki and, addressing him as "Fa-
177 ther," asked him how he was. Kaweki was almost too weak to speak,
758 but he took our hands in turn and apologized for not having been able to get up to greet us. He said, "My daughter will get you

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P C 123 571 574 P [832] F C 571 574 177 758

beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

C [226]

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

P [533]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

molimo, just as they would have done for one of their own people—a song of praise and thanks to the forest for saving one of its children, even if he was a villager.

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sansiwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

[ARCHERS]

75 Cuts, wounds, and sores are treated by rubbing the medicine, prepared with water or oil, into the wound. To cure headaches, rheumatism, and mental and other disorders, the skin may be scarified with an arrow and an herb rubbed into the wound. An effective though painful remedy against frambesia is widespread among the Mbuti. Mbuti and villagers both claim that it not only cures but prevents any recurrence of the affliction: Two species of vine are used, or, if the frambesia is malignant, a decoction is made with water and the earth of the nest of the ant (*ti'i*).

The Mbuti claim to know how to reduce fractures, says Schebesta.

Dysentery, diarrhea, and constipation are treated by enemas prepared from various lianas, barks, and peppers.

Various leaves and plants are applied or rubbed externally, without any scarification, against headache and stomach-ache, or inserted into tooth cavities.

• 759 Schebesta says that he has encountered no evidence of specialization in the field of medi-
75 cine. There never seems to be any need for one
628 band to apply for help or advice from another,
[P. 187-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

P Z 881 304 177 [346]

Z P [759] [301]

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

P Z 881 177

[P. 217-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 536 177 157 811

[p. 232-D]

766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER MOLIMO (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] P M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *kare* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
76 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P. 189-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-A]

776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
192 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[177] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[775] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[776] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

[ARCHERS]

775 The soul, the word for which designates the
• 761 pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the
[774] sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital force mentioned, *megbe*, changes into the totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

774 Dreams are events that actually befall the
828 soul during sleep, according to the archers. While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and wander at will. In this way God and the dead can manifest themselves during sleep.

775 The northern archers think of a realm for the
[777] souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves, and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the dead and their god are, like the God of the Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of properly Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult
[769] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one of the vital principles takes the form of a star, living with the celestial divinity, remote from the Mbuti world.

[P. 191-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-C]

the Mbuti world. The other principle becomes 775
one of the forest sprites, the *befe*, living with the 776
earthly divinity, Toré, and assisting him in his [761]
lordship of the forest. Far from representing the dead, these sprites are regarded as knaves, to be fought with as such. In legends they are concerned principally with the hunt and frequently try to trick the Pygmy out of his prey to which, as *befe*, they have a right themselves. If they represented the souls of the dead, suggests Schebesta, the Mbuti would hardly be able to take the attitude toward them that they do.

Death may also be regarded by the Pygmy as 761
a punishment visited on man for one of three 773
sins. God forbade his children to look at him, but one of his daughters was overcome by curiosity, and death resulted. (This legend is actu- [184]
ally found more frequently among the net hunters than the archers.) God forbade his children to follow him on a certain path, but they became impatient and followed, and death resulted. God (Muri-muri) left fire in the care of his mother, Matu; but a Pygmy stole it from her and she died from cold, so Muri-muri condemned all men to die. This curiosity, impatience, and greed are severally cited as causes of death.

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

[P 191-D]

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
[784] serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé-*
[262] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[753] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
[761] it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is believed to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[779] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

MAGIC

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[P. 192-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.192-C]

notions and practices of the archers and their totemism in their belief in *megbe*, the vital force dispensed, in part, by the divinity. It is one of the life principles, distinct from that which becomes a star or a sprite after death. *Megbe* is transformed anew into the totem when the body dies. The divinity possesses it in totality; astral beings are endowed with far more *megbe* than mortals; hence, their greater power and strength which derive from *megbe*. Mortals, then, have to reinforce their store of this vital force to give themselves additional strength and power. There are certain practices by which this may be achieved, notably by the use of bells hung about different parts of the body. When a man dies, his son may put his lips to those of his father to capture the *megbe* as it passes from his body. 761 778 778 761 789

By increasing his store of *megbe* the Mbuti can place himself on the same level as supernatural beings with whom he must have dealings. Schebesta cites legends showing how the Mbuti managed to steal fire from Toré by the use of bells to increase their *megbe*. [773]

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

[P.193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses. 776 [821] [761]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.) 776 772 761 821 [372] [841]

[ARCHERS]

There is no attempt to rationalize the fact that the force emanating from the sky God works both good and evil; it is just accepted as a fact. But it is exactly this fact that is the thread binding the various notions that form the Mbuti magico-religious system. Magic itself, good or bad, can be practiced only through the use of this force. The personal sky God himself is, for Schebesta, the supreme magician, manifest in different and opposing ways, whose power is everywhere. He is too remote to be the object of any cult but is, in a sense, represented among human beings by the lineage elders, inasmuch as they inherit the power of the original ancestors; hence, the respect and obedience that is their due. 776 771 761 •

If the outward manifestations of Pygmy religion mainly concern the God of the Undergrowth, if the cult practices seem overgrown with magic and superstition, and if there is any appearance of polytheism in the Mbuti rationale, all is resolved (for Schebesta, at least) into a consistent monotheism by the basic Mbuti belief in vital force.

[P 193-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

764 [184] [768] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [761] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[P. 222-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *teboo* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755]
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.223-C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P. 231-D]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P.237-A]

776 God and lord of the *ba-keti*, the dead. Schebesta (1950, 23) says that among the "Sua" he was not able to discover any association of the rainbow, lightning, thunder, or death, with the benevolent "*Jägergottheit*" (Kalisia).

The Putnam material does not attempt to interpret the Mbuti notion of a chthonic God. Among the Epulu net hunters, Kalisia is apparently unknown to the Mbuti, who use the term Mungu both among themselves and when talking with villagers. This God is benevolent, though in some mysterious way that does not detract from his benevolence he is associated with death.

776 Disaster, ill fortune, and lack of success in
775 the chase are usually attributed to *satani* (also *sitani*, *shaitani*), forest sprites akin to the archer *befe* (Schebesta gives the Sua word as *beki*). It seems that Mbuti may become *satani* when they die, but it is not clear by any means that all *satani* were once Mbuti. They are never
• [761] referred to as though they had been Mbuti, though at death the word *satani* is sometimes used in connection with a vital force leaving

[NET HUNTERS]

The dividing line between magic and religion, according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

The net hunters believe that death is caused by the water animal that is the rainbow that is, sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether

[P. 238-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-C]

the water animal is the cause of all death or whether it causes only unexplained deaths. It seems that it may not be connected with "normal" deaths—deaths that do not, in fact, cause any particular crisis as far as the community as a whole is concerned. 761 776

According to Mrs. Putnam's notes,[1] the water animal that is the rainbow is also the *molimo*. She asked a direct question as to whether this was so or not and was given an affirmative answer by one of her most reliable informants. She says that his manner seemed to indicate further that she had asked the right question. According to the same informant the *molimo* comes out the day following the death of some important person, regardless of whether the death was by natural or other means. The informant also referred to a dance in which the men "chased" the *molimo*, but this evidently was not one of the serious *molimo* dances as it was not fatal for women to see it. It seems certain that the water animal and the rainbow are [535]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

two manifestations of the same spiritual being and that both this being and the *molimo* are in some way connected with death. The former causes death (whether in some or all cases is not known), but the latter seems to be different in that it appears only the day following death and can restore normality to the community in crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis. The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo* "animal" in times of crisis and brings it physically into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings of food, which is consumed by members of the *molimo*, and by dance and song. 761 776 [782]

No information is given as to any belief in the origin of death, or of any human failings that might cause it other than violation of the *molimo* by a woman or of the *elima* by a man. Infringement of rules of exogamy and other taboos may or may not cause death; individual opinion among the net hunters varies considerably on such matters. 761 784

According to local informants, the only villagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, Ndaka, and Bali. 776 171

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but not necessarily of death. When lightning comes at night, campfires may be covered so that the 821 [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esamba* for *lusumba*.

[P 238-0]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Magic

The Putnam material contains no information on any vital force corresponding to the *meghe* of the archer Mbuti, but the various practices of the net hunters indicate a belief in some form of force associated with the individual, which can be utilized by him during his life and which is released at death. It is by no means clear that this force can be acquired by magical means, such as by the use of bells and charms among the archers, or that it can be passed on from father to son by the latter's breathing in the breath from the dying man's mouth. There is mention in the Putnam material of this being done only once. 789 761

Putnam mentions magic in connection with the hunt and with the weather that might affect the hunt. Magical practices are not mentioned in other contexts, such as protection against one's enemies or, conversely, as aggressive action against them, or for the prevention of imminent disasters such as the falling of a 789

[P. 239-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *uda* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulozi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulozi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *lozi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulozi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled. 761 754 886 [192]

In legend the *lozi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *lozi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *lozi* is not seen at his (or her) 761 754 266 [773]

[P. 240-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself
754 awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing
266 him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 This belief seems associated with death and
754 with people who are near to that particular
177 crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

776 The Putnam material does not support any
114 theory of a celestial God such as that described
[184] by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

[P.291-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
789 adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case. There is no common explanation of death or illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The nearest approach to standard mythological rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

[76] [754] [154] 538 776

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 581 789 P 581 *177 [789] craft or to a breach of marital taboos, as indeed are any disasters, natural or unnatural, that befall the couple. The Mbuti, not having any traditional means of divination, are considered by the villagers to be dependent on them for help, though a few Mbuti have learned the art and become quite highly respected by the villagers. Sometimes if villagers come to hear of a marital dispute within a band, they will try to settle it by reference to divination, and if so the Mbuti appear to accept the settlement without question, in the village, but in no way allow it to impinge upon the reality of the situation in the forest. So once again the only dependency that exists is in the minds of the villagers.

DEATH

C 761 784 754 P • 761 *177 [608] Even when it comes to the greatest crisis of all, death, the Mbuti seem to accept all the externals of village ritual but none of the implications. The invariable accusation of witchcraft and the equally invariable mention of supernatural sanctions as an alternative cause of death are made to remind the Mbuti not to falter in fulfilling their obligations to their *kpara*. Village insistence upon the unnatural causes of death serves to sow enough seeds of doubt in the mind of the Mbuti to cause at least momentary fear.

C 764 761 [608] P 764 761 *177 The actual ritual of burial is conducted under strict village supervision, the necessary payments being made by the *kpara*. The *kpara* and his family, as well as many other villagers, attend personally in the procession to the grave, and the *kpara* is almost certain to take a prominent part in the subsequent discussion as to the cause of the death and be present at the divination, if one is held. But whereas the Mbuti generally subject themselves to village ritual with the best of grace, they become quickly impatient following the burial of the dead and sometimes simply walk out of the *baraza* where the cause of death is being determined, leaving it entirely to the villagers to decide whatever pleases them. The village preoccupation with death and its unnatural causes disquiets the Mbuti, and when an Mbuti dies in a village there is frequently voiced suspicion that somehow the village is responsible; maybe one of the old curses is at work, perhaps a neglected *kpara* is employing a sorcerer to seek revenge, or, more likely, it is impersonally simply the village itself that caused the death.

P 761 764 Among themselves the Mbuti do not bother to settle the question, if they ask it, but if they feel that the village is to blame in some un-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

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He was the only one I ever knew who fought with his brother, and his wife was the cause of that fight. (Aberi was also one of the three to die following the curse of the Ngwana villager).

On another occasion the witch was also a woman, a rather crotchety, interfering old lady who was in the difficult position of being both a mother and a mother-in-law as well as a grandmother in the same camp. Her son, Amabosu, had exchanged sisters with Ekianga, and all of them lived in the same band. As Ekianga was an individualistic Mbuti with three wives, the situation was one fraught with difficulties, and old Sau's outspoken championship of her daughter as against Ekianga's two older wives did not help.

Sau was also the one chosen as witch in the mock trial after which the villagers attempted to detain her and the Mbuti carried her off with them to the forest.

Evidently even in the village, regarded with suspicion and fear as it is, the Mbuti are not prepared to accept the real implications of witchcraft, so they see no need for the associated ceremonies. But they do sometimes make use of the villager institution to settle their own dissociated grievances in their own way.

THE VILLAGE *MOLIMO* MOURNING CEREMONY

The funerary rituals and the divination of the cause of death are only part of the village ceremony attendant upon death. There follows a period of mourning that varies in length according to the status of the deceased and the wealth of his survivors, and that is terminated by final cleansing ceremonies and a feast for all mourners who have stayed the course, which generally means the immediate patrikin. During the mourning period, the patrikin are obliged to perform certain ceremonies to protect the deceased and help him on his way to join the ancestors. This ritual is known to the Bira by the name *molimo*. When talking in KiNgwana they call it *essumba* or *ishumba*, although it is quite different from the Ngwana ceremony of that name. The Bira *molimo* involves the use of a "singing" pot called *tete*, which is used to create a noise in imitation of the clan totem of the deceased, and of the leopard who is respected by all Bira. Exact details of the ritual are not known. I was not allowed to attend village *molimo* ceremonies because my close association with the Mbuti in the forest was considered as evidence of antipathy, if not of hostility. But from a number of different sources which I investigated as thor-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 602 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
[177] phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the
761 whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so
761 with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
763 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
152 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[887] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

766 two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be oc-
[768] cupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt
765 with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it
621 should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes
[778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature
621 of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest con-
594 text, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one
765

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the south-eastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

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Mbuti

765 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they
152 should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

• 761 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death
765 at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not
[783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an-
[594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby
462 female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their
[171] women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

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The very fact alone that each band has clearly defined boundaries and that each hunting territory borders on two or three others may be taken as an indication of the self-sufficiency of the over-all region and of each territory. Were such fixed and adjacent boundaries to exist with the accepted and generally practiced custom of non-trespass, then where each territory was not self-sufficient trespass or warfare would be bound to occur, and there would have to be some institutionalized manner of dealing with the situation. Mbuti society has no institutional means of dealing with any such situation, nor is there any indication that it ever has had either the institutions or the need for them. The social organization, such as it is, indicates that each band within its territory is to the largest possible extent independent of its neighbors in terms of politics and economics. It might indeed be argued that territorial self-sufficiency, and consequent territorial demarcation, were achieved only with the advent of the village tribes and their plantations. There is, however, not the slightest evidence for this, and the evident abundance of the forest is a strong counterargument.

At all times of year there is in the forest an abundant supply of mushrooms, roots, berries, nuts and herbs, some fruits and some leafy vegetables. The very fact that the Mbuti exchange meat for plantation foods and villager utensils indicates that there is at least ample meat for Mbuti needs, with a surplus for trade. And again it is worth noting the fact that the Mbuti themselves equate hunger with noise and laziness, both perfectly rational explanations of poor hunting and gathering.[1] On those rare occasions when the hunting, even far off in the forest, really is poor, it is considered exceptional enough to call out the *molimo* society, normally reserved for death.

As far as items of material culture are concerned, we have probably indicated sufficiently (p. 33 *seq.*) the extent of Mbuti dependence upon the village, and the degree of its necessity. It is more significant and telling to look at the structural aspects of the economic relationship. Here we immediately see that the structure is very heavily one-sided. From the village point of view it is perfectly clear-cut, depending on the two alleged institutions of *karé* blood brotherhood and hereditary ownership, although, owing to the constant flux in

[1] The equation of hunger and death is a common one to the Mbuti, who say "Hunger kills me" instead of "I am hungry." But the symbolism goes deeper, and a surfeit of food is considered the sine qua non of a *molimo* death festival—the primary focus of which is not on death but on the continuity of life.

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ment of a dispute is to avoid attaching blame to one individual or another, for this would result in a rift in the band. The blame has to be either deflected or dissipated, and the village notion of witchcraft is sometimes used to this end. P 177* 754 626

In the prolonged dispute over Ekianga and his three wives, the situation was aggravated by having, in the same band, Ekianga's brother-in-law, Amabosu, with whom he had exchanged sisters, and Amabosu's mother, old Sau. Sau made an ideal scapegoat, conforming to the village notions of what a witch should look like, and her role at times became rather like that of the camp clown. She would be accused of dancing outside people's huts in the middle of the night, and on one occasion she was distinctly heard to mutter in an exasperated voice, "Do they expect me to urinate inside my hut?"—for she had indeed emerged in the middle of the night to answer a call of nature. Nonetheless, on that occasion she rose to the needs of the moment and agreed that she had been dancing because she had been made to dance, and she was not responsible, and she was sorry for any harm she had done. P 177* 754 578 554 595

However, she was a major and active peacemaker in the family squabble, actively intervening to prevent Ekianga and Amabosu from fighting, and equally actively looking after the children of all the wives involved, passing them from one to the other and in this way helping to preserve reasonable relationships at least between her daughter and her son's wife.

All the more in the village was Sau used as a scapegoat. But whereas in the forest the scapegoat, even if the clown, feels the full weight of the blame he takes upon himself and may suffer some unpopularity, though temporary, in the village there is no such disadvantage, and old Sau played her role with zest. At a time when there were an unusual number of deaths through stomach disorders contracted in the village, the Mbuti were sharply criticized by the villagers for allowing this to happen and not taking the proper protective measures. It was plainly witchcraft, if not sorcery, and it was their duty to find the witch and have the necessary purification. An elaborate witch-hunt was held in the village, and of course Sau was finally "divined" and dragged out of her hut—where, at the time, she was dozing—complaining about all the noise. P 177* 534 754 761 1647 754 563

Emerging into the center of the village she made all the usual protests, and performed the usual trick of stabbing herself with a knife, but holding it carefully so that it just nicked the skin sufficiently to P 754 754 177* 554

P 754 *177 554 draw impressive-looking streaks of blood. She was promptly stopped from "killing" herself, having it explained to her that she was only a witch and could not really help what she had done, and only had to purify herself.

C 754 563 However, the deaths continued and nobody else was willing to take Sau's role, and in the end there was no alternative but to accuse her of sorcery. In village belief, witchcraft substance is normally dormant P *177 754 554 761 but may become activated through a number of causes. A witch is a person who possesses this substance but has no control over it. Once discovered, the witch is under an obligation to keep the substance "cool." Sau obviously was not keeping hers cool, and it is said that if very bad people know they are possessed of witchcraft substance they may learn how to control it deliberately, and they then become sorcerers. Sau, then, was accused of deliberate and malevolent use of P [683] her witchcraft substance. She was formally condemned to be beaten to death. The Mbuti made a show of beating her but then stopped, telling the villagers that they did not want to kill her as then they would only have her spirit to deal with (using another purely village concept), which would be much more difficult to control. Exile was suggested instead, and Sau was duly exiled, and departed for her own village in great spirits, laden down with foodstuffs.

P *177 761 754 62 166 554 The deaths had caused the band, which originally had been gathered in the village for a wedding, to depart abruptly for the forest as soon as the Sau incident was over. It took a number of days to prepare themselves, taking fond farewells of their exchange partners, and Ekianga went ahead with three other hunters and their families to select the site. When the rest arrived they found Ekianga comfortably installed, with the sorceress, Sau, happily in an adjoining hut looking after his children. Her position in the forest was in no way changed. She remained a scapegoat, but her right to stay with the band was never seriously challenged, nor were the respect and affection with which she was regarded ever diminished.

P *177 554 754 184 The same use of witchcraft was found in other bands, and the same professional scapegoats. The other "witches," like Sau, occasionally made fun of the whole thing by miming all their alleged achievements as witches, including the legendary witch's dance and the casting of the "evil eye." In every case the "witch" occupied an otherwise perfectly normal role in camp life, having no more and no less respect P *177 754 than any other by virtue of being a scapegoat.

[182] [626] In forest life there is no need for witchcraft as a social institution,

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were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 [761] 776 828 [772] 776 828 159 534 [535] [765]

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

776 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try.
828 He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine
159 choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was
534 not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However,
776 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if
778 the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place
[224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778
• 761 A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as
826 for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh
[192] and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as re-
778 quiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed
761 out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape
826 through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti
831 recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the
[535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual
[765] apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

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778 This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and sing-
535 ing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The
152 erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen
778 in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in
883 which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

771 The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack
789 of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the
[761] forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence,
[181] is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion.
778 For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to con-
[789] vey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

778 Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish
822 this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is re-
533 inforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects
[844] as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song.
[881] The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

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822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
822 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[178] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[761] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[765] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[789] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two cylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

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"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

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765 828 157 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Balekimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, however, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

761 778

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74 *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[594] 765 [152]

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 561
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[189] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[961] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[793] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
[184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
582 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with *paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a* family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Ageronga were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

000 village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as
P 764 being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting
177 the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be
522 severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends
P in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be af-
[201] fected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

C The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of
761 settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no
764 death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was
P not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not
[761] co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and
[177] that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

P Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's
765 little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect. [761]

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekianga and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekianga, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever. 763

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

fear, but a recognition of the completeness of a loss that could never 763
be made good. There was a finality and terrible emptiness in old Balekimito's death which could not be answered, for which there was no explanation, not even through sorcery or witchcraft. For the moment it seemed that the Pygmies, faced with the death of an old and well-loved and respected person such as this old lady, had nothing to cling to, and I was genuinely afraid that some of them would come to harm. Young and old alike crowded around the house, trying to force their way to Balekimito's deathbed. They were even fighting to get in, and once inside they fought to get out. At one point several children came flying out in a frenzy and threw themselves onto the ground, beating it with their arms and legs, kicking and biting at anyone who tried to comfort them. Inside, the commotion was even [762]
worse—Asofalinda, looking almost as old as her dead mother, had put a noose around her neck and seemed to be trying to strangle herself, full of remorse at having let her mother die. It took three men to take the noose from her neck, and when they finally tore it from her she ran outside and collapsed on the ground, sobbing her heart out.

Even Moke quietly forced his way into the death room and stayed there for a few minutes, saying nothing, making no sound, while tears rolled down his wrinkled face. Then he went out again and helped Asofalinda into the shade. Only Tungana and his wife, Bonyo, remained where they were, outside their hut a few yards away. They were too old for the exertion, and they just sat and cried to themselves, unashamed.

I went to my half-finished veranda to get out of the sun and found Kenge and a number of youths sitting around a fire. No [372]
matter how hot it is, there always has to be a fire. After a while the 763
rest of the men joined us and sat silently, as though waiting. Then 761
Moke came into the middle of the veranda and started talking, very softly and quietly, so that it was difficult to hear him at all. The

763 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be
• 761 a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest."
[765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred
[555] the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up
[829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said.
[186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we
[768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's
[152] house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they
[828] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village. 765 534

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good *life* that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god. 765 761 765 372 778

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 765 594 177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

fear, but a recognition of the completeness of a loss that could never 763
be made good. There was a finality and terrible emptiness in old Balekimito's death which could not be answered, for which there was no explanation, not even through sorcery or witchcraft. For the moment it seemed that the Pygmies, faced with the death of an old and well-loved and respected person such as this old lady, had nothing to cling to, and I was genuinely afraid that some of them would come to harm. Young and old alike crowded around the house, trying to force their way to Balekimito's deathbed. They were even fighting to get in, and once inside they fought to get out. At one point several children came flying out in a frenzy and threw themselves onto the ground, beating it with their arms and legs, kicking and biting at anyone who tried to comfort them. Inside, the commotion was even worse—Asofalinda, looking almost as old as her dead mother, had [762] put a noose around her neck and seemed to be trying to strangle herself, full of remorse at having let her mother die. It took three men to take the noose from her neck, and when they finally tore it from her she ran outside and collapsed on the ground, sobbing her heart out.

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger. It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278] have effective medicines against poisonous snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd gummed to one end) is administered, with the use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro* bark for the former complaint, and *teboo* liana for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847] produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755] unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177] some may seek the help of a villager witch doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761] little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's account for the archers, cited examples of wailing. The following instances taken from the notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

1. A Pygmy who had been visiting another band returned to his own camp and reported that a cousin of his had died. A wailing, suddenly started, was taken up, mostly by women but also by men and children, all over the camp. It lasted for 10 minutes and was repeated several times during the evening for five minutes at a time. Everyone went to sleep as usual; there was a final wail on waking the next morning. 763

2. A newborn infant (son of one of the most important hunters in the band) died at night. Only its father and mother wailed. Early in the morning the parents dug a pit in the house and buried the baby, wrapped in a small mat, with no ceremony. The next morning the couple dismantled the house and, using the same material, rebuilt it on the other side of the clearing. That night the father danced as usual. 763 764

3. An old Mbuti woman died while visiting the village. She was the mother of three of the male members of the band. Most of her relatives were with her when she died, and they wailed. When the news was received back in the hunting camp, such of her relatives as remained there wailed. Only one of them, one of the great hunters of the band, left to attend the burial. 763

4. There was an epidemic in a hunting camp, 763 731 165

[P-222-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 223-A]

763 and two people died. After burial and wailing,
731 camp was broken. On the march to another site a
165 woman who had not contracted the illness died, although she was not "ready to die." Within two weeks a woman gored by a buffalo (an extremely rare occurrence) died from her wounds. Following this last event, there was a consultation, and it was suggested that the band should disperse as there was some strong influence at work.[1] However, the dispersal did not take place.

763 5. A very well-liked hunter died while in the
[754] village. There was some talk that a half-paralyzed Pygmy, also a member of the band, had put a curse on him; but this in no way impaired the friendship between the accused and the children of the deceased. When the Pygmy was dying, his son wanted to take him back to the forest but was persuaded to let him die in the village in peace. His family and friends were present; those in the hut wailed occasionally, those outside were busy cooking. When he died the wailing broke out anew, and relatives started coming into the village from the forest. His villager patron could not come, so he sent his brother, the headman of a village a few

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 223 - C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the
761 whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so
761 with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
763 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
152 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[887] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763 children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152 sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764 the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768 a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152] there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]* the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764 the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152 same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764 and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177* not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152 by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the *body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception* [887] to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766 small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768 be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge, Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation. Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Ageronga were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect. [761]

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekianga and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekianga, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever. 763

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 763 She looked up at me with eyes that already had a bluish film over them and caught hold of my hand. She said she wanted to die near her son and was glad to be back again. She agreed to take some white man's medicine, and the dispenser from the Station de Chasse was sent for. This was quite a departure, as this family had always resisted more strongly than any the use of modern medicine.

Ekianga was almost beside himself. Gray-haired Asofalinda, no longer stiff and rough, but full of kindness, tried to comfort her younger brother, but she was too full of grief herself. She knelt on the ground beside her mother and wept. The old lady was the only one who seemed fully in control of herself, though the room was filled with wailing men, women and children. When the dispenser came she flickered to life with a burst of her old flame and slapped feebly at him with a bony hand as he pulled gently at her bark cloth to give her an injection, telling him to mind what he was doing. I felt her wince as the needle went in, but she continued looking up and smiling her old sweet smile. She was among her relatives and her friends, and that was all she wanted; she knew the injection would do no good. She held onto me so tightly that I couldn't leave until she finally dozed off; then when her grasp relaxed I quietly left and went out into the sunlight. Everyone was sitting around morosely, almost angrily. Even the little children, whom I had seen playing contentedly through other funerals, were quiet, holding onto their mothers in a frightened way. Everyone was watching Ekianga's fine wooden door, waiting for the end, waiting for old Balekimito to die for ever.

It was only a matter of hours. She never woke up.

The demonstration of grief that followed was no mere formal expression ordained by custom; it was something very real and disturbing. I have seen death in a Negro village where the atmosphere was one of fear—fear of sorcery, of the power of evil that had been unleashed. Here it was quite different. It was not a feeling of

fear, but a recognition of the completeness of a loss that could never 763
be made good. There was a finality and terrible emptiness in old Balekimito's death which could not be answered, for which there was no explanation, not even through sorcery or witchcraft. For the moment it seemed that the Pygmies, faced with the death of an old and well-loved and respected person such as this old lady, had nothing to cling to, and I was genuinely afraid that some of them would come to harm. Young and old alike crowded around the house, trying to force their way to Balekimito's deathbed. They were even fighting to get in, and once inside they fought to get out. At one point several children came flying out in a frenzy and threw themselves onto the ground, beating it with their arms and legs, kicking and biting at anyone who tried to comfort them. Inside, the commotion was even worse—Asofalinda, looking almost as old as her dead mother, had [762] put a noose around her neck and seemed to be trying to strangle herself, full of remorse at having let her mother die. It took three men to take the noose from her neck, and when they finally tore it from her she ran outside and collapsed on the ground, sobbing her heart out.

Even Moke quietly forced his way into the death room and stayed there for a few minutes, saying nothing, making no sound, while tears rolled down his wrinkled face. Then he went out again and helped Asofalinda into the shade. Only Tungana and his wife, Bonyo, remained where they were, outside their hut a few yards away. They were too old for the exertion, and they just sat and cried to themselves, unashamed.

I went to my half-finished veranda to get out of the sun and found Kenge and a number of youths sitting around a fire. No [372] matter how hot it is, there always has to be a fire. After a while the 763 rest of the men joined us and sat silently, as though waiting. Then 761 Moke came into the middle of the veranda and started talking, very softly and quietly, so that it was difficult to hear him at all. The

763 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be
761 a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest."
[745] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred
[555] the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up
[829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said.
[186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we
[168] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they
[152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he
[828] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763 •
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [152]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 177 159 754 C 563 754

nobody there. He struggled and wrestled but could not escape, and eventually he was thrown onto the ground. He suffered violent dysentery from that time on. But in spite of this illness, Aberi was still strong and healthy enough to be one of the most energetic, if not one of the most successful hunters. And so when he fell ill during a visit to the village, some time after the elima had ended, nobody thought much about it—except Aberi. He claimed that he had been bewitched, and he knew why. He said that many months ago he and two other Pygmies had promised a villager from the BaNgwana village of Dar es Salaam that they would give him a lot of meat if he let them have a sack of rice. The villager, unwisely, gave them the rice but never got the meat. After several attempts to get his due he cursed all three with a powerful curse, and it was this curse, Aberi said, that was killing him. This villager not only possessed the witchcraft substance, but he knew it and used it deliberately. He was a sorcerer. Nobody believed Aberi, however, and slowly he got better.

P C [439]

One evening I met him wandering up the path leading from Cephu's tiny camp to our own, and I asked him how he was, saying that it was good to see him walking again. He often wore a dismal, dejected look, but this time his face was completely empty of any expression whatsoever. It was frightening to see a face normally full of one emotion or another so void. Even his ugliness had deserted him, and in its place there was just nothing. Aberi said, slowly and carefully, that his body was better but he was going to die because he had been cursed, and for that there was no cure. He spent a short while in our camp, and we all tried to cheer him up. He seemed to brighten after a little singing, and when he left us he was almost cheerful.

P 177 159 754 763 C 563 754

Early in the morning, while it was still dark, I was awakened by an outburst of the most terrible wailing and crying, and I knew what it meant without asking the ash-gray Kenge, who came pounding at my door. I went outside, and in the dim light I saw Pygmies all over

P 177 159 754 763 C 563 754 the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."

Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

P 177 754 C 563 754 If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said nothing.

P 177 764 C 563 761 764 [754] Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiating. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother. *We* do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p. 182-C]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

764.

Several early travelers mention burial customs among the Pygmies of the Ituri. Stuhlmann (1894) describes burial, with the corpse either stretched out or doubled up in a circular hole. Burrows (1898, 197), referring mainly to the Aka, says that, when a Pygmy dies, he is buried "and there is an end to him and his memory." He reports that there is no mourning and no memorials to mark the graves. Johnston (1902, 1904, 539) also mentions burial and says that important Mbuti are buried with supplies of food, tobacco, and weapons. [184]

According to Schebesta, although burial in some form or another, generally following the villager pattern, was in common usage at the time he wrote, the northern archers formerly abandoned the corpse, placing it with its back against a tree. If someone died inside a hut, the corpse was left there for about two weeks, until decomposition had well set in. Then, without burying the remains, the camp was abandoned.

182 (D)

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[1]

P 764 •

P [765] [535] [114]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *karé* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

P M 764 177

P M [608]

[1] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[P. 182-D]

183 (A)

[ARCHERS]

[P·183-A]

P M 764 177 nent among the many archers who had hastened to attend the funeral took charge. He measured the corpse with his stick and drew the outline of the grave on the ground. His son, assisted by others, opened a grave, using pointed sticks, a hatchet, and a bush knife, and cleared the loosened earth with their hands. The crying P [152] of the women became louder, calling *"Afae!"* (father). A few women sat nearby, singing dirges. Not only the relatives mourned, but all present. With the help of the Lese *kare*, the P M [308] floor of the grave was covered with sticks, then leaves. The womenfolk hurried to the edge of the grave as the corpse, decorated only with an arm ring, was brought through a hole in the side of the hut and placed in the grave. The wailing P [152] reached its climax; the wife, children, and even the eldest grown son, threw themselves on the ground as the men began to fill in the grave. One man had to hold the eldest daughter to prevent her from throwing herself into the grave. The earth was stamped down, and the mourners moved away, women and children and some of the young men crying. One daughter remained near the grave as the house was pulled down to cover it (after the household goods had been removed).

Shortly after the burial some men went off hunting. By three o'clock the entire camp was deserted, and a new one had been built by evening.

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

264 [184] [768] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [561] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[D 222-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

1. A Pygmy who had been visiting another band returned to his own camp and reported that a cousin of his had died. A wailing, suddenly started, was taken up, mostly by women but also by men and children, all over the camp. It lasted for 10 minutes and was repeated several times during the evening for five minutes at a time. Everyone went to sleep as usual; there was a final wail on waking the next morning. 763

2. A newborn infant (son of one of the most important hunters in the band) died at night. Only its father and mother wailed. Early in the morning the parents dug a pit in the house and buried the baby, wrapped in a small mat, with no ceremony. The next morning the couple dismantled the house and, using the same material, rebuilt it on the other side of the clearing. That night the father danced as usual. 763 764.

3. An old Mbuti woman died while visiting the village. She was the mother of three of the male members of the band. Most of her relatives were with her when she died, and they wailed. When the news was received back in the hunting camp, such of her relatives as remained there wailed. Only one of them, one of the great hunters of the band, left to attend the burial. 763

4. There was an epidemic in a hunting camp, 763 731 165
[P. 222-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

764 miles away. There was some suggestion that the Mbuti should be buried in the village of his patron, but the eldest son refused and said that the forest was his father's "earth," and this was where he should be buried.

The grave was dug by Mbuti and villagers, about 4 feet deep, with half of it 1½ feet deeper. The body was placed in the deep section, on its side, facing north, covered with sticks and phrynium leaves. Then everyone threw in earth and filled the grave. The women at the funeral became hysterical at this point, falling to the ground and beating themselves. The dead man's second wife tried to throw herself into the grave on top of the body. When the grave was filled, everyone sat down and talked and smoked. The youngest son of the deceased had been playing around quite happily all the time. After smoking, villagers and Mbuti all washed their hands and feet in a nearby stream.

152 Both Patrick and Anne Putnam claim that there is, among the Epulu Mbuti, formal and controlled wailing, also wailing as a manifestation of genuine grief among both men and women. Men and women will weep apart during

[177] [1] Suggestions of this kind are sometimes made by the Mbuti in their village context, in imitation of the villagers. They by no means necessarily indicate Mbuti belief.

[P 223-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 223-C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

[P.251-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning festivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migrations, living in every camp it established during the course of some fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it; on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 sults I wanted I had no alternative. Other methods would have produced different, though not necessarily contrary, results.

However, there were inherent limitations in the technique followed, which involved close identification and integration between myself and the Epulu net-hunters. For one, by identifying myself
123 with the Mbuti, my relationships with the villagers were automati-
648 cally worsened; the mere fact that I preferred to study the Mbuti rather than the villagers was ground enough for hostility. But being accepted by the Mbuti in their forest hunting camps was a privilege
[122] denied to most villagers (though few would have wanted it), and learning to speak the village language with a strong Mbuti accent that made it almost unintelligible except to other Mbuti added further fuel to the fire. This all made it extremely difficult for me to see the Mbuti/Villager relationship from any but the Mbuti point of view, though I tried, at the end of 1958, to establish a better rapport with villages both in and beyond the Epulu area.

However, it was impossible for me not to take sides. Had I wished to work as an outside observer I am not even sure that it could have been done, as I do not think such an observer would have been tolerated for long in the forest camps. And as an outsider I would certainly have been denied familiarity with many aspects of Mbuti life, particularly the all-important *molimo* festival. In fact, as an "insider" I was able to observe the process of exclusion of the few outsiders temporarily admitted to a forest camp. But in any case I was quickly forced by purely practical considerations to take sides.

123 During the burial proceedings in the village, for instance, in the
648 first month of my stay, I was invited by both Mbuti and villagers to
764 take part. But whereas the villagers wanted me to stand by and watch the digging of the grave under villager supervision, the Mbuti wanted me to help out with the digging. By acceding to the latter wish I automatically lost my status among the supervisors, and in fact became unclean and had to ritually wash myself with the other gravediggers. And during the post-burial meeting of the men, when the villagers all argued among themselves as to which Mbuti witch had caused the death, I had the choice of listening on one side of the grave with the villagers or of standing on the other side with the Mbuti and being associated in this way with their mirth and their ridicule of what was, to them, an utterly nonsensical procedure. And when on one occasion a burial took place on the morning of the day that a wedding was to be held in a neighboring village, I had the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

choice of staying to listen to the villagers ceremonially wail on behalf of the dead Mbuti, or of going off with the rest of the burial party, as soon as the grave was filled, to the wedding. I found it more sensible as well as more congenial to prefer the wedding to the wailing.

These are only a few of the many instances where a choice had to be made, where no middle road was possible even had it been desirable. The result is then necessarily to some extent one-sided, for no matter how I tried to effect a balance by subsequent investigation, I still feel an urgent need to conduct further field work, taking the village standpoint.

Once started on the road, the process of identification was swift, but never complete enough to render it impossible to observe intelligently and with deliberate detachment. Such temporary blindness to other points of view as occurred took some time to wear off, and this was perhaps the major drawback of the technique, and one that should be borne in mind in the more interpretive parts of this work, for it resulted in a number of unasked and therefore unanswered questions.

Integration demanded a number of things, one of which was that I should at all times be as fully mobile as any Mbuti. This cut down the belongings that I could carry with me; a blanket, a single change of clothes, a typewriter, paper and pencils. With a bundle of this size on my back I was able to travel as fast as was necessary whenever the band moved from one camp to another. It meant that I was economically dependent upon the band, however, so some kind of equilibrium had to be reached. I was not successful as a hunter, being too large and clumsy, and I did not carry a gun nor did I wish to acquire food in this way. When within easy reach of the village, then, I would acquire supplies of village foods, such as plantains, beans, rice and peanuts, at the same time that the Mbuti got their supplies. Instead of barter or theft I used currency, but bought only comparable quantities of exactly the same kind of food as the Mbuti. It was then cooked, usually by a youth who acted as general assistant, informant, guide, mentor and censor, but sometimes by myself or by another bachelor, and shared, as was the custom, among any bachelors who were around at the time. As was also the custom, I was adopted by a woman whose husband was away, but who still had his hunting net and sent it out each day with her stepson. She also sometimes cooked for me, and always built my hut, as she did for the rest of her family.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to his credit, increasing his prestige and also somewhat increasing his trading opportunities. The trade is mainly thought of in terms of meat and labor on the side of the Mbuti, village foods, clothes and tobacco on the side of the villager. A fairly friendly relationship does sometimes develop between two *karé*, who, regardless of the status differentiation, undergo the whole *nkumbi* together, suffering the same ordeals side by side, and are perhaps more united by age than they are separated by the status differentiation.

The political aspects of *karé* brotherhood reinforce the economics, not only serving as a basis for compensation against a migrant Mbuti, but also for extending the *karé* relationship to link the Mbuti's *kpara* with the village boy's father. The relationship is primarily between individuals, but it nonetheless creates felt obligations between the families involved, and one family of villagers may invoke the help of another family in a dispute, through an Mbuti *karé* link. The kinship ramifications of *karé* brotherhood are still far from clear from the village point of view, and it seems that the introduction of the Mbuti to the system may have somewhat disorganized the traditional system. For the Mbuti there is no connection between *karé* and kinship, and effectively there can be none among the villagers. If there were, then the formation of a *karé* tie between *kpara* and their own Mbuti would be incestuous, and the formation of such ties with unrelated families, conceived of as a sibling relationship, would effectively prohibit marriage in that direction and create an impossibly confused dual kinship system. Yet *karé* do refer to each other sometimes as "brother," and take advantage of their thus extended kinship relations.

The religious aspects of *karé* brotherhood are far less easy to define, and far less easy for the investigator to determine because they are seldom, if ever, discussed. I have never heard such a discussion, unless I instigated it, except on the occasion of the death of a villager. On the death of an Mbuti it is generally only the other aspects of the *karé* relationship that are discussed, involving liability for funerary expenses, compensation for outstanding obligations, divination of the cause of death. But when a villager dies the Mbuti *karé* is introduced into the heart of the funerary ritual, having to perform divers functions such as beating the villager's wives, leading an attack upon all close kin of the deceased, conveniently clustered together for the purpose, "to drive away evil," as the villagers explained it among themselves and to me. The Mbuti *karé* is also made responsible for providing certain foods for the deceased and, I believe, certain herbs

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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with which the body of the villager is treated before burial. Owing to my somewhat peripheral relationship with the villagers I was not allowed to witness the more intimate rituals when the *karé* Mbuti was closeted with the deceased on one occasion for about three hours, on another occasion for one hour. Nor was I able to elicit much from the Mbuti, who said that they knew nothing about it, and only did what they were told to do by the villagers. When asked what that was, they repeated the above information, which was as much as I had gathered from the villagers, and no more except a few colorful and imaginative details about the appearance and odor of the corpse. This being clearly something better investigated from the villager side, I did not press the matter. It seems sufficiently well established, however, that the ritual connection between *karé* is considerable as seen by the villagers, and this was borne out on one occasion when an important Bira noble died and the entire funeral ceremony, including the burial, was held up for a day and a half because of the non-appearance of the dead man's Mbuti *karé*. On this occasion the Mbuti eventually arrived on the run carrying a spear, loudly shouting his complaints at being brought from the forest for such stupidity (again the term *mbafu*). There were several hundred villagers assembled, and the Mbuti ran through them to the compound of the deceased. He evidently knew in advance what was expected, and broke his way in to the closed hut where the widows were wailing. There was great concern among the villagers because he took his spear with him, and they said he might kill the women, but they did nothing to prevent him. Happily there was a full complement of widows at the subsequent burial.

The villagers recognize that they cannot force the Mbuti *karé* to fulfill their obligations by political or economic pressure, but they now have another weapon. By the act of ritual circumcision, according to tribal lore, the Mbuti are placed in a direct relationship with the tribal village ancestors, and by the *karé* bond each Mbuti is placed in a direct relationship with the protective spirits that look after the welfare of their respective individual villager partners. Every step of the *nkumbi* reinforces the authority of the tribal ancestors, through the supernatural powers at their disposal, over the Mbuti as well as over the villager initiates. Failure to fulfill "kinship" or *karé* obligations on the part of the Mbuti cannot be dealt with by the legal mechanisms available to the villagers, but it can now be countered by supernatural sanctions. Villager lore defines the Mbuti responsibili-

C 581 789 P 581 *177 [789] craft or to a breach of marital taboos, as indeed are any disasters, natural or unnatural, that befall the couple. The Mbuti, not having any traditional means of divination, are considered by the villagers to be dependent on them for help, though a few Mbuti have learned the art and become quite highly respected by the villagers. Sometimes if villagers come to hear of a marital dispute within a band, they will try to settle it by reference to divination, and if so the Mbuti appear to accept the settlement without question, in the village, but in no way allow it to impinge upon the reality of the situation in the forest. So once again the only dependency that exists is in the minds of the villagers.

DEATH

C 761 784 754 P 761 *177 [608] Even when it comes to the greatest crisis of all, death, the Mbuti seem to accept all the externals of village ritual but none of the implications. The invariable accusation of witchcraft and the equally invariable mention of supernatural sanctions as an alternative cause of death are made to remind the Mbuti not to falter in fulfilling their obligations to their *kpara*. Village insistence upon the unnatural causes of death serves to sow enough seeds of doubt in the mind of the Mbuti to cause at least momentary fear.

C 764 761 [608] P • 764 761 *177 The actual ritual of burial is conducted under strict village supervision, the necessary payments being made by the *kpara*. The *kpara* and his family, as well as many other villagers, attend personally in the procession to the grave, and the *kpara* is almost certain to take a prominent part in the subsequent discussion as to the cause of the death and be present at the divination, if one is held. But whereas the Mbuti generally subject themselves to village ritual with the best of grace, they become quickly impatient following the burial of the dead and sometimes simply walk out of the *banza* where the cause of death is being determined, leaving it entirely to the villagers to decide whatever pleases them. The village preoccupation with death and its unnatural causes disquiets the Mbuti, and when an Mbuti dies in a village there is frequently voiced suspicion that somehow the village is responsible; maybe one of the old curses is at work, perhaps a neglected *kpara* is employing a sorcerer to seek revenge, or, more likely, it is impersonally simply the village itself that caused the death.

P 761 764 Among themselves the Mbuti do not bother to settle the question, if they ask it, but if they feel that the village is to blame in some un-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

oughly as possible, it seems that among both Bira and Ndaka, and I believe also among the Lesé, death is believed to put fellow clansmen of the deceased in great danger from the *keti*, or evil spirits. The object of the *molimo* is twofold, then; it must help the deceased on his way, giving him what protection it can, and it must protect the living, who will be in a state of ritual danger throughout the period of mourning.

During that period the *molimo* meets regularly, at nighttime, in the house of the senior surviving member of the clan, in whose possession the *tete* is held. Only adult male clansmen are admitted, and the sound of the *tete* is the audible evidence of the invisible presence of their totemic guardian spirit. Specially prepared food is offered to the spirit, and the rest is eaten by the men. No women are allowed to participate in any way, even by cooking the food, according to all informants. However, I had been told the same thing about the Mbuti and found it to be different, and do not accept this information without some reservation. It would seem, though, that women generally are excluded from the *molimo* of the villagers, and indeed it really is no concern of theirs.

During the proceedings, which may last an hour or so, the men wail and call out the name and/or the kinship term of address of the deceased; his praises are recited and he is commended to the ancestral spirits. At the same time, the praises of the surviving clan members are similarly recited, and mention is made of the way in which they have upheld tribal lore and observed all the rules of clan exogamy, and have increased the number of attendant Mbuti. Continued protection for the living is requested, particularly for the period of mourning. Apparently no Mbuti take part in this part of the ceremony, though there seemed to be some disagreement over this and my impression was that the associated Mbuti are not prohibited from attending, but effectively seldom, if ever, do.

Upon the death of an Mbuti the *kpara* will not only oversee the burial and funerary ceremonies and divination, he will also want to hear announced the calling together of the men of the *molimo*. Sometimes he will leave it at that, but if the Mbuti continue to stay in the village and hold any *molimo* meetings in their village camp, the *kpara* may attend one or two meetings. It is very noticeable that when he does, the meeting runs a completely different course, centering around some erotic dancing by the younger men and a small amount of singing. The *molimo* trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763
children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152
sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764 •
the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768
a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152]
there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]*
the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764
the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152
same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764
and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177*
not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152
by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception [887]
to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766
small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768
be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

765 828 157 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Balekimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, however, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that 761 978 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74 [594] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display 765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the [152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba*, a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

763
761 of him. She pointed her skinny hand at him, flinging her arm back-
152 ward and forward with every step, rhythmically enumerating all the
578 reasons why he should keep his mouth shut. He was a great one at complaining about other people being trouble-makers, but he made more noise than anyone. Besides, one should never say that anyone had died completely unless they had died for ever.

Madyadya, Manyalibo's adopted son, lazily wandered in between them and spitting on the ground said that Asofalinda made a pretty good noise herself. Old Moke laughed noiselessly. Asofalinda strode back to her house and slammed the fine wooden door; Mambunia continued to grumble to himself for a few minutes, and Masisi asked who was going to give him some tobacco.

761 It seemed that the girl was very ill with dysentery but was not
763 yet dead. The Pygmies express various degrees of illness by saying
953 that someone is hot, with fever, ill, dead, completely or absolutely dead, and, finally, dead for ever.

763 Unhappily, early the next morning loud wailing from Cephu's
152 camp, a quarter of a mile away, told us that the little girl was now dead for ever. When someone is ill the women relatives will wail, but it is a formal act, perhaps copied from the Negroes for whom it is an obligation. But when someone really dies, for ever, there is among the Pygmies a burst of uncontrollable grief, not only from relatives, but from friends. Even men will weep if they have been close to the dead person. It is a very different sound, and a terrible one, and that is what we heard shortly after dawn.

764 The funeral took place the same day, directed by the Negroes.
[123] I helped with the digging of the grave, but Kenge, Kelemoke, Amabosu, and Masisi's eldest son Ageronga were the chief diggers.
[177] The Negroes lent the tools and stood there, giving instructions, and they became impatient and angry when we stopped and climbed out of the grave for a smoke. The young Pygmies laughed and joked, and

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

Kelemoke, although he was a close relative of the girl's, was in particularly good humor. P 764

Meanwhile the body had been bathed, scented, wrapped in a white cloth, tied up in a mat and placed on a rough wooden bier. This was strictly according to Negro custom. In the forest the Pygmies would have been unable to get the soap and scent and cloth, for one thing, and would not have had the tools to dig an elaborate grave, for another. The bier was brought to the graveyard, which lay behind the village, in a noisy, wailing procession of Pygmies and Negroes. The body was carefully lowered into the grave. Rather grotesquely they made sure which end was which by grasping the head and twisting it under its covering. The body was oriented, laid on its side in a niche that had been cut under one wall of the grave, and held in place with three stones. Sticks were placed at an angle over it, and these were covered with leaves, then with moist earth, so that no soil should fall on the body. Then the grave was filled, some people throwing in a handful of earth, others just standing and watching. The mother and older sister tried to throw themselves into the half-filled grave and had to be dragged away. Cephu was weeping so bitterly that he had to be supported. Among the Negroes there is a strict ruling about funeral protocol—who is allowed to wail and who is not, who is allowed to support the chief mourner, a purely formal gesture, and so on. But this funeral followed no such rules. Whenever it made no difference to them the Pygmies followed the Negro custom, but the moment they wanted to go their own way they did. P 764 177 C [764] [152]

Before the grave was completely covered the women left. The Negroes directed the operation of guiding the spirit safely away by pouring a bucket of water, first into a hole left in the earth above the head of the corpse, then down the grave and off in the direction of the forest, away from the village. To the Negroes the forest is the place for spirits of the dead; they must be kept away from the village at all costs. P 764 177 C 764 775

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends in bowls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be affected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [52]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764] •
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 177 159 754 763 C 563 754 the place, standing in the doors of their huts, listening. One after another said, "Aberi is dead, completely dead."

Apparently he had gone back to his camp, and Tamasa had given him a little hot broth to warm him up, as he complained of being cold. He had gone to sleep, but later, quite suddenly and without any warning, he had awakened with a start, struggling violently as though trying to get up. But some unseen power was clutching at his shoulder, and Aberi gave a loud cry and fell back dead. Within a matter of weeks both the other Pygmies who had been cursed with Aberi had also died, under similar circumstances.

P 177 754 C 563 754 If the Pygmies had believed in witchcraft, such a terrible series of coincidences would certainly have brought forth an accusation. As it was they never even mentioned any possibility other than that the villager might have used poison. This could have been true in Aberi's case—but in all three? The Pygmies shook their heads and said nothing.

P 177 764 C 563 761 764 [754] Aberi was buried the following afternoon, with villagers officiating. Sansiwake was almost beside himself with grief, and Tamasa had to be dragged bodily away from the grave. When the women had all left, the villagers started their usual inquiry into the death, to see who was responsible. They did not mention their fellow villager from Dar es Salaam, the one who had cursed Aberi; instead they named Tamasa. Kelemoke and Masalito, who had their arms around Sansiwake and were trying to comfort him, turned and looked at the accusers. Kelemoke spoke for them both. He said, quietly, but with considerable feeling, "Tamasa is our sister, Tamasa is our mother. *We* do not kill our own kind."

Without waiting for the villagers to finish their formalities, the Pygmies all returned to their camps and began preparing to leave the village and go back to the forest, where such things do not happen.

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire.

Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.

[P.341-B]

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Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[For information on the Molimo and Elima religious associations, see category 575.]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

detail. All her work has the indisputable advantage of being a factual record of personal observation of a single hunting band over a period of eight consecutive years. That she is not an anthropologist is to a great extent mitigated by the fact that her record confines itself to her observations, and by the training she received from her husband. Nonetheless this factor should be taken into consideration, particularly as her previous training was as an artist. This accounts in part for the detailed and accurate descriptions of what she saw, but it also accounts for her sometimes highly imaginative presentation of the facts. For instance, when she hears the *molimo* horn at night, she (1954, 84) writes: "Where the Esamba roamed, there went death. Its eerie, lowing voice was the voice of evil." In fact this, as well as being a statement of her own interpretation of the *molimo*, is also an accurate picture of the villager interpretation. It is also significant that she uses specifically village terms, such as "Esamba" (for the more correct *lusumba* or *esumba*). Living as she did among the villagers as well as among the Pygmies, Mrs. Putnam was influenced by many of their notions and not infrequently used the villagers as informants, though she always states when the latter is the case. We must then assume that

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765.
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[P. 157-D]

182 (D)

[ARCHERS]

The southern archers affirm that they always used to burn their corpses. Nowadays the burial takes place beside the hut of the deceased, and the corpse, covered with a cloth, is passed out through an opening made in the side of the hut. It is placed in a hole in the ground, covered with bark and earth. The hut is then pulled down over the tomb, and household utensils are added to the pile. Mourning is profound and sincere among men and women, but ritual dances of mourning, such as those practiced by villager women, are unknown.[2]

In "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri" Schebesta (1948, 543) gives details of a funeral he attended in a southern Lese village, and of an archer funeral, and compares the two. The archer funeral was of an old Mbuti who died after a short attack of smallpox. Schebesta received the news at six o'clock the morning following the death. On reaching the camp he found the corpse laid out in a new cloth, inside the hut. Nearby crouched the widow and eldest daughter. All the womenfolk of the camp were gathered outside the hut, crying and moaning. The eldest son had gone to the village to inform his father's *karé* (p. 179), and within two hours returned with three villagers, wailing. Meanwhile the Pygmies had agreed that the grave should be dug beside the hut. The most promi-

[2] This statement, again, is totally contrary to my experience among both archers and net hunters.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.223-C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

[NET HUNTERS]

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this
796 kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at 575 533 that time. 765 796

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not 575 clear and which took place down near the vil- 534 lage. One villager took part. The trumpet and 533 the performer, covered with a cloth, were car- 796 ried in from the forest on a crude litter and dis- [114] appeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have 765 witnessed were of the more serious kind, follow- 533 ing the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, [534] even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally [535] a period, early in the night, during which the [831] men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [065]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 825
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

Z 563 796 P 177 796 P Z [844] [764] [765] P 583 585 177 Z 563 585

[P.251-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Upon establishing what was, for me, the first hunting camp of the year, there commenced what I might here call the real mourning festivities, as opposed to the festivities imposed upon the Mbuti when in the village. One of the persons to die had been an old and much respected and beloved Mbuti lady, Balekimito. Her death was made the occasion for a great *molimo* festival, which within the first three months of my field trip brought me right to the heart of the Mbuti magico-religious system. Subsequent investigation elsewhere, even among archer bands, revealed a degree of similarity that makes it possible to generalize widely from the base of this single band study, in this realm at least.

I followed the same band throughout its entire series of migrations, living in every camp it established during the course of some fourteen months. During this time the band was sometimes entirely in residence in the Epulu village, in which case I was there with it; on occasion it was entirely in the forest, and sometimes it was divided between the two. When it divided I simply had to distribute my attentions as the occasion seemed to demand. Sometimes I was able to make use of an informant in the other division, and I trained three Mbuti youths for this purpose.

On two occasions I was able to take quick side trips to other parts of the forest, but I left the bulk of my search for comparative material among other bands until I felt that one complete annual cycle had been completed. It so happened that the process of fission and fusion was more systemized than I had anticipated, and my records of consecutive changes in the composition of the hunting band clearly showed the pattern in time for me to be able to spend a few months in different parts of the forest, with both net-hunters and archers, and even allowed me to make a brief excursion to the Kivu district and to Ruanda and Burundi, though the material gathered there was not immediately comparable.

FIELD TECHNIQUE

Before myself assessing the results, and in order to enable others to assess and evaluate the material here presented, it is important that field method should be discussed. The particular technique I employed was born of the particular situation. I do not claim that any other technique was impossible, but I do claim that for the re-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621
the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771
pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 796
evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try 881 765 •
to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the 177 *
picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar
names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to
the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their
own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121
a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177 *
the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621
any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate
the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study
them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the
village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and
discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the
same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting
bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at
the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be
able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting
camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief
spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or
by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we
shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti,
and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the
process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover
the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently law-
less, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

[P. 30 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

oughly as possible, it seems that among both Bira and Ndaka, and I believe also among the Lesé, death is believed to put fellow clansmen of the deceased in great danger from the *keti*, or evil spirits. The object of the *molimo* is twofold, then; it must help the deceased on his way, giving him what protection it can, and it must protect the living, who will be in a state of ritual danger throughout the period of mourning.

During that period the *molimo* meets regularly, at nighttime, in the house of the senior surviving member of the clan, in whose possession the *tete* is held. Only adult male clansmen are admitted, and the sound of the *tete* is the audible evidence of the invisible presence of their totemic guardian spirit. Specially prepared food is offered to the spirit, and the rest is eaten by the men. No women are allowed to participate in any way, even by cooking the food, according to all informants. However, I had been told the same thing about the Mbuti and found it to be different, and do not accept this information without some reservation. It would seem, though, that women generally are excluded from the *molimo* of the villagers, and indeed it really is no concern of theirs.

During the proceedings, which may last an hour or so, the men wail and call out the name and/or the kinship term of address of the deceased; his praises are recited and he is commended to the ancestral spirits. At the same time, the praises of the surviving clan members are similarly recited, and mention is made of the way in which they have upheld tribal lore and observed all the rules of clan exogamy, and have increased the number of attendant Mbuti. Continued protection for the living is requested, particularly for the period of mourning. Apparently no Mbuti take part in this part of the ceremony, though there seemed to be some disagreement over this and my impression was that the associated Mbuti are not prohibited from attending, but effectively seldom, if ever, do.

Upon the death of an Mbuti the *kpara* will not only oversee the burial and funerary ceremonies and divination, he will also want to hear announced the calling together of the men of the *molimo*. Sometimes he will leave it at that, but if the Mbuti continue to stay in the village and hold any *molimo* meetings in their village camp, the *kpara* may attend one or two meetings. It is very noticeable that when he does, the meeting runs a completely different course, centering around some erotic dancing by the younger men and a small amount of singing. The *molimo* trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *tete*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *bulé*, empty.

The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

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On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

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361 When the camp is first set up, the framework of the huts is com-
342 pleted, but they are probably only partly roofed. The greater the
621 distance between camps, the later the band arrives and the less opportunity there is to complete the building that day. Sometimes shelter is sought overnight at an old camp site on the way. But however advanced the work may be on the first day, subtle changes take place for the next two days, during which time lagging members of the band will have arrived.

342 The first to reach the site choose any location they wish for their
621 family hut, the choice being left almost entirely to the women. Men,
476 women and children co-operate in the necessary work of clearing and
462 of cutting and collecting the saplings and phrynium roofing leaves (*mongongo*). Women build the huts, sharing the supply of saplings and leaves as necessary, and helping each other with the building if darkness is approaching or if rain threatens. Such help seems to fol-
[612] low lines of friendship rather than of kinship, as does the grouping
[614] of the huts themselves.
[613]

361 For instance, the tight cluster at the north end of the camp (Plans
621 5 and 7) was brought about because of the death of Balekimito, an
613 old and respected lady who was a member of the Puemi/leopard lin-
765 eage, but married into the Bomasua/buffalo lineage. Both lineages were jointly holding the *molimo* festival for the dead lady, and the *kumamolimo* (*molimo* hearth) was placed in the center of their rather exclusive cluster. The presence of two male and two female members of another lineage, the Bokelé/buffalo, should be noted, however, as an instance of the strength of affinal ties (the same thing being evident at the southern end of the camp).

361 However, the Puemi and the Bokelé were the only ones in that
621 part of the camp to arrive on the first day. They built their huts facing
593 equally toward each other and toward the *kumamolimo*. When
595 Ekianga, member of the Bomasua and son of the dead lady, arrived
613 the next day with two of his three wives, there was an immediate change in all the huts. When Amabosu (β) saw Ekianga (B) occupy the hut built by his youngest wife, Amabosu's sister, he took action. His own wife, who was Ekianga's sister, built an extension to the house facing it almost directly away from her brother, looking right into the entrance to the hut of Ausu (α), her husband's kinsman. The reason was that Amabosu felt Ekianga should not be sleeping with his youngest wife at that time, and wanted to show his displeasure. Ausu, not wanting to take sides, carefully projected the

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bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

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594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[965] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to unquestioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the *elima*, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, decides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The *molimo* horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again regardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their comprehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or prohibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is sometimes utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the nonlineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, regardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

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888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[165] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
*177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

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765 152 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 765 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not [783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an- [594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 462 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] [171] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

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765 462 152 [171]

became bitter and went far away until they had killed and eaten someone. Their bitterness then left them and they returned and the *ofa* ended. The Mbuti archers in this region deny they do this, but agree that it is a woman's job to wail. A man's job is to hunt. A man will say, "We are glad you are dead, now you can guide us to good hunting." (The Epulu net-hunters claim to say the same thing when the *molimo* is over.) Some Lesé refer to the same custom as *chachima*.

765 462 171

Over to the east, I found that the Plains Bira have a similar custom called *masoso*. Among the Forest Bira it seems to be a part of what they call their *molimo*. Again the women of the family are expected to wail formally and to exact tribute from visitors coming to the village of the deceased. The men argue about problems of inheritance, and conduct the burial and purification rituals.

765 764 621 594 [561]

Among all the villagers it is stressed that any such death ritual concerns only the family of the deceased. Whatever other similarities there may be between their practices and those of the Mbuti in this connection, a restriction on participation along kinship lines is not one of them. For the Mbuti a death is mourned and grieved by any who have reason for feeling a personal loss. This means primarily the immediate family and age mates. These are the people responsible for the disposal of the body, though others will help if help is needed. The band as a whole reacts to the loss however, and it is the responsibility of the band as a whole to celebrate the death in such a way as to restore the normality of life. This is the *molimo*.[3]

[3] The wider structural significance of the *molimo* is discussed in the last two chapters, "Principles of Organization."

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no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561 433

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absent-mindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

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of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

Closer to an indigenous system of pun-
627 ishment is the morning rampage of the youths' section of the *molimo*
[765] society. Disguised behind leafy branches they charge through the camp with the *molimo* trumpet on their shoulders, and attack the huts of any truly recalcitrant offenders. Even then, as a token of the responsibility of the entire camp, the youths attack *every* hut to some extent, taking a token leaf from every hut. And still in keeping with the notion of dissipating the blame, they are likely to give the worst beating to the hut of the disputant who is least to blame.

681 There are two threats that form the ultimate sanctions against
684 the most serious offenses. O: is the threat of ostracism, for such crimes as incest, and this is spoken of as leaving the matter to the forest. Ostracism means refusing membership in the band. If one band does this, other bands are likely to follow suit, and the offender
688 will be left alone in the forest, and alone he will die. The other threat
765 is the direct threat of death, but this is reserved among the Epulu
533 Mbuti and other net-hunting bands uniquely for the crime of failure on the part of an adult male to sing (a crime sometimes conversely described as sleeping) during the *molimo* festival. The sacred singing takes place late at night, and its efficacy depends on participation of all the men and youths. It is said that anyone found sleeping (the only conceivable reason for not singing) would be killed with two spears in the stomach and buried beneath the *molimo* hearth. The women would simply be told he had gone away, or been taken by a leopard, and he would never be referred to again.

627 The different ways of dealing with a dispute depend so much upon
578 the context rather than upon the precise nature of the dispute that the legal process can best be illustrated by citing a number of cases. It will immediately be apparent that in the vast majority of instances there was no visible conclusion to the disputes at all; they evaporated as quickly as they arose. There were few instances where anything resembling a general opinion was expressed, and even fewer where any positive action was taken. The cases that follow, then, are classified according to the most common causes of dispute. Of such causes food and sex are by far the most common. Territorial disputes are confined to married couples with different territorial affiliations, but whereas food disputes are also largely found among the young (married) hunters, they are by no means always marital, but often between unrelated hunters or their wives, and occasionally among youths. Disputes concerning sex involve both the young married couples and youths, as do the everyday disputes over apparently

626 578 224 Cephu was neither a very good nor a very popular hunter, and it may be that he was afforded less cooperation by his fellow hunters as a result. Toward the end of a particularly unsuccessful day, Cephu 626 627 224 578 slipped off and set his net up where it would catch the first wave of animals put up by the beat. He was caught with his spoils, however, and when back in camp there was a gathering of all the youths and hunters and elders (except Moké) at the *kumamolimo* (hearth of the *molimo*), to which Cephu was summoned by calling his name across to the small camp he had built for himself. He was named in the most uncomplimentary terms, and when he finally came to defend himself he was subjected to indignities, even by the youths and children. He was openly accused of stealing food from his fellow Mbuti, and this was something only animals did (note that the anger was of the band at someone having stolen from the band; this to the Mbuti is true theft). All manner of other grievances were brought up [165] against Cephu, particularly his lack of participation in the *molimo* for Balekimito, Ekianga's mother, paternal aunt to Manyalibo and Masisi. Cephu responded that Balekimito was not his mother, and this was the trap into which he had been led. By saying this he disclaimed membership of the hearth, and so his theft became more logical but his act even more reprehensible. Finding himself now both a thief and an outsider, Cephu broke down and offered to return all the meat he had caught. The hunters went with him and stripped not only his hut but those of the three other families in Cephu's camp, leaving Cephu complaining that he would die.

That evening, however, Masisi slipped over in the dark with a peace offering of cooked food[4] and not long afterward Cephu made his way to the *kumamolimo* and joined in the singing for his "mother," Balekimito. This was one of the very rare occasions when a dispute was ended by what might be considered as direct retributive and punitive action by the band.

685 157 [224] 10. This is not to say that theft of food never takes place. It would be a rare Mbuti woman who did not conceal a portion of the catch in case she was forced to share with others, and occasionally a bachelor like Pepei, with a reputation for being somewhat *waxi-waxi*, was caught stealing a small quantity of food from a cooking pot or from

[431] [182] [4] Prestation is an important though unformalized part of Mbuti life, and a major means of establishing social relationships. Any property except the most personal items, such as used bark cloth, bows and spears, are likely to change hands, and even these personal items may be offered or sought.

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 593 578 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 626 593 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

834 578 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an administrator there who took her photograph. Masisi demanded the money, and the girl said she did not ask for any. Masisi's wife said the girl was a fool, that she could have got fifty francs. In fact, she was a thief because she deprived everyone of cigarettes. The girl was still standing up where she arrived in camp, and Masisi's wife went up and forced her to sit down, and thrust her private parts into the girl's face as a gesture of contempt. The girl's parents said nothing.

30. A man burped loudly during the evening meal, and brought forth insults from all sides that would have developed into a fight had Moké not taken the *banja* sticks and started beating them, a sign for the *molimo* singing to begin.

31. A girl, decorated with leaves stuck in her bark cloth, was dancing vigorously and some of the leaves kept falling out. She blamed the younger children and started beating them until they fled, crying. Nobody interfered.

32. Amabosu, for no known reason, refused to allow his wife to move the fire from their hearth when changing camp. She went to her brother's hut and sat there sulking for nearly a whole day. Amabosu, fed by his mother, paid no attention.

33. Occasionally, however, even the most trivial origins can lead to a serious and lasting rift. Such a dispute, described more fully in *The Forest People* (Chapter 6), involved two brothers, Aberi and Masalito. It started when Masalito went to visit his brother on a rainy day. Masalito was in the main camp, Aberi in Cephu's camp. Aberi was asleep, and his wife insulted Masalito twice, first by refusing to smoke the same pipe, second by offering him an old and dirty pipestem to take back to the main camp with him. This led to a fight between the two brothers which was temporarily healed by the force of ridicule levelled against Aberi, and further subdued by the action of the *molimo* in beating Masalito's hut as a sign of the displeasure of the forest.

However, the bad feeling remained, if hidden, until Aberi's death.

DISPUTES CONCERNING THEFT

Theft, apart from the kind practiced by Pepei, was unknown except in the village context. Sometimes when Pepei was caught he was thrashed; on the other hand, sometimes he was tolerantly laughed at and allowed to go his way. There was once, however, a curious case that was never settled.

539 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They be-
186 gan to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man
825 and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing
245 our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they
186 die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He
825 walked with two spears.[2] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent
245 someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten
776 all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539
186 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to
829 the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [2] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 [761] 776 828 [772] 776 828 159 534

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers. [535] [765]

776 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try.
828 He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine
169 choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was
534 not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However,
776 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if
778 the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place
[224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778 761 826 [192] A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed
778 out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape
761 through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti
826 recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they
831 do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the
[535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major
[765] feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

533 765 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 462 881 765 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more importance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 182 181 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of concern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death, but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are [561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765]
I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
922 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[178] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[761] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[765] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[789] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

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"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[965] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is 796
taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and sim- [533]
ply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser [224]
molimo, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may [716]
develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*) 765 •

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is [828]
largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of [778]
poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in pro- [261]
viding food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

765 828 157 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Balekimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, however, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

761 778

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74 *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[594] 765 [152]

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [535]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 561
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 761
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

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never lost sight of. The trumpet itself, while avowedly an "animal" 765 •
whose animal noises (mainly in imitation of elephant and leopard) 534
are designed to scare women and children and keep them in their huts, is the only sign of the presence of a supernatural power. The main function of the trumpet is to sing, and to pass on the song of the Mbuti into the forest. It is taken off to a distance from where it picks up the song from the men around the *molimo* hearth and echoes it on into the night. This way, the Mbuti say, the forest is sure to hear it and be pleased.

Normally a trumpet is kept high up, concealed in a tree. During a festival, however, it is kept in water except when in use, for it is considered to represent the power of the forest for chastisement. Keeping it in water keeps it "cool." It acts, it seems, as an intermediary, passing on the song of the Mbuti to the forest, but returning in the morning with power, and sometimes with anger. When it appears in the [533]
morning, just before dawn, the men have had at the most an hour's sleep, and this is a signal for them to begin singing again. An adult male who fails to sing during a greater *molimo* festival is allegedly killed, and when the trumpet appears in the morning its first act is to search for sleeping men. It is held by a number of youths, who run up and down the camp in search (this may also happen during the evening). But then, to show its power, the trumpet is carried from hut to hut, the youths beating on each with branches and tearing leaves off the roofs. The huts of any troublemakers are particularly singled out, though with due regard for the process described under "Government," by which individual blame is avoided. The older men and even the women may yell at the *molimo* to go away, or to go back to the water, but on this occasion the youths are effectively in charge. There is generally a mock battle in which some of the youths will try to block the path of the trumpet, borne by other youths, or to deflect it in another direction. There may even be a tug-of-war, with some youths pulling it in one direction, some in another, though such contests are formal and enacted more as a dance than as an actual test of strength. All the time, those carrying the trumpet keep it concealed behind leafy branches, or simply by holding it between them. In the end it is carried out of the camp triumphantly as dawn breaks, and with a few defiant bellows returns to its secret hiding place in the water. A vine stretched across the stream warns women [784]
and children to keep away.

It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as

765 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as
534 sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance
778 when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used
[613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern
534 of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced
[611] emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a
[174] noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it.
[621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the impor-
621 tance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life,
771 and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as
778 it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can,
181 for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other
182 things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

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the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, 621
which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of 771
the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The associa- 778
tion with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and 181
earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to 182
create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the *molimo* and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

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886
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40. Balekimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long *molimo* festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 276-L]

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41. A spot like this, in the Lelo River, was the resting place of the *molimo* trumpets used in honor of Balekimito. Vines are stretched across the stream to warn intruders to keep away. The precaution, however, is as much for fear of theft as for fear of desecration.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
• 765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[793] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

182 and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each
761 hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostenta-
• 765 tiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the
561 hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning
598 rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by
[593] the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

182 Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for
761 the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only sym-
765 bolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the
83 fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the
392 ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

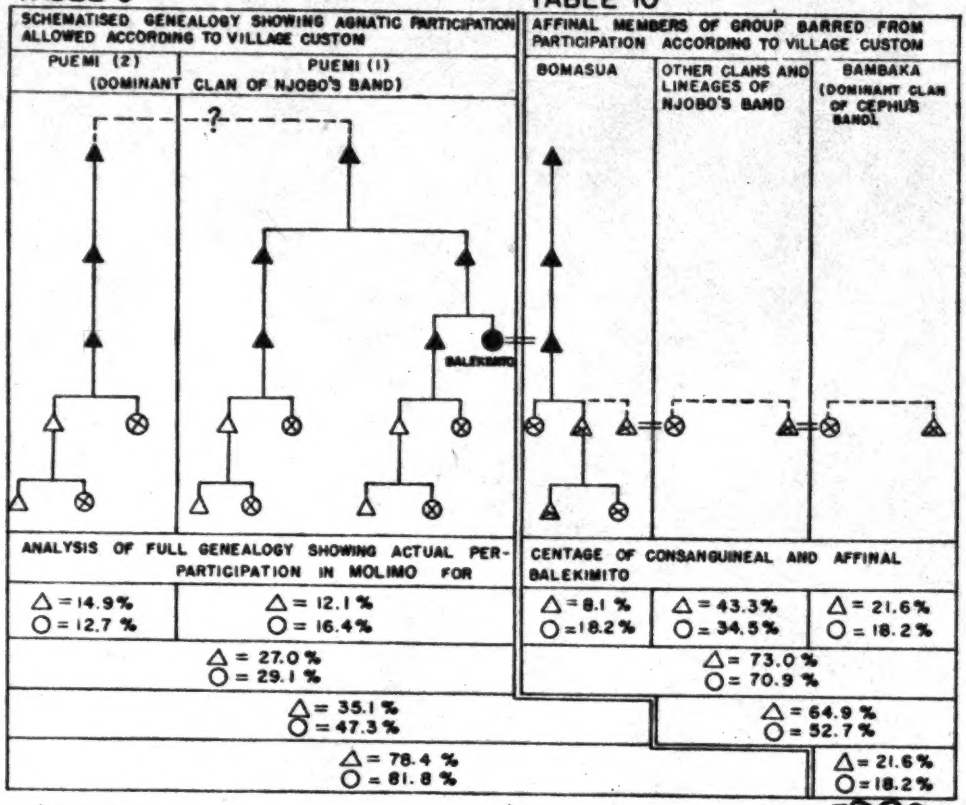
761 And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms
181 of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

*177 Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful
*177 not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager
754 can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[671] [10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

TABLE 9

TABLE 10



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342 closed on hinges. The only other hut to have a door was that of
[184] Njobo, which was at the opposite end and also faced down the middle, but not quite so blatantly as Ekianga's. The rest had leaf-covered frames which were simply pulled across the opening to close it.

342 My house was built opposite Njobo's, with the old witch Sau
123 and her son Amabosu to my right. At first the Pygmies were going
122 to build me the biggest house ever built in the forest—bigger than Camp Putnam. We finally compromised and when the framework of interlaced saplings was finished I had two rooms, each about ten
[476] feet square. Even so, I knew it would never be finished, for by then the number of workers was dropping off rapidly; so I suggested mudding the walls of only one room, but leafing the whole roof so that our "village" would have a veranda. This was thought to be a fine idea.

761 One day I was on my way out to the plantation with Kenge,
763 Manyalibo and Moke, when on the way we met Cephu's handsome
152 nephew, Kelemoke, a very light-skinned youth who had two children even lighter than he. He was wailing and crying, and told us that Cephu's daughter, only a few years old, had just died. He then
761 continued on his way, wailing loudly. I expected the others to turn
763 back, but they continued as though nothing had happened. Kenge
152 made some remark about Cephu's virility and the others snorted with
522 laughter. Kenge had the charming habit of laughing at his own jokes, which seemed funnier to him the more he thought about them, so he was still clapping his side and doubling up and shouting to the forest what a funny joke it was when we reached the plantation.
763 Then he stopped. Although we could see nobody, Moke called out
761 quietly that Cephu's daughter had died, and Njobo and Masisi and
152 a few others appeared from where they had been "working," looking rather cross at being disturbed. Njobo said it was a nuisance. The
[765] girl was his wife's niece, and this meant that his wife would keep

him awake with her wailing and would probably forget to cook for him. He set off at once for the village, grumbling, and Moke went with him. Masisi started one of his loud tirades, saying in his sharp voice that Cephu never looked after his children properly, so it was no wonder they died. This must have reminded Kenge of his joke, because he started laughing again, or perhaps he was laughing at Masisi, but Masisi got angrier than ever and said he was going straight to the village to tell Cephu what he thought of him. He stamped angrily after Njobo and Moke, still shouting deprecating remarks about the bereaved father.

Kenge laughed happily and said that there was going to be a dreadful noise when Masisi got back to the village, so we would do better to stay where we were until it was all over. Manyalibo, who had not said a word, suggested looking for *itaba,* a sweet edible root, and with food our foremost thought we set off.

When we got back to the village in the late afternoon we found everyone sitting around outside their little houses, staring gloomily at nothing in particular. Masisi was still talking loudly, pointing at the sky and over in the direction of Cephu's camp, from which I could hear women wailing, and saying that it was a shame that Cephu should let his children die and cause everyone so much trouble. Tungana mournfully said that he didn't like funerals; the Negroes made so much noise at them. Masisi's younger brother, Mambunia, still a bachelor because one of his legs was crippled with paralysis and he was not able to hunt well enough to support a family, added in shrill falsetto that Cephu was so inconsiderate and such a trouble-maker that he would probably let his daughter die completely—completely and absolutely.

I did not understand what he meant at first, but it provoked an immediate response from Asofalinda, Ekianga's widowed sister. She strode across the camp, marching with long swinging strides to where Mambunia was sitting, his paralyzed leg stuck out in front

village at all costs. Rather to my surprise this struck the Pygmies as being funny, and they began sniggering. Kenge, carefully dusting the last specks of earth from his spotless shorts, pretended to be severe and said this was no time for laughter. He then promptly cracked a joke at the expense of the Negroes and joined his friends in howls of mirth. When Pygmies laugh it is hard not to be affected; they hold onto one another as if for support, slap their sides, snap their fingers, and go through all manner of physical contortions. If something strikes them as particularly funny they will even roll on the ground, but this time the disapproving looks they got from the Negroes discouraged them.

The Negroes, having restored order, went on to the business of settling who was responsible for the death of the child. To them no death is natural; some evil spirit, some witch or sorcerer, had cursed the girl with dysentery and made her die. They tried to find out who had been fighting in Cephu's camp, who were the enemies of the girl's family. Their concern was a real one, for if the witch was not found, it might strike at them next. But the Pygmies were not co-operative. They were bored and listless. The girl had died and that was that. The Negroes finally gave up and we all returned, washing from head to foot as we crossed over the Nepussi.

Back in the main camp everything was normal. Only in Cephu's little camp was there quiet, subdued wailing from the house of the child's parents. There was some discussion as to whether or not the molimo should be called out. Cephu said in an aggressive manner that it should be, the only trouble being that he didn't have one. Certain families own them; others do not but when in need can borrow them from relatives. Cephu promptly called on Njobo, who reluctantly agreed.

That night, after the evening meal, a small number of men from the main camp went over to Cephu's camp and sat down around the central fire. The women and children were in their huts; some

talking, some sleeping, some sobbing softly. The men started singing, and after a while I heard their song echoed from far off in the forest and recognized the wistful sound, hollow and ghostly, answering the men with snatches of their own song, sometimes singing its own variations, sometimes breaking off into low, growling, animal noises. The men continued singing as though nothing were happening, and I heard the molimo coming closer, circling around the camp. The women were all quiet in their huts now, and the fire had burned low; the camp was pitch dark except for an occasional glow where the ashes of some family hearth still glowed faintly outside a hut. Even near a village, Cephu never built huts in imitation of the Negroes, and his camp was a typical forest camp, a close little circle of small conical huts, made of a framework of saplings covered entirely with leaves.

The molimo was silent for a few minutes and I looked at the faces of the men around our fire, which was flickering faintly in the middle of the camp. They were all staring at the flames, their eyes wide open but seeing things I had never seen. Only Cephu was lying back in his chair, and he seemed to be asleep. There was a slight movement beside me and I heard the molimo almost in my ear. The sound was gentler and a little sad; it was now singing closely with the men, as if answering their song. Amabosu had joined the group and was on my left, and I saw that he had his hands up to his mouth. Then in the shadows I saw that he was singing into what looked like a long length of bamboo, a sort of trumpet, which was producing that eerie, hollow sound. After a few minutes he stood up. One of Tungana's sons also stood up, and I could see that he was holding the other end of the trumpet. The two danced around the fire, waving the bamboo tube over the flames, Amabosu singing into it all the time and the men's chorus growing louder and louder. Then the two performers dashed suddenly away into the forest behind the camp, and after a few leopardlike growls the trumpet was heard no

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them [176] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

voice of the clan totem, and it makes only animal sounds—it does not sing. 765 177 186

To end the period of mourning there had to be a feast, a great deal of the food being supplied by the Bantu. I felt that this was really why the Pygmies went through with the Negro funeral ceremony. Everyone was in high spirits. Even Cephu and his group joined the festivities, glad that there was no longer any need for the women to wail, constantly reminding them of a death they would rather forget. It is better to forget the dead quickly, the Pygmies said, instead of making yourself remember them all the time, as the villagers do. When referring to the Bantu in this way, disparaging them or their customs, they used one of two terms, one meaning "animal," the other "savage"; the Negroes used the same terms about the Pygmies, and there was no great feeling of mutual respect. [761]

At the height of the festivity there was a sudden cry from the roadside, swelling into a burst of wailing that was infinitely more terrible than anything I had heard before. It was certainly worse than when Cephu's poor little girl had died for ever. Then old Balekimito, the much-loved mother of Ekianga and his dead brother Kolongo and of starchy old Asofalinda, was carried into the camp. She had been ill for some time, but as she was an old woman nobody had thought much of it. She had been ill before and not died completely, not even just died. But now she had died completely and absolutely, and her great hulking son, the great hunter, the man of substance with three wives, hairy, ugly Ekianga, was running up and down, his face streaked with tears, beating himself on the head with his fists and crying that his mother was going to die for ever. 763

Balekimito was carried gently over to her son's house, through the wooden door, and laid on the floor just inside. I went in to see her. The poor old woman was so thin I could see every bone in her weak, tired body; yet when I had last seen her she had been fine, upright, strong, and a powerful old matriarch if ever there was one.

763 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be
761 a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest." [765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred
[555] the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up
[829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said.
[186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we
[768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's
[152] house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they
[828] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

village, brandishing one hand above his head, telling everyone to 763
stop making such a dreadful noise, that it was not doing any good
to anybody. "Crying is a matter for the immediate family," he said. [152]
"She was a mother to us all, but for all of us to cry is just too much
noise." He clutched his head to illustrate the point, then grabbed a
couple of children, one of them his own, and sent them flying. By
now his temper was no longer artificial, and the women decided it
was wiser to keep out of his way, and left.

As soon as the wailing stopped and the door to Ekianga's house
was closed, with only the family inside, the cloud of depression lifted.
Everyone started talking about the imminent return to the forest— [166]
about where they would go to hunt, where they would go for mush-
rooms and for fruit and nuts and honey, and where they should
make their first camp. All agreed that it should be far away—but
not so far that old Tungana could not come.

That night there was a little wailing from Ekianga's house, and a
few women both in the main camp and in Cephu's camp were cry-
ing to themselves. Every now and then Masisi's sharp voice was
raised, telling them all to go to sleep.

The funeral took place the following morning, again conducted 765 •
by the Negroes. Balekimito was buried next to Cephu's daughter, 177
and once again, when the grave had been filled in and the women [764]
had left, the Negroes tried to conduct a council to discover who had
been responsible for the death. But the Pygmies were in no mood to
play games. They simply walked off after the women, washed them-
selves perfunctorily in the Nepussi and returned to the camp to start
preparations for going back to the forest.

After all, if Balekimito had died she had died well, and there
was a lot to do—plantations to raid and food to steal. This was no [186]
time to fool around with Negro notions of witchcraft and sorcery;
this was a time to get back to the forest as quickly as possible and
to hold the biggest molimo festival the forest had ever seen, to make
the forest happy again.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks themselves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

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832 dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts.
826 Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate
[302] decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known,
156 and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed
832 her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black
302 juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cica-
304 trized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked
[361] just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

765 During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the
[283] entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a
[262] noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut
765 the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket
392 was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

765 I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this
582

was. He told me it was the *kumamolimo,* "the place of the molimo," and now that everyone was here we were going to start the festival. The food that had been collected from hut to hut was to feed the molimo, because the molimo was a hungry animal that ate a great deal. He added pointedly that it smoked a great deal too, and when I gave him several packets of cigarettes he solemnly put them with the food in the molimo basket.

About an hour later, when I was in my hut, I noticed that Makubasi and Ausu were standing outside, obviously wanting to say something. Usually they were not backward about interrupting, and I was puzzled when Ausu beckoned with his head that I should come outside. He whispered in my ear that a few of them were going off to get the molimos, as we were to start the festival that night. Masimongo, Kenge's brother-in-law, had said that he, as well as Manyalibo, wanted to bring out his molimo, and make it a doubly great festival. Half a dozen youths were waiting to see if I would go with them, but they told me that the place where the molimo lived was a long way off and we would have to run all the way and return when it was dark.

Of course I said I would go, and we started off immediately. But halfway across the camp Masimongo leaped into my way and shouted that I was not to go. For a moment there was a loud and sharp argument, most of which I could not follow. Finally Njobo, to whom everyone always listened, said that he had seen me in the forest and knew I could travel as well and as fast as the others, so that I would be safe. Masisi then objected with a shrill torrent of words, saying that the molimo was none of my business. For a moment I felt like saying I would not go, as I certainly did not want to cause any bad feeling. The others were already moving off at a run, down the path through the glade, not waiting for me.

Njobo pushed me on the shoulder and said to follow quickly, if I was sure I could keep up and would not be afraid of traveling in the

765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly to Masimongo and Masisi, that the molimo had already sung to me
[885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lelo, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Ausu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was
[487] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

48 and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped
123 through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash.
[133] The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets
[136] and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

765 I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but
182 I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had
191 known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting,
[825] they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything
[178] except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a
765 whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly
182 on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

THE SONG OF THE FOREST

Makubasi wandered about aimlessly, poking here and there from habit to see if there was any tasty fruit to be had for the picking, but it was too dark to see. 765 182

Just as I was about to ask where the others had gone they reappeared, announcing their presence with low whistles that sounded like the call of a night bird. They were in two pairs, each pair carrying between them, over their shoulders, a long slender object. Even at that moment I wondered if they would veer off into the complete blackness of the forest before I could see more closely, but they came on toward us. Madyadya was carrying the rear end of what proved to be a huge tube of some kind, fifteen feet long. He gestured proudly and said, "See, this is our molimo!" Then he turned and putting his mouth to the end of the trumpet, which it was, he blew a long, raucous raspberry. Everyone doubled up with laughter, the first sound they had made since leaving camp. 765 534 [533] [522]

I was slightly put out by this sacrilege and was about to blame it rather pompously on irreligious youth, when I saw something that upset me even more. I do not know exactly what I had expected, but I knew a little about molimo trumpets and that they were sometimes made out of bamboo. I suppose I had expected an object elaborately carved, decorated with patterns full of ritual significance and symbolism, something sacred, to be revered, the very sight or touch of which might be thought of as dangerous. I felt that I had a right, in the heart of the tropical rain forest, to expect something wonderful and exotic. But now I saw that the instrument which produced such a surprisingly rude sound, shattering the stillness as it shattered my illusions, was not made of bamboo or wood, and it certainly was not carved or decorated in any way. It was a length of metal drainpipe, neatly threaded at each end, though somewhat bent in the middle. The second trumpet was just the same, shining and sanitary, but only half the length. 765 534 123 177

Everyone was looking at me to see what my reactions would be.

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765 534 123 177 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo, which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional materials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] [533] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

managed to find enough breath to blow a long blast that was sometimes musical, but more often not. The younger Pygmies all seemed anxious to have a turn, but Ausu, who was the only one who really knew how to play, kept aloof. He ran ahead of us all, silently, into the night.

It was so dark along the trails that I had to run barely two feet behind whoever was in front, occasionally reaching out and touching him to make sure he was still there. I had learned to lift my feet high to avoid roots, but I did not know the trails inch by inch, as the Pygmies did, and once I put my foot in an animal hole and fell. But nobody stopped, and I had to run all the faster to catch up.

Only at the streams was there enough light for us to see each other dimly; and at each stream I looked at those two drainpipes being lovingly washed and fed with water. I was curious as to how far this was a ritual act, and how far it was originally a practical measure that would make a wooden trumpet swell, closing any possible cracks, so that it would sound better. Ausu said that of course that was why they did it, they did the same thing to all their wooden whistles and flutes as well; it made their voices stronger. Then he added casually, "We know it makes no difference to the sound of the metal trumpet, but we do it anyway."

When we reached the top of the hill that descends, gently at first, then steeply, into the Lelo River, we all halted and stood in the glade. It was lit with silvery patches of light, shining here and there uncertainly, where the moonlight found its way down through the rustling trees. Even the darker shadows glowed every now and then, but with a strange natural luminosity that came from the mushroom-shaped nests of the termites. We could hear the Lelo swishing below, and on the far side of the river voices from the camp floated lazily across to us, as though we were gods and they were mortals, infinitely far away.

We stood there for a moment. Then Ausu took the end of the

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765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

pulled across the entrances to the little huts, and only the men were left outside.

Njobo was there to greet us, and the first thing he asked was whether I had been able to keep up with the others, or if I had "walked like the BaNgwana." He then turned to the others with an obvious "I told you so" air and said, "You see, it is all right; he knows how to walk." This apparently slight compliment was in fact a very real one, because to the Pygmy it is one of the most important differences between the people of the forest and the people of the village that the latter do *not* know "how to walk." Walking, to the Pygmy, means being able to run swiftly and silently, without slipping, tripping or falling. Every day he depends for his food on his ability to "walk," and more than once his life will be saved by the same ability, when he has to run from a charging buffalo or creep away unnoticed from a sleeping leopard.

Masisi, unbelieving, asked if I had not fallen at least once, and when he was told I had, he roared with laughter. Masimongo, who had been another to object to my going, pointed to my torn clothes, dripping with water and perspiration, and filthy where I had fallen, and he too laughed. Nobody mentioned the molimo.

Kenge came up and asked disapprovingly why I had gone off so quickly without telling him. He said he had cooked dinner and now it was all cold and I would have to go without. He gave my clothes a withering look and said he would wash them out the next day, and that I had better take them off now and get dry. I went over to my hut and changed, and when I came out he had a piping hot meal waiting by a blazing fire.

What followed that evening was to follow every evening for the next two months. It was the focal point of the molimo festival, and the repetition every night was an essential part of it. The ceremony, if you can call it that, did not center around ritual objects, as do the

765 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that [534] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in [778] themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest [186] wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

765 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the 533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh- 534 ter Kondabate and her husband Ausu, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amabosu, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

no longer worried me that the trumpet was a metal drainpipe instead of a piece of bamboo or wood, because now that I could not see it I realized that Ausu was right. It was the sound that mattered. As the men sang in the camp, the voice of the molimo echoed their song, moving about continually so that it seemed to be everywhere at once. During a lull in the singing it started giving animal growls, and the men looked around to make sure that all the women were safely in their huts. Almost immediately Amabosu and Madyadya came running into the camp from the far end, past Cephu's camp, picking their feet up high in the air so that more than ever they seemed to be floating above the ground they trod. They came right up to the fire and squatted down either side of it, the front of the trumpet still held on Madyadya's shoulder as Amabosu warbled softly into the other end.

I noticed that the trumpet was still wet; it must have been given a "drink" just before it was carried into the camp. Now both youths stood up, and with Amabosu singing all the time, in reply to the song of the men, Madyadya took the end of the trumpet in his hands and waved it up and down, passing it through the flames of the molimo fire and over the heads of all of us sitting there. Some of the men took up hot ashes and rubbed them over the trumpet, and some even put live coals in at the far end. As Amabosu sang harder and louder, sparks flew out over Madyadya's shoulder, disappearing into the night with the song.

Then the two of them went dancing off, around the camp once and into the forest. There were a few last defiant bellows from the direction of the river, and no more was heard. The men stopped singing and prepared to eat. Two caldrons had been boiling over the fire, and both were now ready. One contained rice, the other a kind of spinach made from the leaves of the manioc plant. Eaten together they are delicious. I wondered if there would be any precedence as to who should eat first, or if there would be any ritual, but there

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
688 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
539 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was sing- 765
ing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed 533
it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but 539
the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang 825
again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important 765
it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me 533
around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that [854]
Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general 765
pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but [183]
with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all [854]
women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the [533]

765 baby was too young to know what was going on, and so could not
533 tell the others what he saw; possibly simply because it did not matter very much anyway, for the Song was not only Beautiful, it was Good and Powerful.

It took me some time to realize just how important song was. That first night I just thought of it as being a beautiful sound. After we had eaten the food that had been offered to the molimo we sang again, and at one point the younger men got up and danced around the fire, excitedly, but without any of the frivolity that would come later. This was the first night of the molimo and everyone was on his best behavior. Then when the dancing was over we heard the trumpet again, and as we sang it sang back to us, getting farther and farther away. As it went it carried our song with it, deeper and deeper into the forest. Finally we could hear it no more, and only the echoes of our own voices came back to us from the night.

765 Not long after that old Moke stretched and yawned and said
533 that he was tired and that everyone should go to sleep and let him
513 sleep. But the younger men paid no attention and went on singing, so Moke resignedly joined in. But after another half-hour, when it was not very long before dawn, even the younger men decided to
[372] quit. Moke picked up the log he had been sitting on, the end of
[373] which was glowing in the hot ashes, and shuffled back to his hut, swinging the log so that it glowed brightly and lit his way across the camp. Manyalibo simply stretched out where he was, right beside the molimo fire, and went to sleep there. A number of youths did likewise, their hunting nets making comfortable beds, but I went back to my hut. I found Kenge there, fast asleep. He was on my bed, wrapped in my blanket, snoring contentedly, and the hut was filled with smoke from the fire he had lit beside him.

765 In spite of the hunting that had to be done each day, the men
533 sang in this way every night. And every night we looked to see who
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would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
578 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I felt that air of importance and

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123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
562 every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
825 they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
825 about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
522 washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

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know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it 534 [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting 322

765 534 322 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [489] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765 534
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534
for old men to talk about these things. 123 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 888
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322]
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411]
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i to.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157]
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

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5

The Crime of Cephu, the Bad Hunter

765 533 EVERY NIGHT the men gathered to sing the songs of the molimo, and every morning the youths awakened the camp with their shouts and yells. This went on week after week, yet the daily life of the hunting group continued as though nothing particularly unusual was [152] happening. The men were more sleepy in the mornings, and sometimes tempers were short, but never for long. The necessities of hunting and gathering for a living did not allow it.

512 As soon as the camp was light and there was no further danger of the molimo's making an appearance, the women emerged from their huts and went down to the river to bathe and to collect water

selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

765 Even though he[1] always
578 made his camp a short distance off it was close enough to be thought
152 of as the same camp, and whether or not we appreciated his presence
621 we thought of his camp and ours as being the same. Even his unwillingness to take part in the molimo was accepted, to maintain some semblance of unity; but this sudden statement made it impossible to ignore Cephu's feeling of rivalry any longer. Rather than cause an open breach, everyone in the main camp kept his thoughts to himself and was silent.

224 About an hour after dawn, four or five youths with their nets and
372 spears went off to light the hunting fire. I went with them, and only when we had crossed the Lelo and were on the other side did they speak. Then it was about trivialities, and soon they were chatting and laughing as though nothing were wrong. Shortly afterward we were joined by half a dozen of the younger married men, the most active hunters, and we lit the fire at the top of the hill. Leaves and twigs were piled around the base of a young tree, and an ember brought from the camp set them ablaze. More leaves were thrown on so that dense clouds of smoke went billowing up to the invisible sky, until finally the flames burst through with a great roar of victory.
[182] There was no great ritual or ceremonial, but somehow this act put the hunters in harmony with the forest and secured its blessing and assistance for the day's hunt. The Pygmies regard fire as the most precious gift of the forest, and by offering it back to the forest they are acknowledging their debt and their dependence.

224 As we sat around waiting for the others, one or two couples passed
[222] by. They were going ahead so they would have extra time for gathering mushrooms on the way. They paused to chat and then walked
224 on, lightly, swiftly, and gaily. Before long the main body of hunters
372 arrived and asked where Cephu was. We had not seen him. It
578 seemed that he had left the camp shortly after us but instead of
156 passing by the hunting fire had followed a different path. Someone suggested that he was building a fire of his own. This brought cries

[1] [i.e., Cephu. - Analyst]

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224 This dance[1] was still in progress when the main body of the hunters
578 returned. They strode into camp with glowering faces and threw
152 their nets on the ground outside their huts. Then they sat down,
156 with their chins in their hands, staring into space and saying nothing. The women followed, mostly with empty baskets, but they were by no means silent. They swore at each other, they swore at their husbands, and most of all they swore at Cephu. Moke looked across at me and smiled. He was skinning the civet.

I tried to find out what had happened, but nobody would say. Kenge, who had been sleeping, came out of our hut and joined the shouting. He was the only male who was not sitting down, and although he was young he had a powerful voice, and a colorful use of language. I heard him saying, "Cephu is an impotent old fool. No, he isn't, he is an impotent old animal—we have treated him like a man for long enough, now we should treat him like an animal. *Animal!*" He shouted the final epithet across at Cephu's camp, although Cephu had not yet returned.

The result of Kenge's tirade was that everyone calmed down and began criticizing Cephu a little less heatedly, but on every possible score: The way he always built his camp separately, the way he had even referred to it as a separate camp, the way he mistreated his relatives, his general deceitfulness, the dirtiness of his camp, and even his own personal habits.

The rest of the hunters came in shortly afterward, with Cephu leading. He strode across the camp and into his own little clearing
• [765] without a word. Ekianga and Manyalibo, who brought up the rear, sat down at the kumamolimo and announced to the world at large that Cephu had disgraced them all and that they were going to tear down the kumamolimo and abandon the camp and end the molimo. Manyalibo shouted that he wanted everyone to come to the kumamolimo at once, even Cephu. This was a great matter and had to be settled immediately. Kenge, not slow to seize the opportunity

1. [i.e., the imitation of the leopard--Analyst]

224 Manyalibo stood up and began a rather pompous statement of
765 how everyone wanted this camp to be a good camp, and how every-
578 one wanted the molimo to be a good molimo, with lots of singing,
156 lots of eating, and lots of smoking. But Cephu never took part in the molimo, he pointed out. And Cephu's little group never contributed to the molimo basket. Manyalibo went on, listing the various ways in which Cephu had defaulted and made the camp into a bad camp instead of a good camp, and the molimo a bad molimo. And now, he added, Cephu had made the hunt a bad hunt. He recalled how on the first day, even before the camp was built, we had been presented with an antelope by the forest, but how ever since Cephu had joined us things had gone from bad to worse.

224 Cephu tried to interject that the molimo was really none of his
765 business. At this Masisi, who had befriended him over the chair
578 incident, and who had relatives in his camp, rounded on him sharply.
156 He reminded Cephu that he had been glad enough to accept help
593 and food and song when his daughter had died; now that his "mother" had died, why did he reject her? Cephu replied that Balekimito was not his mother. This was what everyone was waiting for. Not only did he name the dead woman, an unheard-of offense,
[602] but he denied that she was his mother. Even though there was only
[621] the most distant relationship, and that by marriage, it was equivalent to asserting that he did not belong to the same group as Ekianga and Manyalibo and the rest.

578 Ekianga leaped to his feet and brandished his hairy fist across the
156 fire. He said that he hoped Cephu would fall on his spear and kill
152 himself like the animal he was. Who but an animal would steal meat
224 from others? There were cries of rage from everyone, and Cephu
224 burst into tears. Apparently, during the last cast of the nets Cephu,
578 who had not trapped a single animal the whole day long, had slipped
156 away from the others and set up his net in front of them. In this way

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

 But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food, showing that it was a kumamolimo, the only outward indication that the God of the Forest had been invoked and was waiting silently nearby, in the trees or in the Lelo itself, ready to enter the camp at night and join his people in their songs of joy and praise. The casual observer might have thought the youngsters were playing a game when they went around from hut to hut with a fishing line and a basket, collecting food from everyone. There was certainly nothing about their demeanor to indicate that this was an essential part of a great act of communion. And if the same observer were told that this was so, he would probably form the opinion that the molimo, whatever it was, could not mean very much if it was treated so lightly and casually. P 765 [776]

This, in fact, is the opinion of the villagers. For them the ritual act is the important thing. In their religious rites it is the correct performance of the ceremonial that counts most. If correctly performed it is bound to bring the desired results, regardless of the accompanying thought, if indeed there is any. All attention is focused on the act itself. And it must not only be performed correctly, but with a solemnity that betrays fear. C 765

The difference between the two attitudes is perhaps one of those fine shades of difference that divide magic from religion, though there is so much overlapping that they can seldom be divided in practice. Whereas the villagers believe that the act itself brings about results in a way they cannot explain, which is what we call magic, the BaMbuti do not believe this at all. They believe in a benevolent deity or supernatural power which they identify with the forest. To this they owe as much respect and affection and consideration as they owe to their own parents, and from it they can expect the same in return. So, for the Pygmies, it is not so much the act itself that counts, or the manner in which the act is performed, but the thought that goes with it. The collecting of food from hut to hut is not a P C 765 771 789 P 778 P 765 771

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765 771 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which every single member of the group must participate.

765 562 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole concern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

881 765 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was married to Ausu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Ausu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima*, and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 574 888 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her husband. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives, but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 888 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765 and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888 know him well too. The elders—the *mangese,* the Great Ones— 765 formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561 hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562 and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535 and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765 an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [123] back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765 of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535 and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481 by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

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765 not simply run; they seemed to float over the ground at tremendous
535 speed, their feet high in the air. I saw why I had been told not to
481 come out, because the youths that were armed with sticks and branches on the flanks of the trumpets kept on lashing out viciously, at imaginary intruders. When Ekianga, or any of the others who were running about independently, beating on roof tops and tearing off leaves, came too close, they had to leap from side to side to avoid being hit. Each person seemed concerned only with what he was doing. Nobody so much as looked at anyone else.

765 Then the rest of the men came out of their huts, one by one,
533 went over to the kumamolimo and began singing. It was no tenta-
372 tive, sleepy sing-song, as it was on many mornings, but singing in real earnest, as loud and as vigorous as at the height of the night. The molimo fire was fanned up into a blaze, and youths ran swiftly around the camp picking up bits of wood from everywhere, dancing back to the kumamolimo and throwing them onto the fire. Then, with a wild rush, the two trumpets joined together and were surrounded by a single dancing forest, and sounding a martial air they tramped around the edge of the fire and disappeared into the trees. They seemed to cross the river and climb up the hill on the far side, until the sound of our own voices drowned the more distant music of the trumpets.

765 For the whole of that day everyone's nerves seemed to be on edge.
152 Asofalinda was in a rage about something and she strode up and down the length of the camp, shaking her arm and pointing at everyone in turn, telling them they were all lazy good-for-nothings. Masisi was in one of his worst tempers and lashed out with an acid tongue at anyone foolish enough to try and talk to him. Manyalibo sulked and said it was pretty poor that it should be so difficult to fill one molimo basket. There should be two, three, or even four baskets, and they should be full all the time, he said. He made some remark about Masamba's not having done much to help, so Masamba threw

an empty basket at him and said, "There, you make so much noise, 765
go and fill it yourself." Even before the hunt went off there were 152
two full baskets hanging up, and by evening there were four.

The change between the atmosphere of the morning and that of the evening was unbelievable. Usually when a day starts off in such ill humor it continues in that way to the bitter end. But the hunt seemed to restore everyone's good spirits, even though it was not outstandingly successful. I did not go on the hunt, but stayed in camp. And all day long the girls were singing in Kondabate's house, and the old woman was with them.

After we had eaten the evening meal Manyalibo went around the 765
camp himself and took a piece of wood from the fire outside each 533
hut, placing them all on the molimo fire. Then, before it was com- [372]
pletely dark, the men gathered to sing. Even Cephu was there, and the singing was light and cheerful. The girls that had been in Konda-
bate's hut came out as soon as we started. They had painted their [302]
bodies with black kangay juice, and in their hair they had twined [301]
circlets of vine, one strand of which stuck way out in front, over their foreheads, with a small bunch of feathers dangling from the end.
They kept together in a tight little group, their bodies swaying in 765
unison to the songs of the men. Then they began to dance, still so 535
close together that I could not see between them. They danced all around the group, forcing us closer and closer to the fire. In a snaking, graceful line they seemed to take charge of the music, increasing the tempo until the men were as exhausted as they were, and we all stopped for a rest.

By then it was dark, and I expected the girls and the rest of the 765
women and children to retire to their huts. But they had built a fire 562
of their own at the edge of the molimo group, and there they all sat, chatting inconsequentially as though they did this every night.
It was then that I first noticed the old woman. Under a great head- [142]
dress of vine and feathers her hatchet face looked more angular than [292]

765 562 142 [292] ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 562 832 [304] Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 562 533 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent molimo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

765 562 535 [534]

this direction and that; even her fingers each seemed to have a dance of its own. But her head was still, and her eyes were fixed on those of Kondabate. 765 562 535

At this point Kondabate handed the banja to another of the women standing nearby and led the young girls right into the center of the men's group, dancing in a close circle around the molimo fire. As they moved around, the men stood up and made room for them, and now the singing came almost entirely from the women. The men just stood and stamped and clapped and growled a bass accompaniment. The girls danced more and more wildly, but their heads and eyes were always turned toward the molimo fire, no matter how violent the body movement. After nearly half an hour the old woman, still crouching, ran into the center after the girls, and turning to face them from the far side of the fire she drove them slowly backward, back until they were lost among the others at the edge of the group. The singing was quieter, and in a few minutes it faded away altogether. Not a word was spoken. 765 562 535 533

After a short rest the singing started again, and this time there was no mistaking it—the women were leading. Manyalibo's wife picked up the banja and beat them, sharply and decisively, and the girls began the song. The men followed in obedient chorus. Once again, as the song grew faster, the old woman began to twitch until her whole body was alive with movement. Then she sprang up and came into the center of the kumamolimo alone. For an instant she stood there, and her head moved sharply from side to side. It was like the movement of a bird, keeping a wary eye open for possible foes. As she began to dance she seemed to sink slowly into the ground, her knees folding up like a concertina, her body bending at the waist; but always her head stuck out in front, jerking from side to side, eyes staring and expressionless.

She circled the fire three times, looking out and upward into the night, but unseeing; then as if satisfied that she was alone and un- [372]

765 observed she flung her head and her whole body around and faced
562 the fire directly. She was about seven or eight feet away from it. She
535 advanced slowly and cautiously, two steps forward, one step back,
533 her attention riveted on the flames. The singing was louder and faster,
372 but she refused to be hurried. At her own pace she approached closer and closer until it seemed impossible that she could stand the heat. She hesitated at the brink of the fire, her frail body gleaming with sweat, her face glowing and trembling. She made as if she was going to pounce on the fire, but whirled around at the last moment and danced quickly back to where the women were singing, watching her, eagerly and anxiously. She sat down on her haunches and accepted a steaming bowl of liko.

The singing did not stop this time but went on quietly at a slower tempo. The men made no attempt to move back closer to the fire. After about ten minutes the old lady, apparently refreshed and as full of vigor as ever, danced back into the men's circle, with Kondabate at her side. Their movements were perfectly co-ordinated, even to the twitching of their heads; as they sank down close to the
765 ground they might have been one person. But as they neared the
562 fire, again having circled it several times, the old woman sprang to
535 her feet and ran swiftly around to the far side and crouched there,
372 staring at Kondabate through the flames. They started circling once more, each keeping her eyes on the other, moving from side to side so that they were always opposite each other. But now they were closer to the fire than they had ever been and on their hands and knees they passed through the hot ashes, as though trying to reach each other through the flames.

Finally Kondabate retreated and squatted down at the edge of the circle, her body twitching just as the old woman's had done, her eyes staring and empty as she gazed at the molimo fire. The men heaped more wood on the flames, which were beginning to die down.
[533] Now they were singing as loudly as the women, stamping on the

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames. 765 562 535 372 [533]

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and [831] 765 562

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765 562 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 562 993 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned" the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to 562 play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 372 182 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 533 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again, and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

765 •
ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides 533
she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of 765
nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old 533
woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so 824
that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt [284]
to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or 765
because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evi- 881
dently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether 881
the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger 177

881 men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older
177 men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought
881 the village was better as they might be able to make money out of
177 tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been in-
609 creasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

881 It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun
177 in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest.
[765] Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

765 I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the
177 molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

361 The night before we were due to move back to the village every-
152 one was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening
[521] meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at every-
361 one who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

883 177 52 [273] would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 52 [152] Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo [765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 533 [535] The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

ing us as gently as the breeze. When he had finished he stood by 765 •
the fire and sang to the forest by himself, with the molimo answering 533
from a great distance, getting fainter and fainter. Finally they
were both singing so quietly that I could hardly distinguish their
music from the music of the crickets and the frogs and the birds of
the night. Somewhere a hyrax gave its throaty, rasping call of despair, [136]
and an owl hooted. Moke sat down, and nobody spoke, and nobody
sang. Something wonderful had come into our lives and filled them [152]
with the magic of love and trust, and though we still possessed that
love and trust, we regretted the going of the power that had brought
it.

At dawn we were awakened as usual by the sound of the two 765
trumpets. But there was a quality about their tone that was harsh 534
and brash. We all knew that the real molimo had gone, but we had 177
to go through with the final ritual for the benefit of the villagers.
The bellowings did not last long, and soon the trumpets disappeared in the direction of the village with a bunch of noisy youths in attendance. Later, when the main body of the camp was packed up and ready to leave, one of the youths came running back and told us with great excitement what fun they had had frightening the villagers with the molimo, but that now it was safely hidden in the forest, on the outskirts of the village.

We got a warm reception as we emerged from the plantations 177
among the neat rows of mud houses. The villagers eyed the baskets on the women's backs and tried to estimate how much meat they were bringing. They called out offers of free meals in an attempt to bribe their way into the favor of people whom they theoretically regarded as slaves. As we filed from the leafy plantation, leaving the forest behind us, we left a kind and friendly world and entered a different one. Here, if the world was open to the sky it was also open to greed and suspicion and treachery. Village women attached themselves to "their" Pygmies and tried to pry into the baskets

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MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

The evening meal was a good one, as the Pygmies had brought 262
in far more meat than they allowed to the villagers, and in return 264
for what they had given away they had received generous portions 430
of rice, beans, groundnuts and manioc, and a few of the tiny bitter 177
tomatoes which blend so well with manioc leaves and groundnuts
in the making of a sauce. When it was dark, the women and chil- 533
dren retired almost immediately, and the men gathered at the central 571
fire where four upright poles indicated the Pygmy version of a *baraza,* [345]
or men's meeting place. At first, several villagers came to see what [535]
was going on, and the Pygmies sang and danced for them. They
sang and danced until the villagers, tired after a heavy day's work
in the plantations, went to bed. Then the men really began to sing.
They sang and sang until it seemed almost as though we were back
in the forest. But any time there was a strange sound, and it was sus-
pected that there might be a villager lurking about, they stopped.
They had guards posted all around to make sure they were not
caught unawares.

It must have been about three o'clock in the morning when the 765
molimo made its appearance. It came into the camp preceded by two 534
youths holding glowing firebrands in their hands. Waving the brands 372
high in the air, then swinging them down to touch the ground,
they laid a fiery path for the molimo to follow. It was stately and
imposing. Following this path of glowing cinders the molimo circled
the village several times and then came to rest by the fire, where it
sang very quietly. Just as I wondered if it was really going to sing
as it did in the forest it moved off, and the tempo increased. Sur-
rounded now by all the youths, the molimo started running around,
faster and faster, making lightning swoops on the group of older men
who were sitting by the fire. The rest of the men were either dancing
in a frenzy around the fire itself, as if protecting it, or else they
were with the molimo. I heard a crunching sound as the molimo 765
plowed through a small field of sugar cane at the edge of the vil- 534

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 534 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud beaten from walls.

765 533 78 [513] There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their dancing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house. 765 781 535 534 372 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire. It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliberately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it. [276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village. 765 534

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god. 765 761 765 372 778

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 765 594 177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 765 574 177 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women P 881 took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful P [832] young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima but he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
771 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
[765] festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
[533] dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
182

er's chances by going to live with Kenge before Yambabo had been 584
well and truly bound to Taphu.

There was only one thing to do, so Kenge made arrangements for 585
Yambabo to leave the next day, with a suitable wedding party. They 177
would stop overnight at Katala's village and continue the next day
to Babama. At this point an uncle of Taphu's died, and the Babama
villagers sent a message that the wedding was off. Taphu, however,
sent word that as far as the Pygmies were concerned the death made
no difference and the wedding was on. Kenge did not want to offend
the villagers at this stage, so he delayed a few days, and after a
respectable lapse of time he finally sent the wedding party off. But not 585
before Yambabo had had yet another change of mind. As she was [302]
being rubbed with palm oil and camwood paste, so that she would
look her very best, she suddenly reached out for the hearth. Before [765]
anyone could stop her she had covered herself from head to foot in
ashes, the sign of deepest mourning. As the rest of the party had
already been oiled and painted for some time, and were anxious to be
on their way, there was not much sympathy for Yambabo. They
told her that if she wanted to walk through the villages like a ghost
they did not mind, but one way or another she was going. Masisi,
who was acting as her father, gave her a long lecture, during which
his wife hurriedly wiped off the ashes and smeared on more oil.

The party finally got off and had a slow and pleasant journey, 585
stopping in each village in the hopes of receiving presents of food 177
and palm wine. It stopped over at Katala's, where the long-suffering [574]
family of Ngoma fed the whole party lavishly, and the next day it
arrived at Babama. Yambabo was led through the village to the Pygmies' encampment, but the villagers came hurrying after. They said
the wedding could not possibly take place there so soon after the
death of a relative and would have to be held in the village. Taphu
wandered out of his hut to see what was going on. He was dressed
in a dreadful array of cast-off clothes given him by the villagers.

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire.
Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

• 765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.
[P.341-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions
[177] are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763
children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152
sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764
the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768
a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152]
there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]*
the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764
the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152
same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764
and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177*
not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152
by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception [887]
to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766
small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768
be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

•766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

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of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the south-eastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Death, Funerals, and Mourning

364 [384] [768] Burial is the custom among the net hunters, as with the archers. In general it follows the same pattern, taking place inside or immediately beside the hut of the deceased; the hut is pulled down over the grave and the camp deserted immediately. No weapons, utensils, ornaments, or food are buried with the corpse. [561] Nor is there any attempt to find the cause of death and to place the blame.

165 Most deaths occur from causes easily understandable to the Pygmy. Infection is rare. Pneumonia and dysentery are the major fatal illnesses. The greatest single cause of accidental mortality is a fall from a tree (the trees are of great height, with few low branches to break a fall). Other possible and not infrequent causes of accidental death include the falling of dead branches on top of huts, which may kill several people at one time. Death through burning may occur owing to the habit Pygmies have of getting up at night to relieve themselves, then squatting down almost on top of the fire to get warm. At such times they smoke [276] strong tobacco, which they inhale deeply and sometimes faint as a result, falling into the fire.

[p. 222-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; *if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But* in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763
children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152
sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764
the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768
a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152]
there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]*
the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764
the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152
same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764
and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177*
not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152
by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception [887]
to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766
small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768
be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

766 two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

of the most dramatic festivals possible. The *molimo* is not concerned with the death of the individual, nor with securing safe passage for the soul, but rather with affirming a belief in life and in the continuity of life and in the continuity of the band, despite the fact of death.

It seems, from inquiry in all parts of the forest, that there were many different ways of burying the dead and that no uniform custom existed; rather that, as now, each band had its own preferences. The most common method now, and apparently in the past, is simply to pull the hut down over the corpse, the body having been buried in a shallow pit dug in the ground or simply left on the bed, covered with leaves. In some bands the hut is then burned, in others it is left, but the general practice is to move camp at once. If it is too late to move that day, the family concerned will sleep out in the open until they are able to build a new hut in the next camp.

On some occasions bodies are buried up in trees, and in the southeastern region of net-hunters this is how the Mbuti say they dispose of dead lepers. Nearly all Mbuti say that in the old days they buried their dead in holes in the ground, filling the holes in afterward so that the animals would not find the bodies. Today it is usual, throughout the forest, to wash the body before disposing of it in any of these ways. But this, and other practices such as scenting the corpse, wrapping it in a cloth if one is available, raising and lowering it three times before burial, and orienting the body in its resting place, vary according to the practices of the local villagers, and are almost certainly to a large extent borrowed from them. The Mbuti seem impatient and unconcerned about such details, and if they attend to them they do so only perfunctorily. They are particularly reluctant to allow anything of any possible value to be buried with a body, and if the burial takes place in a village and the villagers insist on using cloths and sleeping mats, the Mbuti will do their best to retrieve these unseen, at the last moment.

Similarly, head-shaving seems to be of little significance to the Mbuti, though they frequently do shave when a member of the band dies. But, unlike the villagers, they are not consistent in the practice, and they leave their hair lying around where it has fallen to the ground, whereas the villagers are scrupulously careful to collect their own hair cuttings, which they take off into the forest, or to a stream, and secretly hide.

The explanation given for self-mortification is that all the immediate family feel responsible, to some extent, for a death in their midst.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the
761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74
[594] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

763 761 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest." [765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 [555] Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said. [829] [186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we [168] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they [152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he [828] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

855 There is a
917 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister
[928] will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta* describes one of the lat-
628 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

* *Ibid.*, pp. 134-135.

[P. 340-A]

165 tine in the least possible time. Some-
372 times this puff knocks him out; he
[276] faints, and falls forward into the fire.
Very often there are others up about the same business, who, when they hear the thud, will run over and pull the victim out of the fire, in which case he will survive with bad burn scars. Sometimes, however, no one hears him, and the burns are fatal.

765 When a pygmy dies, his kinsmen
[764] bury him near the camp. They get
[273] bananas or wine ready-made from their Negroes, and a regular bout of wine drinking begins. The members of the deceased's family cover themselves with white pipe clay, and weep and wail for several days. This noisy manifestation of grief is intermittent, and formally controlled. Sometimes they even put it off for two or three days until all the relatives who have been away visiting at other camps can be gathered in. Most of it is done by women, who will weep and wail for a while in concert, then rest together, then weep together again for another spell. Anyone who is really overcome with emotion weeps quietly by him or herself, alone and without interruption.

• 768 After a few days of this the whole group will break camp and move on to some other site, unless there are strong objections to leaving. In any case, they never return to the grave, and never decorate or touch it.
[P.341-B]

[ARCHERS]

sued and shot with bow and arrow whenever the opportunity arises but are never the object of organized hunting. Other smaller animals and birds are hunted individually; those that take refuge in holes in trees are smoked out. 224 [262]

Schebesta's account suggests that, despite his proficiency at the hunt, the Pygmy takes care to protect himself against its attendant dangers and disappointments by securing the cooperation of the God of the Forest, and of his ancestors, and by making use of magic. He carries charms, observes various taboos, and performs certain rites—mostly sympathetic. It is not clearly stated, however, exactly which rites and charms are used by which particular Pygmies; there is obviously a great deal of variation. Schebesta clearly indicates, however, that among the archers there seems to be a considerable amount of hunting magic and ritual, witnessed by their use of the special whistles (Efe: *segbe*), magic formulas, invocation, and ritual practices he describes. 224 [789] [176] [169].

[P. 173-C]

[ARCHERS]

[P.186-A]

622 leadership among the Mbuti except very rarely.
622 He himself discusses the lineage elders ("*Sip-*
613 *penältesten*," Schebesta, 1948, 332, 559) and
888 states that lineage authority lies with these
648 elders alone. Under villager influence these elders may assume the characteristics of a chief (cf. the "Sultani" of the Pygmies, mentioned by Geil, 1905). Encouraged in this by the villagers, who see a way of extending their authority, the lineage elders may appear to become headmen or chieftains of Mbuti bands, representing the band to the village chief.

622 As mentioned above, the authority of the
613 elder derives from his age, by virtue of which he
888 represents the lineage ancestors. Any offense
[769] against the elder is an offense against the lineage. He takes precedence in all matters: the best part of the game is his, whether or not he took part in the hunt; he presides at various ritual offerings; he is responsible for settling disputes with other bands or with villagers; he leads at the head of the dance. Succession by age is strictly observed. This much Schebesta (1952, 221–223) reports, but without citing examples in sufficient detail to enable us to make a valid comparison between different groups or bands.

[ARCHERS]

782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as "*Mugu! daó a iye!*" ("*Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

[224] According to one of Schebesta's archer informants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to [769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

782 Another important sacrifice is made for the re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *sulia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190 - B]

[ARCHERS]

775 261 [774] The soul, the word for which designates the pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital force mentioned, *megbe*, changes into the totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

774 828 Dreams are events that actually befall the soul during sleep, according to the archers. While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and wander at will. In this way God and the dead can manifest themselves during sleep.

775 [777] The northern archers think of a realm for the souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves, and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the dead and their god are, like the God of the Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of properly Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult [769] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one of the vital principles takes the form of a star, living with the celestial divinity, remote from the Mbuti world.

[P. 191-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost ex- [829]
clusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it was splitting badly ("*apa ndaso aké sinana*"). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: "*kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi*") and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's. 621 626

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again." 621 626 829 769

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*. 621 602 571 578

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued 621 221 224 578

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterised by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes. 538 439 177

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my [224] [251] 538 439 177 776 [186] [769]

[ARCHERS]

[P 188-C]

obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 [83]

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion. 774

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771 •
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 193-A]

114 sion, based as it often is on data provided by unreliable informants but passed as certain fact (Boelaert). According to Costermans, Schebesta's conclusions result from his selection of data to suit his (admitted) preconceived theories. Further, Schebesta relies, as he himself says, on the evidence provided by legends which he accepts without exercising any of the caution necessary for the proper use of such material. Possibly many of the legends and the associated concepts are indeed of Lese origin.

The Godhead

771 776 The Chthonic God of the Undergrowth plainly does not stand by itself, not even when supported by an embryonic "*Totengottheit*," which Schebesta finds among the archers but believes to be of little significance. From an examination of Mbuti mythology and a comparative study of religious terms, Schebesta concludes that there is a third, and important if vaguely conceptualized, "*Himmelsgottheit*."

[ARCHERS]

• 771 776 Mbuti religion thus resolves into a dualism, if not so neatly as it would were Toré, as Costermans (1938) believes, always associated with misfortune and death. For Schebesta the dualism is manifest in both the sky God and the earth God, but not between them.

776 He finds Toré, as we have seen, to be associated with both life and death, good and bad, fortune and misfortune. Even in his most benevolent moments, Toré seems to be necessarily associated with Matu, personification of menstrual blood and its connotations of sorcery and death, if not the personification of the dreaded rainbow itself.

The earth God is addressed as "father" or "grandfather," but the names used for the sky God, despite their diversity from one area to another, all have one common characteristic—their linguistic association with words connoting brightness, movement, or creation. The sky world is thought of as being much the same as the earth world, though much embellished in mythology. The celestial God is an old man,

[P.193-B]

[ARCHERS]

There is no attempt to rationalize the fact that the force emanating from the sky God works both good and evil; it is just accepted as a fact. But it is exactly this fact that is the thread binding the various notions that form the Mbuti magico-religious system. Magic itself, good or bad, can be practiced only through the use of this force. The personal sky God himself is, for Schebesta, the supreme magician, manifest in different and opposing ways, whose power is everywhere. He is too remote to be the object of any cult but is, in a sense, represented among human beings by the lineage elders, inasmuch as they inherit the power of the original ancestors; hence, the respect and obedience that is their due. 776 71 761

If the outward manifestations of Pygmy religion mainly concern the God of the Undergrowth, if the cult practices seem overgrown with magic and superstition, and if there is any appearance of polytheism in the Mbuti rationale, all is resolved (for Schebesta, at least) into a consistent monotheism by the basic Mbuti belief in vital force.

[P 193-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

any other god or spiritual being for protection or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A number of symbolic actions performed as parts of technological operations in order to smooth over the disturbance caused by some kind of change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in which the youngest male descendant of the hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and opens the operations dividing the meat for consumption (cf. p. 207).

Putnam, further, was never convinced that the Mbuti had any notion similar to the European notion of God. He disagrees strongly with Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious practice as indicating a belief in a personal god. He suggests that the ritual practices described by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sympathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct cause and effect in their magical practices is the only kind of "religious" belief that can safely be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or villager.

[NET HUNTERS]

The dividing line between magic and religion, according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

The net hunters believe that death is caused by the water animal that is the rainbow that is, sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether

[P. 238-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-0]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold [121] equally well among the archers. It is simply one of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

• 771 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light [575] of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [192] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *toré* society is an in- [176] tegral part of the religious system of the archers and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.
[P 248-3]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 248-c]

and that Toré is applicable as a term for God. 000

As there is confusion, even among the Mbuti, on questions of religious terminology we can do little by pointing to this or that context. We must go a great deal further and try to discover something of the underlying system of values. In the light of such an inquiry we shall be able to assess better the significance behind the outward differences between the two groups; for instance, differences over the performance of ritual, differences in magical practice, and others. Here we cannot be content with a comparison of outward behavior, for we are dealing with a world of symbolism, and in that symbolic world we can fruitfully compare only the values that underlie the symbols. To do so leads us into the very much wider field of study that is broached in the succeeding and final two sections (pp. 249–272). By attempting to understand something of the Mbuti system of values we may not only hope to understand the significant differences between one type of hunting band and another, but also we may hope to get some idea of the real relationship between both kinds of band and their villager neighbors.

771 121 181

1

1: Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
• 771 tion we find in the legends between the natural (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the
772 normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P 270-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.270-C]

malevolence) in the forest world of the Pygmy. 538
In his daily life the Pygmy regards the forest as 181
a kind, good, protective home. At the risk of 771 •
being accused of begging the question, I would 772
like to say that other evidence (song, dance, and the practices of the Mbuti religious associations) also suggests that the Pygmy opposes these two worlds as we would oppose the sacred to the profane. Our understanding of his relationship with the villager tribes that surround him is, I think, considerably increased if we bear this fact in mind and realize its full implications.

I deliberately use the term "supernatural" 538
loosely in order to allow the fact to appear that 771
very few of these legends deal with the supernatural as we generally understand the term. Situations that would, to us, be supernatural—such as villagers turning into elephants or even *satani* changing form at will and luring innocent Pygmies to their doom—to the Pygmy are, in a sense, natural. Like the difference between the sphere of magic and that of religion, and in a way corresponding to them, the dividing line is

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers. 538 771 [828]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There 538 789 182 [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

[P270-0]

538 776 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves indicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice. [789]

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 771 772 I mention one further factor, which in a way may be said to be magical, and that is the power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and

[P. 271-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 271-C]

rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 • 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. [825] 533 538

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex- 789

[p. 292-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
[078] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
• 771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 272-87]

cult subject of sociological study, the magico- 538
religious system. In the absence of such details 121
we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this col- 538
lection of legends there seems to be ample 186
justification for supposing that the rejection of 121
villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

The legends further emphasize the sanctity 538
of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main 778
ways in which the Pygmy maintains his dis- 771
tinctness from the villager. But the importance 171
of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again the structural factor is elusive. 621

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether. 771 • 796 [881] [965] [177]*

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti, and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently lawless, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society. 121 177* 621

[P.30 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative*, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ence and natural life. There is no practical cause—the cause itself is supernatural. I include various *rites de passage* under religion because such rites involve a thoroughgoing belief in the supernatural. The nature of the supernatural, however, varies greatly as seen by Mbuti and as seen by villagers. Both peoples, however, do have a belief in the supernatural; that is, scientifically nonexplicable powers that are invested in another class of beings, without form or substance, which we call *spiritual*. It is belief in these spiritual beings that is the essence of what we here call religion.

CURATIVE MAGIC

As indicated above, we are not here in the least concerned with acts, of either the Mbuti or the villagers, simply because they involve an assumed but scientifically false connection between cause and effect. We use the term "magic" as a translation of the native term, which groups together divers curative activities in the belief that all are equally scientific. Thus the penicillin that cures a sore is magic just as much as the antelope horn that cures a spell of bad hunting.

In trying to assess how far the village world impinges on the forest world in this respect, then, we have to see what situations there are for which the Mbuti have no cure and which they wish to cure, and for which the villagers do have a cure. Or, indeed, we must look to see if the reverse situation exists.

When I say there is little magic in the forest world of the Mbuti, I mean that there are few curative activities, and for the very simple reason that there are relatively few situations that require curing. For most Mbuti who have reached adolescence the life expectancy is good, as is the expectancy of good health. For most minor physiological disorders the Mbuti seem to have effective remedies, some of which are cited in Appendix II together with details of the botanical identification of the plants, wherever I was able to be sure, or reasonably sure, that these were the only plants used. Such remedies cover not only the mild fevers, aches and pains, and sicknesses that may come the way of the Mbuti, but they also cover accidental injury such as may be incurred by falling on a spear, by being attacked by a wild animal, bitten by a snake, stung by bees, or by falling from a tree, breaking or twisting an arm or leg. Such injuries, however, occur remarkably seldom.

For these particular curative activities the Mbuti are acknowledged

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.63]

CHAPTER 6

Village Religion

NKUMBI

Both villagers and Mbuti have notions concerning spirits and spiritual intervention, and associated religious systems. Once again, however, even where the facts coincide, the systems do not. One of the major differences is the lack of ritual ceremony among the Mbuti and the importance of it among the villagers. Thus, though manhood is every bit as important to the Mbuti as to the villagers, there is no formal Mbuti initiation ritual. And although marriage is considered just as sacred, and is recognized by the Mbuti as having profound social implications, it takes place in the forest in an apparently utterly casual manner without any ceremony or ritual joining of the boy and girl or of their families. The ritual attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward death again is totally different. P C 771 • 796

But in the lack of ceremony the villagers once again see a chance for acting as intermediaries, as though this made them indispensable. The Mbuti are continually being subjected to one or another ritual ceremony at the hands of the villagers, even when the affair is entirely domestic and apparently does not in any way directly concern the villagers. C 796 P 796 177*

According to the notion of hereditary ownership, of course, the villagers also have a responsibility, and by virtually assimilating or, better, adopting the Mbuti into the villager tribe they are obliged to adopt them also into the religious system. The parallel kinship system, while never opening the way to complete integration, nonetheless demands an extension of the parallelism in all directions. The villagers have no qualms about this, and it is certainly no indication of friendly intimacy, for in this way they hope to secure the inferior status of the Mbuti not only in the present but also in the afterlife. At the same time the villagers believe they have found another source of control over their wayward servants. C 608 563 P 608 C [626]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

a few yards away, and some village camps, depending upon the circumstances, are actually built still in the shade of the forest, out of sight of the village and its plantations.

But granted this separation of the two worlds, and the fact that when the band (or part of it) comes to the village it disintegrates as such, and if we accept the lack of any economic necessity or political force by which we could explain the relationship, we still have to answer the question as to why a relationship exists and what its true nature is.

This can best be answered after we have seen the nature of the forest world, but it can already be seen that the meeting of the two peoples is somewhat like the meeting of two polar opposites that are irresistibly drawn together. And indeed, such magnetic links between opposites are the only true ones we have found. The point at which the forest and the village truly meet, the focal point of the relationship between the two peoples, is not economic or political, but religious. The nature of the meeting is one of opposition, and this opposition is most clearly expressed in the mutually antagonistic systems of values. Although we have only concerned ourselves with the village world to this point, we have already seen the strength of the village fear of the forest, resulting in their unwillingness to enter it and their consequent "dependence" upon the Mbuti for necessary forest products. This fear is expressed in religious terms by reference to the hostile forest spirits, and the general antagonism of the forest to the village world, witnessed by its reluctance to support village crops. Insofar as the villagers recognize the Mbuti as a forest people they believe them to be somehow aligned with the forest spirits, and therefore to be placated. That does not prevent the villagers from attempting, while placating, to extend some form of control over the Mbuti. Indeed they seem far more concerned about this than they are about the small amount of meat or labor they manage to extract from the Mbuti (see Table 3 for an example of "economic" exchange).

The Mbuti most nearly fall under village control through their own fear of the village (which by its very nature is not only not "of the forest" but is actively hostile to the forest), and through their fear of the powers the villagers claim to have over the supernatural, by witchcraft and sorcery. Quite apart from the historic genesis of the Mbuti/Villager relationship, the very antagonism of their ways of life, together with their territorial propinquity, would be enough to de-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[p. 229]

CHAPTER 13

Magic, Witchcraft and Sorcery

MAGIC

To separate the world of magic from the world of religion is perhaps a dangerous pursuit, and not always profitable. In this instance it is done because we can thereby achieve a significant contrast between the world of the village and the world of the forest. By and large the village world is full of magic, witchcraft and sorcery, leaving little room for what might be considered the more spiritual, or religious, aspects of belief, faith or even hope, and certainly none for worship in the sense of devotion.

The forest world, on the other hand, is remarkably lacking in the former elements, and filled with the latter. But there is an overlapping and, necessarily, a meeting ground where any further overlapping is rejected and which becomes an area of conflict. The Mbuti have their own very simple forms of magic, but no witchcraft or sorcery, which they utterly reject. However, when faced with it in a village context, they are forced to come to terms with it and they have learned to turn these village institutions to their own advantage, in much the same way that they accept other village institutions such as the *nkumbi* initiation.

Increasingly one is aware of a curious ambivalence in the Mbuti attitude toward the village. This is not surprising in itself, when two opposed societies are in such close juxtaposition. But the vehemence of the Mbuti denial of witchcraft and sorcery seems at odds with the meekness of their acceptance, however nominal, of village domination in the village context. The answer lies mainly in the Mbuti attitude to the unknown, an attitude that is optimistic but open. In the realm of the known they can afford to be vehement, and they are perfectly aware of the social values of an institution such as witchcraft, and make use of it without accepting the belief. Similarly with the

Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for these are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.246]

CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [775]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunting in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 181 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo, keti, boru, roho, satani.* [192] These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

This power derives from a single source whose physical manifestation is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*ndura*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essentially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinand'e;*

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [613] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 765

the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, 621
which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of 771 •
the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The associa- 778
tion with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and 181
earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to 182
create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food, showing that it was a kumamolimo, the only outward indication that the God of the Forest had been invoked and was waiting silently nearby, in the trees or in the Lelo itself, ready to enter the camp at night and join his people in their songs of joy and praise. The casual observer might have thought the youngsters were playing a game when they went around from hut to hut with a fishing line and a basket, collecting food from everyone. There was certainly nothing about their demeanor to indicate that this was an essential part of a great act of communion. And if the same observer were told that this was so, he would probably form the opinion that the molimo, whatever it was, could not mean very much if it was treated so lightly and casually.

This, in fact, is the opinion of the villagers. For them the ritual act is the important thing. In their religious rites it is the correct performance of the ceremonial that counts most. If correctly performed it is bound to bring the desired results, regardless of the accompanying thought, if indeed there is any. All attention is focused on the act itself. And it must not only be performed correctly, but with a solemnity that betrays fear.

The difference between the two attitudes is perhaps one of those fine shades of difference that divide magic from religion, though there is so much overlapping that they can seldom be divided in practice. Whereas the villagers believe that the act itself brings about results in a way they cannot explain, which is what we call magic, the BaMbuti do not believe this at all. They believe in a benevolent deity or supernatural power which they identify with the forest. To this they owe as much respect and affection and consideration as they owe to their own parents, and from it they can expect the same in return. So, for the Pygmies, it is not so much the act itself that counts, or the manner in which the act is performed, but the thought that goes with it. The collecting of food from hut to hut is not a

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 771 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which every single member of the group must participate.

765 562 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole concern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

881 765 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was married to Ausu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Ausu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima*, and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 574 888 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her husband. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives, but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 888 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He

881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
• 77 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
[765] festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
[533] dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
182

[P.193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses. 776 [821] [061]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.) 776 772 761 821 [372] [341]

[P. 260-C]

of villager legends. The legends of tradition are 539
somewhat more original and are told in a 128
slightly less summary way but still without any
great show of interest or enthusiasm.

Most of the tales concern the Mbuti and 539
their relationship with the three planes of exis- [82]
tence that they acknowledge: the human, ani- [272]
mal, and supernatural worlds. By various no-
table omissions and commissions they add to our
understanding of their social and religious life.
Whether the tales are villager in origin or not
is for the present purpose not particularly signif-
icant. In practice they are never told the same
way twice. They are often spontaneous crea-
tions arising from a certain set of circumstances,
or they may be adaptations of dimly remem-
bered tales, or of traditional villager tales,
again made to fit certain sets of circumstances.
One of the weaknesses of the present collection
is the absence of such surrounding details.

A full analysis of legends and the circum- 539
stances under which they are told, together 121
with a similar analysis of other Mbuti arts, such
as music and drama (all vitally important
means of expression to the Pygmy), would give

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the
772 normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P. 270-B]

[P.270-C]

malevolence) in the forest world of the Pygmy. 538
In his daily life the Pygmy regards the forest as 181
a kind, good, protective home. At the risk of 771
being accused of begging the question, I would 772
like to say that other evidence (song, dance, and the practices of the Mbuti religious associations) also suggests that the Pygmy opposes these two worlds as we would oppose the sacred to the profane. Our understanding of his relationship with the villager tribes that surround him is, I think, considerably increased if we bear this fact in mind and realize its full implications.

I deliberately use the term "supernatural" 538
loosely in order to allow the fact to appear that 771
very few of these legends deal with the supernatural as we generally understand the term. Situations that would, to us, be supernatural—such as villagers turning into elephants or even *satani* changing form at will and luring innocent Pygmies to their doom—to the Pygmy are, in a sense, natural. Like the difference between the sphere of magic and that of religion, and in a way corresponding to them, the dividing line is

538 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is
776 that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves in-
[789] dicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice.

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 I mention one further factor, which in a way
771 may be said to be magical, and that is the
772 power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and

[P. 271-B]

1: Turnbull E 4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 271-C]

rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact [825] significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. 533 538

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex- 789

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*).

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role,

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-C]

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one of the forest sprites, the *befe*, living with the 776
earthly divinity, Toré, and assisting him in his [761]
lordship of the forest. Far from representing the dead, these sprites are regarded as knaves, to be fought with as such. In legends they are concerned principally with the hunt and frequently try to trick the Pygmy out of his prey to which, as *befe*, they have a right themselves. If they represented the souls of the dead, suggests Schebesta, the Mbuti would hardly be able to take the attitude toward them that they do.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p.192-c]

notions and practices of the archers and their totemism in their belief in *megbe*, the vital force dispensed, in part, by the divinity. It is one of the life principles, distinct from that which becomes a star or a sprite after death. *Megbe* is transformed anew into the totem when the body dies. The divinity possesses it in totality; astral beings are endowed with far more *megbe* than mortals; hence, their greater power and strength which derive from *megbe*. Mortals, then, have to reinforce their store of this vital force to give themselves additional strength and power. There are certain practices by which this may be achieved, notably by the use of bells hung about different parts of the body. When a man dies, his son may put his lips to those of his father to capture the *megbe* as it passes from his body. 761 778 778 761 789

By increasing his store of *megbe* the Mbuti can place himself on the same level as supernatural beings with whom he must have dealings. Schebesta cites legends showing how the Mbuti managed to steal fire from Toré by the use of bells to increase their *megbe*. [773]

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *uda* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulozi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulozi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *lozi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulozi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled. 761 754 888 [192]

In legend the *lozi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *lozi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *lozi* is not seen at his (or her) 761 754 266 [773]

[P. 240-D]

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

765 the men rearranged themselves at the kumamolimo without making
562 any mention of what had happened.

I looked at Moke, and found him staring at me curiously. He understood my question and nodded. Yes, this was what he had told me I was yet to see.

765 There is an old legend that once it was the women who "owned"
562 the molimo, but the men stole it from them and ever since the
773 women have been forbidden to see it. Perhaps this was a way of reminding the men of the origin of their molimo. There is another old legend which tells that it was a woman who stole fire from the chimpanzees or, in yet another version, from the great forest spirit. Perhaps the dance had been in imitation of this. I did not understand it by any means, but somehow it seemed to make sense.

562 The woman is not discriminated against in BaMbuti society as she is in some African societies. She has a full and important role to
[462] play. There is relatively little specialization according to sex. Even the hunt is a joint effort. A man is not ashamed to pick mushrooms and nuts if he finds them, or to wash and clean a baby. A woman is free to take part in the discussions of men, if she has something relevant to say. In fact, it was the apparent absolute dominance of the male in the molimo that had seemed to be the exception.

562 But now even in this the woman had come into her own. She had
372 asserted her prior claim to the fire of life, and her ability to destroy
182 it, to extinguish life. Or had she been destroying it? Perhaps when she was kicking the fire out in all directions among the menfolk she was giving it to them, for them to gather and rebuild and revitalize with the dance of life.

765 I was trying to puzzle it all out when the singing started again,
533 and I saw that the old woman had returned, alone. All the others were in their huts, and the men seemed to be singing as though by their song they could drive the last remaining female away. They sang louder and harder, but she kept circling the kumamolimo, keep-

262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 703 The animals of the forest, which symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting; flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

716 [717] Both pygmies and Negroes believe in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

[P. 338-B]

[ARCHERS]

776 [P. 191-A]
192 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
114 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
774 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[177] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[775] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[776] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

[ARCHERS]

795 The soul, the word for which designates the
761 pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the
[774] sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital force mentioned, *megbe*, changes into the totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

794 Dreams are events that actually befall the
828 soul during sleep, according to the archers. While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and wander at will. In this way God and the dead can manifest themselves during sleep.

795 The northern archers think of a realm for the
[177] souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves, and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the dead and their god are, like the God of the Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of properly Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult
[769] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one of the vital principles takes the form of a star, living with the celestial divinity, remote from the Mbuti world.

[P. 191-B]

824 Pygmies FO4
825 Mbuti
776
774

[For information on personification of "forest" as Provider, on reification of "forest" as a single mighty being or force to be placated, and on projection onto forest of both man-like emotions and impersonal supernatural power and sanctity: see 778.]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-A]

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[P. 191-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 191-C]

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[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
[784] serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé*-
[262] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[753] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
[761] it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is believed to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[775] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

Magic

761
778 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
[P 192-B]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 237-A]

776 God and lord of the *ba-keti*, the dead. Schebesta (1950, 23) says that among the "Sua" he was not able to discover any association of the rainbow, lightning, thunder, or death, with the benevolent "*Jägergottheit*" (Kalisia).

The Putnam material does not attempt to interpret the Mbuti notion of a chthonic God. Among the Epulu net hunters, Kalisia is apparently unknown to the Mbuti, who use the term Mungu both among themselves and when talking with villagers. This God is benevolent, though in some mysterious way that does not detract from his benevolence he is associated with death.

776 Disaster, ill fortune, and lack of success in the chase are usually attributed to *satani* (also 775 *sitani*, *shaitani*), forest sprites akin to the archer *befe* (Schebesta gives the Sua word as *beki*). It seems that Mbuti may become *satani* when they die, but it is not clear by any means that all *satani* were once Mbuti. They are never [761] referred to as though they had been Mbuti, though at death the word *satani* is sometimes used in connection with a vital force leaving

[NET HUNTERS]

776 the body (p. 238). There is also some confusion
775 among the net-hunter Mbuti between the terms *mungu* and *satani*, which at times appear to be interchangeable. Schebesta (1948, 493) says that the local Bira refer to these forest sprites as "*molimo*," the name they also give to their secret association of men.

776 As with the archers, abnormal conditions of the physical world denote the presence of the chthonic God. At such times the net hunters are careful not to expose themselves to his sight, which would bring death, nor to attract his attention by unseemly behavior. He is a benevolent God but one best kept at a distance. There is no evidence of any connection between God and the lineage through the elder, but each hunting band seems to regard Mungu, while God of all Mbuti everywhere, as being particularly concerned with them.[1]

Cult Practices

788 In so far as ritual is a response to uncertainty
182 or crisis, the net hunters have far less need of it than many other peoples. As we show above, their forest environment provides them with

[1] In view of the extremely loose usage of the term *mungu*, I interpret net-hunter expressed attitudes as indicating a belief in a local deity, not necessarily named Mungu, somehow related to the over-all God.

[P 237-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

781 The dividing line between magic and religion,
789 according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

• 775 There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is
[761] some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

761 The net hunters believe that death is caused
776 by the water animal that is the rainbow that is,
[821] sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether
[825] [P. 238-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

to village boys. In some cases the Mbuti's *kpara* may choose him as *karé* to his own son, and in other cases he may see some advantage in having his Mbuti form a *karé* pact with another villager, as this forms an economic and political link, then, between the two villagers. It seems that, generally, *karé* brotherhood is formed between Mbuti and their *kpara's* patrikin, however. It is believed that this places the two in an indissoluble politico-economic relationship for the rest of their lives, a relationship of subordination as far as the Mbuti is concerned, and one that will persist into the afterlife of the same individuals.

The villager concepts of afterlife are not clearly defined, but it is accepted without question that individuals continue to exist after death and may, if qualified by initiation and by adherence throughout life to the tribal code of behavior, join the ancestors, who live together much as they did in the present world, and continue to concern themselves with the present world. It is also accepted without question that there must be Mbuti in the afterworld, just as there are in the present. If one asks why must there be Mbuti, the invariable answer is in terms of the economic dependence of the villagers upon the Mbuti in the present world, the assumption being that the same needs will exist in the afterworld. But the economic relationship is the most easily expressed and recognized, however mistakenly, and is not necessarily therefore the most important. The political relationship is also recognized, though not quite so easily expressed because of the greater incompatibility of the systems of the two peoples. But there is also a ritual relationship which is certainly as powerful as the others, if not more so, and it is just as much a part of the *karé* pact as are the economic and political aspects.

Karé partners are expected to trade with each other, though not necessarily exclusively. This allows for the formation of *karé* brotherhood between individuals who are not in a *kpara*/Mbuti relationship, and is an attempt on the part of the villager to regularize the situation should his Mbuti join a band trading with a neighboring village. To have a *kpara* in one village and a *karé* in another, strategically chosen, is considered equally advantageous by Mbuti and villager. As far as the Mbuti is concerned it provides him with two groups of people who feel under some kind of an obligation toward him, and who need him. As far as the *kpara* is concerned it gives him someone he can effectively claim against should his Mbuti decide to trade in that direction. As far as the villager *karé* is concerned it is another Mbuti

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [175]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunting in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 181 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo, keti, boru, roho, satani.* [192] These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

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This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *begbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magba*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

sued and shot with bow and arrow whenever the opportunity arises but are never the object of organized hunting. Other smaller animals and birds are hunted individually; those that take refuge in holes in trees are smoked out. 224 [262]

Schebesta's account suggests that, despite his proficiency at the hunt, the Pygmy takes care to protect himself against its attendant dangers and disappointments by securing the cooperation of the God of the Forest, and of his ancestors, and by making use of magic. He carries charms, observes various taboos, and performs certain rites—mostly sympathetic. It is not clearly stated, however, exactly which rites and charms are used by which particular Pygmies; there is obviously a great deal of variation. Schebesta clearly indicates, however, that among the archers there seems to be a considerable amount of hunting magic and ritual, witnessed by their use of the special whistles (Efe: *segbe*), magic formulas, invocation, and ritual practices he describes. 224 [189] [176] [169]

[P. 173-C]

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 22 The direct contribution of the children to the food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The *toré* society, however, widens the field of Mbuti social contact because it embraces, according to Schebesta (1948, 492 ff.), villagers and Pygmies throughout the Ituri, being basically the same as other societies going under different names, such as *anyoto*, *nebeli*, *molimo*, and *lusomba* (the latter two among the Bira-Sua). The common denominator of all these societies is the common belief in the bush demon, the divinity of the Mbuti hunters. The *toré* society, as seen by Schebesta, is thus the origin of similar villager societies in the district. It has a particular significance for the Mbuti who claim it as their own.

Although women are normally excluded, the Mbuti, says Schebesta, admit aged women. The villagers admit only one old woman who is charged with the duty of cooking for the men. Further, he says, the society terrifies the villager women (cf. Anne Putnam) which is not the case with the Mbuti. The society always meets outside the village, in the bush or in a remote, dark area of the forest. Schebesta (1948, 498) witnessed no exclusively Mbuti meeting of the *toré* society, only mixed Mbuti and villager, and exclusively villager, meetings.

The meeting place contains the hut of *toré*, in which are kept the musical instruments used during the ceremonies and on the march. The number and type of these instruments vary, says Schebesta, the commonest being a long trumpet made of wood, slightly curved, some-

[P 183-D]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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[P.184-A]

P times called *lusomba* in Schebesta's account. All
Z these instruments, he claims, however, produce
575 sounds in imitation of the leopard. The archers
346 do not carry the tattoo marks, such as those
534 worn by the Bira-Sua, which resemble marks of
P a leopard's claw.
[304]

A further inquiry made among the archers in
P 1949 confirmed these observations (Schebesta,
Z 1952, 279) and added some supplementary
575 facts. The *toré* hut is to be found near or in the
[346] camp itself. Women and children may attend
the *toré* ceremonies organized by the men. The
"presidents" are an old man and an old woman.
P The meetings are held in honor of Kalisia, God
Z of the Bush, who is, during the ceremony, im-
[176] plored for help in the hunt. The society, Sche-
besta concludes, has a religious aspect. This
P same study revealed the use of three wooden
Z trumpets (*apadia*); a "sonorous pot" (*bodzo*), in
[534] fact a large clay vessel, and the tube through
which the performer sings into it (*luma*); and
three small whistles (*ilitodo*).

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without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a
religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 197
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 189-A]

000 this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

114 Schebesta (1950) bases his detailed study of Mbuti religion on an eight-month sojourn among the southeast archers on his second visit to the Ituri. He also mentions other information collected during his two visits which is of relevance to the net hunters and the Kango farther west. Here we are concerned only with his archer material.

The Chthonic God

• 776 Among the Efe archers Schebesta found the
192 name Toré, applied to what he designates as
184 "*Buschgott*," or God of the Undergrowth. Other names frequently heard are Muri-muri, Mbali, Muku, Kalisia, Bi'i, Ba'atsi, Epilipili, Pucho-pucho, Matu, and Lodi. Like Toré, Muri-muri is found among all archers. Those to the north describe both Toré and Muri-muri as a small, Mbuti-like forest dweller, to meet whom is death because he is the destroyer of all. The central archers distinguish more clearly between Toré and Muri-muri. The latter, who is short in stature, is sometimes termed Toré *bo'ichu* (Costermans, 1938, Toré *bo'iko*). The former is,

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• 776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
76 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P 189-B]

[ARCHERS]

[p. 189-c]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates 776 the presence of Toré: mental confusion or dis- [827] order, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad [828] luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is [777] absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and human beings, of life and death. Everything belongs to him because he created everything, but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is [782] offended by failure to make him offerings from the chase, by quarrels within the band, by disrespect for elders, by infraction of lineage exogamy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices. He punishes such actions or omissions by caus- [784] ing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards on the community (or individual) concerned, by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

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ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore. 776 177 [114]

Schebesta believes that, though different groups of archers give precedence to one name or another, there is only one God of the Undergrowth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning. 776 82 [184] [825]

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good. 776 [171]

Cult Practices

776 782

A number of practices are associated with the

[P. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
• 776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *toré* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
821 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
534 blowing of the *segbe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *segbe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his
782 "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
224 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
372 the apparently ancient *begbe* beat hunt, as is mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

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782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as *"Mugu! daó a iye!"* ("*Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in- [224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to [769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the 782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *sulia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190 - B]

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[P.190-C]

some individual among Toré's children. In his 782
anger he closes the forest so that the hunters can 776
kill no game. Under the circumstances all the 224
weapons in the camp are brought out and placed
in a pile in the center of the clearing. The hunters stand around in a circle, each with an arm held over the weapons. As described by Schebesta, the transgressor, who had divided game he had caught without waiting for the elder, brandished a live chicken over the center of the circle praying for success in the hunt. In the invocation he mentioned Bali (local name for the God of the Undergrowth), "fathers," "grandfathers," and the name of his own father who had apparently been an outstanding hunter. Then the elder cut off the head of the chicken, sprinkled blood on the weapons and the arms of the hunters, and threw the fluttering carcass onto the ground. Everyone watched which way it moved, and when it finally fell with the [787]
stump of its neck pointing toward the forest, this was taken as a good omen and there was a

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shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P. 190-D]

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[P. 191-A]

776 function, any more than has the whole ritual of
192 initiation. *Toré*, according to Costermans, is, if
114 anything, a spirit cult. The *toré* are spirits of the dead, known under different names such as *toré bo ichu*, *toré bo iko*, *toré ba iza*, and are clearly differentiated from the godhead. Sacrifice to Toré may take two forms, writes Costermans, *toré lusi* and *toré luba* (*lusi*, invoke; *luba*, throw, offer), and is practiced more by Lese villagers than by the archers, who practice it only rarely, for the hunt. Costermans, far from denying that the Mbuti possess a notion of God, affirms that they do, as do the villagers, but insists that it is dissociated from the *toré* cult described by Schebesta.

Death and Afterlife

761 The Pygmy notion of soul appears complex
704 and confused to Schebesta (1950, 90; 1952,
171 332). He attributes the confusion to heavy
[170] borrowing from the villagers, the Mbuti originally having little interest in life after death. There is a distinction between body, shade, and soul, respectively, *ela* (or *eda*), *tedi*, and *boru e'i* (or *borupi* in Efe). The Lese villagers make the same distinction. Breath, *ekeu*, is a vital force, extinguished at death. The Mbuti believe that
[705] shades become *befe*, or forest sprites, and the
[706] villagers claim that they become *lodi* or *keti*, phantoms.

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[P. 191-C]

the Mbuti world. The other principle becomes one of the forest sprites, the *befe*, living with the earthly divinity, Toré, and assisting him in his lordship of the forest. Far from representing the dead, these sprites are regarded as knaves, to be fought with as such. In legends they are concerned principally with the hunt and frequently try to trick the Pygmy out of his prey to which, as *befe*, they have a right themselves. If they represented the souls of the dead, suggests Schebesta, the Mbuti would hardly be able to take the attitude toward them that they do. 775 776 [761]

Death may also be regarded by the Pygmy as a punishment visited on man for one of three sins. God forbade his children to look at him, but one of his daughters was overcome by curiosity, and death resulted. (This legend is actually found more frequently among the net hunters than the archers.) God forbade his children to follow him on a certain path, but they became impatient and followed, and death resulted. God (Muri-muri) left fire in the care of his mother, Matu; but a Pygmy stole it from her and she died from cold, so Muri-muri condemned all men to die. This curiosity, impatience, and greed are severally cited as causes of death. 761 773 [184]

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

[R 191-D]

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[P. 193-A]

114 sion, based as it often is on data provided by unreliable informants but passed as certain fact (Boelaert). According to Costermans, Schebesta's conclusions result from his selection of data to suit his (admitted) preconceived theories. Further, Schebesta relies, as he himself says, on the evidence provided by legends which he accepts without exercising any of the caution necessary for the proper use of such material. Possibly many of the legends and the associated concepts are indeed of Lese origin.

The Godhead

771 The Chthonic God of the Undergrowth
• 776 plainly does not stand by itself, not even when supported by an embryonic "*Totengottheit*," which Schebesta finds among the archers but believes to be of little significance. From an examination of Mbuti mythology and a comparative study of religious terms, Schebesta concludes that there is a third, and important if vaguely conceptualized, "*Himmelsgottheit*."

[ARCHERS]

771 Mbuti religion thus resolves into a dualism, if
776 not so neatly as it would were Toré, as Costermans (1938) believes, always associated with misfortune and death. For Schebesta the dualism is manifest in both the sky God and the earth God, but not between them.

776 He finds Toré, as we have seen, to be associated with both life and death, good and bad, fortune and misfortune. Even in his most benevolent moments, Toré seems to be necessarily associated with Matu, personification of menstrual blood and its connotations of sorcery and death, if not the personification of the dreaded rainbow itself.

The earth God is addressed as "father" or "grandfather," but the names used for the sky God, despite their diversity from one area to another, all have one common characteristic—their linguistic association with words connoting brightness, movement, or creation. The sky world is thought of as being much the same as the earth world, though much embellished in mythology. The celestial God is an old man,

[P.193-B]

[P.193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses. 776 [821] [761]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.) 776 772 761 821 [372] [841]

[ARCHERS]

There is no attempt to rationalize the fact that the force emanating from the sky God works both good and evil; it is just accepted as a fact. But it is exactly this fact that is the thread binding the various notions that form the Mbuti magico-religious system. Magic itself, good or bad, can be practiced only through the use of this force. The personal sky God himself is, for Schebesta, the supreme magician, manifest in different and opposing ways, whose power is everywhere. He is too remote to be the object of any cult but is, in a sense, represented among human beings by the lineage elders, inasmuch as they inherit the power of the original ancestors; hence, the respect and obedience that is their due. 776 • 771 | 761 |

If the outward manifestations of Pygmy religion mainly concern the God of the Undergrowth, if the cult practices seem overgrown with magic and superstition, and if there is any appearance of polytheism in the Mbuti rationale, all is resolved (for Schebesta, at least) into a consistent monotheism by the basic Mbuti belief in vital force.

[P 193-D]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P.226-A]
534

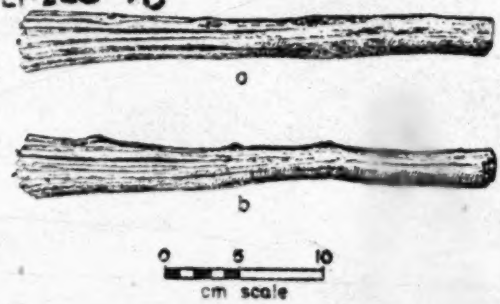

FIG. 52. Split clappers, *banja*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung.
575 Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in
796 that it is known by all that the songs effect
[796] some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated."

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of his Sua material are net hunters or archers. But, except for his remarks on the Kango and "village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the extreme west of the Ituri forest, he seems to have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti. His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184]
greatly from that for the archers. The names 176
given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti, Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neighboring villagers. According to Schebesta, Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [224]
owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benevolent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt, guiding their weapons and assisting the beat, preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187]
is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes known to the elder, telling the hunter where to find game.

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776 • close the forest to them, until they make the 782 propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are expected to make offerings to Kalisia from their [178] food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this purpose (*ende kela*). The hunters may less ceremoniously throw offerings of food into the forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right mind would fail to make these propitiatory sacrifices: "*à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira*" (Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Schebesta does not always identify his source of 114 information. However, from a number of ad- [124] missions such as that noted above, we must assume that his informants were frequently villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied on the question-and-answer technique among both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933, 171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776 forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171] villagers, who regard him in no way as benevolent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity Songe (the moon), with its own remote world, as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 237-A]

776 God and lord of the *ba-keti*, the dead. Schebesta (1950, 23) says that among the "Sua" he was not able to discover any association of the rainbow, lightning, thunder, or death, with the benevolent "*Jägergottheit*" (Kalisia).

The Putnam material does not attempt to interpret the Mbuti notion of a chthonic God. Among the Epulu net hunters, Kalisia is apparently unknown to the Mbuti, who use the term Mungu both among themselves and when talking with villagers. This God is benevolent, though in some mysterious way that does not detract from his benevolence he is associated with death.

776 775 Disaster, ill fortune, and lack of success in the chase are usually attributed to *satani* (also *sitani*, *shaitani*), forest sprites akin to the archer *befe* (Schebesta gives the Sua word as *beki*). It seems that Mbuti may become *satani* when they die, but it is not clear by any means that all *satani* were once Mbuti. They are never [761] referred to as though they had been Mbuti, though at death the word *satani* is sometimes used in connection with a vital force leaving

[NET HUNTERS]

776 the body (p. 238). There is also some confusion
775 among the net-hunter Mbuti between the terms *mungu* and *satani*, which at times appear to be interchangeable. Schebesta (1948, 493) says that the local Bira refer to these forest sprites as "*molimo*," the name they also give to their secret association of men.

776 As with the archers, abnormal conditions of the physical world denote the presence of the chthonic God. At such times the net hunters are careful not to expose themselves to his sight, which would bring death, nor to attract his attention by unseemly behavior. He is a benevolent God but one best kept at a distance. There is no evidence of any connection between God and the lineage through the elder, but each hunting band seems to regard Mungu, while God of all Mbuti everywhere, as being particularly concerned with them.[1]

Cult Practices

788 In so far as ritual is a response to uncertainty
182 or crisis, the net hunters have far less need of it than many other peoples. As we show above, their forest environment provides them with

[1] In view of the extremely loose usage of the term *mungu*, I interpret net-hunter expressed attitudes as indicating a belief in a local deity, not necessarily named Mungu, somehow related to the over-all God.

[P 237-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

788 any other god or spiritual being for protection
[782] or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A
number of symbolic actions performed as parts
[224] of technological operations in order to smooth
over the disturbance caused by some kind of
change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in
which the youngest male descendant of the
hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and
opens the operations dividing the meat for
consumption (cf. p. 207).

771 Putnam, further, was never convinced that
[776] the *Mbuti* had any notion similar to the Euro-
pean notion of God. He disagrees strongly with
Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious
practice as indicating a belief in a personal god.
[789] He suggests that the ritual practices described
by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sym-
pathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct
cause and effect in their magical practices is the
only kind of "religious" belief that can safely
be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or
villager.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

The dividing line between magic and religion, according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

The net hunters believe that death is caused by the water animal that is the rainbow that is, sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether

[P. 238-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-C]

the water animal is the cause of all death or whether it causes only unexplained deaths. It seems that it may not be connected with "normal" deaths—deaths that do not, in fact, cause any particular crisis as far as the community as a whole is concerned.

761 M6

According to Mrs. Putnam's notes,[1] the water animal that is the rainbow is also the *molimo*. She asked a direct question as to whether this was so or not and was given an affirmative answer by one of her most reliable informants. She says that his manner seemed to indicate further that she had asked the right question. According to the same informant the *molimo* comes out the day following the death of some important person, regardless of whether the death was by natural or other means. The informant also referred to a dance in which the men "chased" the *molimo*, but this evidently was not one of the serious *molimo* dances as it was not fatal for women to see it. It seems certain that the water animal and the rainbow are

[535]

[NET HUNTERS]

two manifestations of the same spiritual being and that both this being and the *molimo* are in some way connected with death. The former causes death (whether in some or all cases is not known), but the latter seems to be different in that it appears only the day following death and can restore normality to the community in crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis. The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo* "animal" in times of crisis and brings it physically into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings of food, which is consumed by members of the *molimo*, and by dance and song. 761 776 [782]

No information is given as to any belief in the origin of death, or of any human failings that might cause it other than violation of the *molimo* by a woman or of the *elima* by a man. Infringement of rules of exogamy and other taboos may or may not cause death; individual opinion among the net hunters varies considerably on such matters. 761 784

According to local informants, the only villagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, Ndaka, and Bali. 776 171

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but not necessarily of death. When lightning comes at night, campfires may be covered so that the 821 [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esamba* for *lusumba*.

[P 238-0]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241 - A]

761 work, the victim dies. If the victim himself
754 awakes and recognizes the *lozi* who is killing
266 him, or if he is bewitched by unwittingly sharing his food with a *lozi*, he can save himself by calling on that person to come to him. If the *lozi* comes he will be saved, otherwise he will die. But there are no instances that such ever happened.

761 This belief seems associated with death and
754 with people who are near to that particular
177 crisis. There is a recorded instance of two men, a Pygmy and a villager, who were both accused of being *lozi*. Some time later the villager died in the arms of the Pygmy; since then the village family have held that particular Pygmy in great respect. Among the Mbuti of this area, [538] however, the existence of *ulozi* seems to be of little, if any, practical significance, except as subject matter for storytellers.

The Godhead

• 776 The Putnam material does not support any
114 theory of a celestial God such as that described
[184] by Schebesta for both the archers and the net hunters. Putnam denies that there is any evi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-0]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

184 53 There seem to be no significant points of divergence between archers and net hunters under this heading, except in theory and interpretation of their rationale. In music the archers make much more use of instruments than do the net hunters. Schebesta does not give details of the types of archer song such as given for the net hunters, which does not mean, of course, that such a classification into sacred and secular, for men and for women, does not hold equally well among the archers. It is simply one [121] of the many points on which we need more field data, and it may prove to be an extremely important point when it comes to trying to unravel the contradictions, implicit and explicit, in the material on religious life.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

721 184 114 Here, as in the previous section, the similarity of fact is far greater than the dissimilarity, though this may be obscured by the contradictory nature of various interpretations of the facts. It is here that Schebesta's work is more open to criticism, as it is here that his bias is strongest and here where the material most easily lends itself to interpretation in the light of bias. Costermans (1938) raises an extremely [975] important question when he questions Schebesta's assertion that the *toré* society is an in- [192] tegral part of the religious system of the archers [176] and that Toré is applicable as a term for God.
[P. 248-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To the villager the masked dancers described in the account of the 1954 *nkumbi* (Turnbull, 1957, 193) represent the *ngosa* bird, indicating the presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the bullroarer represents supernatural power. The various taboos applied to the *ganza* express village subordination to that power which is sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from staying in the camp over night even though it meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further scope for getting out of control. The *nkumbi* places the villager initiates in a definite relationship to the supernatural. It is closely connected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no ancestor cult. To them the masked dancers were the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bullroarer was a piece of wood whirled around on the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird" and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti, were neither "real" nor did they represent any reality. They were empty and rather ineffective theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by conversation among the ganza at night and in their constant burlesque.

[P. 254-B]

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
• 776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[P 257-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 257-c]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their unity. Their means of communication are special songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in terms of explicit supplication. They merely call on the God of the Forest by constant repetition of his name (frequently changing from one name to another, it seems for the sake of variety and euphony), and an occasional recitation of his qualities as the source of all good in the Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the *molimo* horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

796 776 778 782 595 796 776 778 782 533 595

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women are members, and participation is compulsory in one's own camp or when visiting another. Communication with the forest God is again established by means of songs, special and sacred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The exception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the initiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

575 796 [885] [533] [776] [778] [858] 881 885 224 575

[P. 257-D]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such. 575 182 796 778 778 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti. 575 177 [439] [881] 554 [171] [181]

1, [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Among the few legends commending the good
597 mother and father, the good brother and sister,
593 only one takes the opposite approach and tells
• 776 of the bad mother. I include it in this section because the emphasis seems to be on the thoughtlessness of the mother rather than the trickery of the *satani*.

A Pygmy, his wife, and his child, were all asleep. In the middle of the night the child woke up and began crying. He cried and he cried. He was crying from hunger, because his mother had not fed him. At last the mother got up and gave the child a plantain. Then she went back to lie down and they all fell asleep again. A little while later the child woke up again and started crying again because he was still hungry. He cried and he cried, but his father and his mother went on sleeping.

A *satani* arrived. "Why are you crying, my child?" he asked. "I am crying because I am hungry!" replied the child. "My mother hasn't given me enough to eat and she won't wake up."

So the *satani* fixed two pots of plantains, and lots of meat. He put them on the fire to cook. When it was all ready he put the food in front of the child and the child ate, and ate, and ate. "Oh! This is good!" said the child, and he ate still more. When he finished there was still a pot of plaintains and lots more meat, so the *satani* said, "Eat some more, my child, then

[P.263-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 263-C]

you will not wake up hungry again." So the child ate some more. 539

At last the child had finished all but a few plantains and a little meat. "Oh! How full I am!" he said, holding his little stomach. "I have had enough, really." But the *satani* pointed to the plantains and the meat that still remained and said, "You must eat some more, or you will surely wake up hungry!" "But I have eaten all I can, really!" said the child. "Eat!" said the *satani*. 577 593 776.

The child took a plantain and slowly began to eat it, then suddenly BAM! He burst. The *satani* vanished. The mother and father woke with a start and saw the dead body of their little child. "Oh, what can have happened?" cried the mother. And there was much grief.

But the father knew what had happened, the mother had let the child go to bed hungry. So the next night when they lay down to sleep, the father slept only with his eyes. In the middle of the night the *satani* arrived to see if there were any more children who had been allowed to go to bed hungry, so that he could feed them until they burst. The father leapt out of his bed and seized the *satani* and cried, "You devil! You killed our son because his mother allowed him to go to bed hungry!"

And the father killed the *satani* completely.

Basi

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

539 828 577 888 539 828 577 888 732 [776] • [682] 539 577 888 732

[P264-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539
776

There is another link between the animal and the supernatural worlds in the alleged existence of "water animals." These water animals are not particularly dangerous spirits; they appear rather as vehicles to transport the Pygmy from the natural world to the supernatural. There is a legend told by the Epulu Pygmies of a man who was known, they say, to their fathers.

> There was once a man called Ngoyi. He was tired of all his relatives and said: "I can't live with you any longer. I'm going to live on my own." And off he went to the river named Tato, where he disappeared into the water. He called out, "I'm going to stay here in the water, and you won't be able to see me any more."
>
> His family had all followed him to the river and asked: "Are you really going to stay there in the water?" He replied, "Yes." He called his children and took them into the water with him. They all disappeared.
>
> Now Ngoyi was a clever worker of wood, and, if you go to the river today and throw in a piece of wood, he will make it into whatever you want. His children are there also, and during the day time they come out to play. And even though they disappear when you come near, you can always hear them talking.
>
> *Basi*

Another legend tells how two brothers were crossing a stream, and one fell in. The other

[P. 268-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 268-C]

thought his brother had been drowned, and returned to camp with the news, but actually he had become a water animal. Some weeks later the land brother saw his water brother and tried to tempt him home, so glad was he to see him still alive. But the water brother caught hold of him and pulled him into the water, so the land brother also became a water animal. 539 776.

And the two Water Brothers stayed in the stream; they stayed in the stream and never came out again.

A third legend connects the rainbow with these water animals.

Some girls were off cutting wood. They crossed a stream by a fallen tree. But really the tree was the "bad water animal, called *klima*, the Rainbow." When returning they all crossed, except the slowest of the girls, and a man who waited for her. As these two were halfway across, the dead tree, which was really the rainbow which was really a water animal, suddenly dived down into the water, carrying them with it. Later on, the couple was seen sitting on a rock in the middle of the stream, but never again after that.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Quite distinct from the water animals are the forest spirits which these Pygmies call *satani*. They are, unlike the water animals, capable of being dealt with. Their outstanding characteristic is an excess of cleverness amounting to the grossest trickery. They molest the Pygmies on every possible occasion, stealing their food, devouring them in anthropophagous orgies. The Pygmies resort to cleverness of the same order. It is perfectly possible, though difficult, for a Pygmy to outwit a *satani*, even to kill one. But one of the legends warns against imitating a *satani's* ways too closely.

539
776

One day a Pygmy and his child went for a walk. They collected some *eseli* nuts. On the way they met a *satani*. The *satani* put a nut on the child's head and split the nut with a machete. "Oh!" said the Pygmy, "that's like the *nkumbi* circumcision school. Tomorrow, I'll collect some more nuts and try that."

The next day he went with his child to the same place and collected some more *eseli* nuts. He put one of the nuts on his child's head and hit it with his machete. He killed his child dead. The *satani*, who had been watching, said, "See! You have killed your child."

The Pygmy left his child's body there and went down to the river. The *satani* went with him. The *satani* threw his spear into the water. The Pygmy said, "I'd like to do that!" But, when he tried, the

[P. 268-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.269-A]

539 spear went all over the place, everywhere except into
• 996 the water. He said: "When you do it, *satani*, it goes straight, yet when I do it it goes all over the place." They left each other.

Basi

Pygmies become *satani* far less frequently than they become water animals, but it can happen. The woman who gossiped became a *satani*. The following tale tells how a certain Pygmy was driven to the same fate by his relatives.

There was once a young Pygmy whose name was Mambalia. His relations kept whipping and whipping him until at last he could bear it no more and ran away into the forest. His family followed him, but he built a huge fire and said: "I am not going back—never!" And he ran even farther away. His relations returned to their camp.

After that, whenever Mambalia heard voices he ran farther away still, until finally, he said: "Now this is my part of the forest, and nobody must come here. I'm going to stay here all by myself."

He lived in a hole in a tree where no one could find him. He became very, very powerful. He became a *satani*. And now he is an old, old man.

Basi

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

538 *Satani* are very popular with the Mbuti as
subject matter for their legends, and they let
• 776 their imaginations run riot. A *satani* can do almost anything except kill a really clever Pygmy. They are used frequently as excuses for failure in the hunt or in honey gathering. When a Pygmy has found a good honey tree and has managed to consume most of the honey himself, his excuse to the camp for not bringing back more will be that he was waylaid by a *satani* who was so tricky that he turned into the Pygmy's grandmother, so he had to hand over all his honey, or something to that effect. (This excuse I heard myself.) Rather than examine more *satani* legends, we now briefly review the collection as here presented and draw such conclusions as we can.

538 Any conclusions are necessarily general and
tentative and are of course based not only on
128 a knowledge of the entire collection of legends, only a bare tenth of which is reproduced here, but of the Mbuti themselves. Also it must be emphasized that we are dealing with only one particular band of Pygmies, a net-hunting group in the Epulu District of the Ituri Forest.

My classification of the legends into three groups, which is quite arbitrary and satisfactory

[P 269- B]

[P.271-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
789 adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose that a standard folklore is associated with magical belief, for magical belief is no more than a socially accepted way of explaining the otherwise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly seen, it is invented and at least clearly understood. With the Mbuti such is not the case.
[76] There is no common explanation of death or
[154] illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man
[154] invents his own legends; he invents his own explanations for abnormal occurrences. The
538 nearest approach to standard mythological
776 rationalization is perhaps the popularly accepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are not malevolent (they do not wish disease and death on people). Though it is their nature to be dangerous, they are dangerous only when seen. They are essentially tangible. They work in a perfectly understandable way and can be counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

538 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is
• 776 that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves in-
[789] dicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice.

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 I mention one further factor, which in a way
771 may be said to be magical, and that is the
772 power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and
[P. 271-B]

824 Pygmies FO4
825 Mbuti
• 776
774

[For information on personification of "forest" as Provider, on reification of "forest" as a single mighty being or force to be placated, and on projection onto forest of both man-like emotions and impersonal supernatural power and sanctity: see 778.]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti considers the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, [illegible] he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government *station de chasse*.

776 two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time 222
throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti [252]
to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of [224]
the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark [482]
tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There [602]
is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much [422]
more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but 222
insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are fre- 533
quently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the 789
elima songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity, [778] [776]

222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1], both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" ("*bachei ba bo*"), "for elephants are like villagers" ("*bambongu bua sopilabatu*"). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 -- Analyst]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They be-
186 gan to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man
825 and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing
245 our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they
186 die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He
825 walked with two spears.[3] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent
245 someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten
-776 all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539
186 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to
829 the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [3] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti convey a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 222 571 439 rest I put in a place where the tree had two arms [i.e., in a fork]. I sang, "Ah! There is only a little honey, but I shall give it all to my *kpara*." I came down.

"Ah! My Mbuti, what are you doing here?" My *kpara* looks at the basket.

"Ah! My master. I came to search for my honey, but there is only a little of it. It is a bad year. It is heavy work. You must go back with my honey; if I get any more I shall come with it."

The *kpara* took my honey with him and returned to the village to say that he had eaten all my honey. His stupidity! [*Ndamdama nda'e!* or *Mbafu yaké!*] When he had gone I quickly climbed up above and I collected all the honey from the place I had put it, and I came down to return to the camp and share it with all my relatives. I walked, I walked, I walked. I arrived at the big river. Darkness began to come. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?" I climbed up a big tree and lay there.

539 222 776 Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke up. A little way off I saw two firebrands. "Ah! Who is walking in the middle of the night like that, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit." I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice. "Ah! My child, where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very, very old woman. I was surprised. "Ha! Grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost the trail."

I remained quiet, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree. It was truly an evil spirit, but he had changed into my grandmother. I sneezed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"Yes, Grandmother. I am here. I was searching for honey, but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Oh, child, you have done badly, for when you did not return I thought you were dead and I left camp to search for you, and I have found you well. You have done very badly toward me. Give me my honey."

"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, I, myself. We shall return together."

"Nonsense! You are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with my honey. Give it." I was afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit. I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more." I threw down more. "Give me more."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself is hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an *even greater fear of the forest from then on.*

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

use of the village fear and respect for forest spirits, but it also makes use of the village love for asserting their superiority and their paternalism. It even makes use of the village concept of kinship obligations, and the respect and obedience owed to a grandmother.

The occasion on which the legend was told was the return of Cephu to the camp, after a short absence in the village, laden down with village foods. It was known that he had gone empty-handed, and it was equally known that he was not on good enough terms with any of the villagers to get such a handout for nothing, that he was too lazy to have worked for reward and too wary of pursuit to steal. However, theft seemed the only answer, so he was asked from whom he had stolen the food. Always a great dramatist, Cephu told the following story in answer, and it quickly became a favorite.

"I am only a poor Mbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my village master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted. I caught *sondu* and *lendu* and *mboloko* and *sindula*, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh *mongongo* leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village."

This much everyone knew to be completely false, but the implied ridicule of the villagers who would believe it was not lost.

"But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape because I am strong, and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Mbuti can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again, and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother.

"'A'i, Cephu, where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me.

"Now, my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, an Mbuti, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager. I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me,

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

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771 nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage
778 of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

771 This power derives from a single source whose physical manifesta-
778 tion is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the
824 vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*ndura*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

778 Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain
776 disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

828 The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essen-
tially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with
[826] conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

771 The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general
778 concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 761 776 828 [772] 776 828 150

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomes* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers. 534 [535] [765]

776 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try.
828 He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine
159 choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was
534 not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However,
776 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if
778 the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place
[224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778 A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as
761 for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh
826 and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It
[192] is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as re-
778 quiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed
761 out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape
826 through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti
831 recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the
[535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major
[765] feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

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ROHO

The personality of the individual dies with the body and is the combination of a particular *boru* and *pepo*. It is associated with the heart and is spoken of as being hot or cold, sometimes as noisy or quiet. Hot and noisy are generally bad qualities, cool and quiet are good. But properly controlled heat and noise can be useful, though dangerous, for both are sometimes thought of as being "strong." The state of an individual's *roho* may be cited as justification for his actions, and nobody can gainsay him, for it is bad to go against one's *roho*. However, a man or woman who is constantly calling on his or her *roho* to justify antisocial acts such as laziness or quarrelsomeness may be said to have a bad *roho*, and will be shunned. 828 778 [192]

SATANI (also *Shaitani*)

This is a concept derived from the villagers, and is for the Mbuti more in the realm of folklore than belief, for *satani* are, to the villagers, malevolent and dangerous forest spirits. The Mbuti use the term in this sense only when recounting a village tale or a tale concerning villagers, for they essentially disbelieve in such evil spirits. However, they sometimes use the term, particularly if talking in Ngwana (to which language it belongs), as synonymous with *keti*. An additional complication: When talking in Bira, they may use *keti* (a Bira word) in the sense of the village Bira, which is the same as the Ngwana *satani*, or evil spirits. However, in the forest context there is no concept of *keti* or *satani* as conceived by the villager, the only spirits being the *keti* as described above, invisible mirror images of the Mbuti themselves, no better and no worse. (Conversely, in the village world all the spirits of the forest are malevolent and dangerous; there is no concept parallel to that of the Mbuti concept of forest spirit.) 177* 776 [192]

THE GODHEAD

As the Mbuti themselves strenuously refuse to admit there is any sense in trying to describe what we here call "the godhead" unless you have seen it, there is not much sense in our trying to do so. Rather, by looking at various aspects of Mbuti life we can discern the exis- 776 778

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
[621] [628] posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 776 778 184 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré, e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- 114
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon 176
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: 539

Ema songé, ema, ema; okinu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowers (1962, 70) of a song of the 171
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

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ahe me daphi umana'o, me bu boki ngbokbu, kumande me pisibi.
I quickly climbed up again, I took all the honey from the place where I had put it.

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me sini ya dodo a sis n'apa a kapa banama bame.
I came down to return to the camp and shared it with everyone.

me tambi, me tambi, me tambi. me kidi apus libo mangbo.
I walked, I walked, I walked, I arrived at the big river.

tokwaba a wanzi piha. me lufu. "ha! tudu a me pedi a me mandula? me ano mabo?"
Darkness began to settle. I said, "Ha! Is night catching me in the middle of the forest like this? What shall I do?"

me daphi kus me mangbo, me langi neko.
I climbed up into a big tree, I lay there.

ame mangondo moki liso. me oni kurahwa ias ebaré.
Halfway through the night I heard a sound and woke. I saw far away two firebrands.

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"mondoa na tamba kifa, na ias ebara bende? nde ketiba!"
"Who is walking in the middle of the night, with two firebrands? It is an evil spirit!"

me kobi nengo. m'oki liso kali.
I remained completely quiet. I heard a woman's voice.

"a miki mamo, miki mamo, miki mamo mu ma?" liso a tata, mozee nengo.
"Ah! My child, my child; where is my child?" It was the voice of my grandmother, a very old person.

me moboki nengo. "Ah! tatamua kabe me amemangondo? nde tata mamo nengo?"
I was very afraid. "Ah! My grandmother is looking for me in the middle of the night like this? Is it really my grandmother?"

"ah miki mamo mu ma? ou moli a pedi, ou a bungi?"
"Ah! Where is my child? Either a leopard has caught him or he has lost his way?"

me kobi nengo, akini ias ebaré akidi tina me.
I kept quiet completely, but the two firebrands came right up underneath the tree.

nde keti nengo, akini akeoki tatamamo.
It was truly an evil spirit, but it had turned into my grandmother.

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me tuni kisio. "Ah! miki mamo ama neko?"
I succeed. "Ah! My child is up in the tree?"

"e'i tata, me ma be'i. me ka bi boki tudaha a me pedi a phe."
"Yes, Grandmother, I am here. I was searching for honey but darkness caught me on the trail."

"Ah! miki, ue mani sinama. ue a bia sisia abende neku, me toli akaba'o; me tondi mota'o. ue si sinama nengo. pisa boki ndamo."
"Ah! Child, you have done badly. When you did not return, I thought you were dead and I left to search for you; I found you strong. You have done very badly towards me. Give me my honey."

"ah! tata, nde tida'i; me kumbandi sasia kumekadi."
"Ah! Grandmother, it is very heavy. I shall carry it for you, we shall return together."

"nabe, uache todahwa; ue lika ma. ma sia na boki ndamo. pikisa."
"Nonsense, you are afraid of the night. You stay here. I shall return with the honey. Give it."

me che'i nengo gande ma upi a bi keti.
I was very afraid, because I knew it was an evil spirit.

me maké boki na dodo. "pikasa ndetina, pikasa ndetina."
I threw some honey down. "Give me more, give me more."

me maké ndetina. "pikasa ndetina."
I threw down more. "Give me more."

"ndetina a manda, tata." "nabe, pikisa, miki masinama."
"There is no more, Grandmother." "Nonsense, give, my bad child."

me che'i nengo, ma maké bokbui me lufu:
I was very afraid, I threw it all down; I said:

"a ngbokbu, tata, be'a, ue ke, ndetina amanda. peda ue sia nda'o. me lika oma."
"That is all, Grandmother, take it, you go, there is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall remain here."

"ebo. nde bonga'i, miki mamo. me siki a'o. ue likato."
"Good. It is good, my child. I shall return. You stay on."

"ue kato'e, tata."
"Go then, Grandmother."

me liki na nia, me bonji mana. mana a piki, me simia a dodo.
I sat with eyes, I waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down to the ground.

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me ka bi anga batu; anga munda.
I looked for footprints of humans. There were no footprints.

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"Ah!" me lufu, "nde keti mabobo. me si ndanza me ka boki bokbu. a bia mua me nengo."
"Ah!" I said, "It was an evil spirit, truly. I did well to throw down all my honey. It would have killed me completely."

akini, gunde me sibo.
But, empty-handed I return.

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

[858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them
[792] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

115 But, most important, he told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not
[533] looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
• 776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[i.e. Moke - analyst]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whistling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

at the trees and opened his arms and raised his expressive hands upward. He began telling the story in his beautiful rich voice, the seriousness of what he was saying belied only by the smile that lurked in the depths of his shining brown eyes. 538 439 177

"I am only a poor BaMbuti; the forest is my father and my mother. But my Negro master had asked me to bring him some meat." So Cephu started, self-deprecating, using the term for his patron in the sense in which only the Negroes use it, as indicating ownership. The Pygmies accept this assumption of superiority outwardly, because it pays—as the story went on to show.

"My master asked me for meat, so I hunted and I hunted and I hunted, and I caught sondu and lendu and mboloko and sindula, and I cut them all up and dried them carefully. When they were nice and dry I wrapped the meat in fresh mongongo leaves and put it all in my basket and set off for the village. But on the way I saw a bad spirit coming toward me. I tried to escape but he caught up with me and demanded the meat. I said, 'No, this is for my master. I cannot give it to you. You may take all my own food, but not this meat—that is for my beloved master.' But the spirit was not to be put off, and I had to fight with him. Finally I managed to escape, because I am strong and a great hunter, and I ran on toward the village as fast as I could. Spirits are very bad things to fight. They would kill any villager; only we Pygmies can deal with them. But then I saw the spirit again and this time he was more clever than I, and he changed into my grandmother. 'A'i, Cephu! Where are you going with all that meat?' she asked me. Now my grandmother died many years ago and I had to be polite to her. So I told her I was taking it to my beloved master. But she got angry and demanded it, asking if I would refuse it to her, a Pygmy, my own grandmother, and bring it to a villager? I pleaded with her and begged her, telling her how good my master always was to me, and how hungry he was for meat. But she snatched the basket from me, and because she was my [224] [251] 538 439 177 776 • [186] [769]

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538 grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down
439 the trail.
177
776 "As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knows what dreadful lives we BaMbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits.
[186] He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Pygmy, you have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just a Pygmy and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.'

"So he gave me rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their poor Pygmies!"

[186] Every time Cephu tells this story it brings knowing smiles to the faces of all who listen, because every "poor Pygmy" has some trick such as Cephu's, by which he twists his "master" around his little finger and at the same time heightens the fear of the villagers for the forest by constantly repeating stories of imaginary spirits and dread dangers.

538 This story, as often happened, set off another. Old Asofalinda,
177 Ekianga's sister, was not to be outdone. She described how she had cut down a fine stalk of plantains outside the village but was surprised in the act by the owner. She just had time to push the plantains into a hole in the ground at the foot of the tree. The villager asked what she was doing there, and what she was putting in the
[776] hole. "Oh, master," she replied, "there was a dreadful dangerous

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole. 538 776 177

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies." 538 536 776 177 [789]

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside, and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon. [522]

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet 512 821 181

 But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food, P 765 showing that it was a kumamolimo, the only outward indication that the God of the Forest had been invoked and was waiting silently [776] • nearby, in the trees or in the Lelo itself, ready to enter the camp at night and join his people in their songs of joy and praise. The casual observer might have thought the youngsters were playing a game when they went around from hut to hut with a fishing line and a basket, collecting food from everyone. There was certainly nothing about their demeanor to indicate that this was an essential part of a great act of communion. And if the same observer were told that this was so, he would probably form the opinion that the molimo, whatever it was, could not mean very much if it was treated so lightly and casually.

This, in fact, is the opinion of the villagers. For them the ritual C 765 act is the important thing. In their religious rites it is the correct performance of the ceremonial that counts most. If correctly performed it is bound to bring the desired results, regardless of the accompanying thought, if indeed there is any. All attention is focused on the act itself. And it must not only be performed correctly, but with a solemnity that betrays fear.

The difference between the two attitudes is perhaps one of those P C fine shades of difference that divide magic from religion, though 765 there is so much overlapping that they can seldom be divided in 771 practice. Whereas the villagers believe that the act itself brings about 789 P results in a way they cannot explain, which is what we call magic, 778 the BaMbuti do not believe this at all. They believe in a benevolent deity or supernatural power which they identify with the forest. To this they owe as much respect and affection and consideration as they owe to their own parents, and from it they can expect the same in return. So, for the Pygmies, it is not so much the act itself that P 765 counts, or the manner in which the act is performed, but the thought 771 that goes with it. The collecting of food from hut to hut is not a

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

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made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoyo was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

000 spot a telltale movement first. Kenge's eyes were sharper, but he was seldom able to identify anything that was more than a few hundred yards away, whereas Henri could tell at several miles.

Everywhere the view was different, and Kenge was as fascinated by this constant change as he was by the abundance of game. The sun shone warmly in a clear sky, but the Ruwenzori had hidden themselves once more in a bank of cloud. Looking at them from the north side of the park we could see only the forest-covered lower slopes.

[189] All at once Kenge said, "I dreamed of my mother last night, and of my wife Maliamo. My mother was crying for me."

I asked him if he wanted to stay another day or so in the park, or go back, and he said he wanted to go back just as soon as he could. When we got back to the guest houses we heard that the superintendent was on his way, so we decided to leave at once rather than have any arguments as to whether it was better for a white man to eat in the kitchen with a Pygmy, or a Pygmy to eat in the dining room with white men. Henri returned with us to the entrance to the park, where he and Kenge said a fond farewell, Kenge giving him some of our stock of rice as a present.

Where the road leaves the heights above the plains and crosses over to the forest plateau, we stopped the car and got out to have a last look. The scene was at its most beautiful, and I waited for several minutes while Kenge took it all in, shaking his head and clucking his tongue in amazement. When he spoke all he said was, "The [190] *Père* Longo was right, this God must be the same as our God in the forest. It must be one God."

Our homeward trip was a triumphant one. Kenge sang loudly as we got farther and farther into the forest. He was so happy to be back that he forgot temporarily about his mother and Maliamo, and himself suggested stopping in several places, which we did.

262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 The animals of the forest, which
703 symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting; flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

• 706 Both pygmies and Negroes believe
[711] in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

[P. 338-B]

• 776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 172 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *sitana*."

[192] The word *sitana* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

789 821 **Weather magic.**—One class of weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta[9] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[113] [9] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933, p. 243.

[P. 337-A]

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[ARCHERS]

[P.189-C]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates 776
the presence of Toré: mental confusion or dis- [327]
order, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad [328]
luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is [777]
absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and
human beings, of life and death. Everything
belongs to him because he created everything,
but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is [782]
offended by failure to make him offerings from
the chase, by quarrels within the band, by dis-
respect for elders, by infraction of lineage exog-
amy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices.
He punishes such actions or omissions by caus- [784]
ing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards
on the community (or individual) concerned,
by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

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Mbuti

some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a family had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *enjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

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selfish magic. Moke threw the horns in a fire and no more was said. It so happened that the family in question continued to have good luck for some time.

Hunting, for a Pygmy group, is a co-operative affair—net-hunting particularly. The use of private magic is frowned on, though there is no law against it. The sacred hunting fire is all that they consider right and necessary, and this is found throughout the forest. It is thought to secure the blessing of the forest which provides the game, and to bring good luck to the entire group. Even those groups that hunt mainly with bow and arrow, hunt not as individuals, but for the group as a whole. For the net hunters it is impossible to hunt alone. Men, women and children all have to co-operate if the hunt is to be successful.

The "Fire of the Hunt" simply involves the lighting of a fire at the base of a tree a short distance from the camp. In other Pygmy groups I have seen a variation in which the fire is lighted within the camp, special sticks around it pointing in the direction the hunt is going to take. In this case the fire is surrounded by a long and heavy vine laid in a circle on the ground, and when the game is brought home it is placed within this circle before being divided. But this particular group, and others in the area, were less formal.

I remember one morning in particular when we went to kindle the Fire of the Hunt outside the camp, because it was the day that old Cephu committed one of the greatest sins possible in the forest.

I doubt if any of us had managed to snatch more than two hours' sleep, and we were all quiet while preparing for the hunt. In a Pygmy camp this is the surest danger signal of all, for usually everyone is talking and laughing and shouting rude remarks from one end of the camp to the other. It was not only that we were tired, but of late Cephu had refused to contribute to the molimo basket, and that morning he had been heard to call out, in his loudest voice, that he was fed up with the molimo of "that camp over there." Even though he always

The past and the future pale into insignificance when compared with the moment. To understand this isolated, self-sufficient Pygmy world of the moment is also to understand something about the Mbuti relationship with the villager living in a very different, expansive, and uncertain world of change. 182

It seems worth mentioning the environmental factor also because the Pygmy himself takes it into consideration. His myth and mime, both important mediums of expression of the Mbuti, accentuate the opposition between the forest and the outside world, and between their peoples. They show a constant effort on the part of the Mbuti to effect a satisfactory relationship with the forest world that dominates their lives with such certainty and inevitability. It is not necessary to consider the environment further, but we must go this far in order to begin to understand the people whose society we are studying. 182 778 (538) 182

[p. 166-D]

[ARCHERS] 000

without religion. From the descriptions given 776
by the few writers who mention the existence of 346
"spirit houses" and "temples," it may well be 171
that these in fact belonged to villagers. The 114
style of construction described by Geil (1905), for instance, is certainly Bantu. None of these sources offers any acceptable evidence that the Mbuti used these spirit houses and temples.

Schebesta, from the outset of his first visit to 771
the Ituri, was convinced that the Mbuti had a religious system. He finally concluded that it 776
comprised the notion of a dynamic but personal divinity, that it was essentially the same among all Ituri Mbuti, but that it differed from the religious concepts of the neighboring villagers though it was influenced by them. Schebesta [778]
asserts that the belief in a personal God is based on the notion of vital force. God possesses the totality of this force and distributes part of it to worldly beings. Thus God is regarded not as a transcendent creator but rather as a person who lived long ago. He is sometimes confused with the first ancestor and may be represented by the moon.

The confusing abundance of names and terms 776
used by the various Mbuti is partly due to the 778
different languages spoken by both Mbuti and 192
villagers, and partly to villager influence, but it 177
in no way denotes any fundamental difference in 177
this basic concept of a personal God accompanied by the belief in a vital force.

[P.188-D]

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
[784] serves the totemic restrictions of his *karé*-
[752] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[753] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[761] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[778] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *magie*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

MAGIE

761 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
778 [p 192-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1951-1955) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p.192-c]

notions and practices of the archers and their totemism in their belief in *megbe*, the vital force dispensed, in part, by the divinity. It is one of the life principles, distinct from that which becomes a star or a sprite after death. *Megbe* is transformed anew into the totem when the body dies. The divinity possesses it in totality; astral beings are endowed with far more *megbe* than mortals; hence, their greater power and strength which derive from *megbe*. Mortals, then, have to reinforce their store of this vital force to give themselves additional strength and power. There are certain practices by which this may be achieved, notably by the use of bells hung about different parts of the body. When a man dies, his son may put his lips to those of his father to capture the *megbe* as it passes from his body. 761 778 • 778 761 789

By increasing his store of *megbe* the Mbuti can place himself on the same level as supernatural beings with whom he must have dealings. Schebesta cites legends showing how the Mbuti managed to steal fire from Toré by the use of bells to increase their *megbe*. [773]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [793]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

religious association (*molimo*) and of the women's religious association (*elima*); songs of the men's main economic activity (hunting) and of the women's (gathering). It is perhaps not quite justifiable to make the subdivision according to sex, as, in hunting and gathering among the net hunters, both sexes hunt. Most of the gathering songs concern honey gathering which is primarily a male occupation. Nor, in fact, does the classification into sacred and secular stand up to full scrutiny, as, in a sense, all songs are sacred as all are related to forest activities and the forest itself is sacred (pp. 258–259). 533 (178)

Unlike the archers, the net-hunting Mbuti make extremely little use of musical instruments of any kind, except for the resonant sticks used in accompaniment to their forest songs. For one thing, a truly nomadic group with only the most basic means of locomotion and transport, namely, the human body, can hardly afford to accumulate possessions beyond the absolute necessities—even less so with bulky nets as an additional item to be carried when camp is moved. Some net hunters know how to make and play notched end-blown flutes, with even greater skill and precision than the neighboring villagers, but they are rarely made. A *lukembi* (*sanza*) is the only instrument 534 (184) (48)

[P. 234 - D]

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776 close the forest to them, until they make the 782 propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are expected to make offerings to Kalisia from their [178] food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this purpose (*ende kela*). The hunters may less ceremoniously throw offerings of food into the forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right mind would fail to make these propitiatory sacrifices: *"à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira"* (Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Schebesta does not always identify his source of 114 information. However, from a number of admissions such as that noted above, we must [124] assume that his informants were frequently villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied on the question-and-answer technique among both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933, 171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776 forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171] villagers, who regard him in no way as benevolent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity Songe (the moon), with its own remote world, as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with 731
water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and 821
snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have [823]
a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena.

As might be expected therefore, such ritual 788
as exists is most often connected with the storm [821]
and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. However, cult practices are far less common, and he [778] •
mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offer- 788
ings may be thrown into the undergrowth, 782
though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or

[P. 237-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To

Z 182 881 776 778 [825] [532] [535] the villager the masked dancers described in the account of the 1954 *nkumbi* (Turnbull, 1957, 193) represent the *ngosa* bird, indicating the presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the bullroarer represents supernatural power. The various taboos applied to the *ganza* express village subordination to that power which is sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from staying in the camp over night even though it meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further scope for getting out of control. The *nkumbi* places the villager initiates in a definite relationship to the supernatural. It is closely con-

Z [769] nected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

P 177 881 776 778 829 The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no ancestor cult. To them the masked dancers were the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bullroarer was a piece of wood whirled around on the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird" and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti, were neither "real" nor did they represent any reality. They were empty and rather ineffective theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by conversation among the ganza at night and in their constant burlesque.

[P 254-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 254-C]

conversation among the *ganza* at night and in their constant burlesque.

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Schebesta (1948, 508–510) says that, for the archers, the *toré* association has both social and religious functions and that membership is common to both villagers and Pygmies through the *nkumbi* initiation. Among the net hunters the term *molimo* is used instead of the term *toré*, and among the Bira villagers the word has apparently similar usage. Thus the *molimo* horn is an instrument that is sacred to both villagers and Mbuti. The villager *molimo* normally makes itself heard during the *nkumbi*, when the young initiates are introduced to it for the first time. It made no appearance at all during the all-Pygmy 1954 *nkumbi*. Evidently it was unable to appear as there were no villager boys among the *ganza*, and the villager *molimo* has a distinct totemic aspect that excludes the Mbuti. Yet for the Mbuti, in particular, the instrument is associated with their most profound magico-religious concepts, and it is inconceivable that they should regard the *nkumbi* as initiation into their own religious society without the inclusion of their version of the *molimo* horn.

P
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881
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The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[P. 256-D]

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skeptical amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
782 different attitude to the forest from that of the
575 villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*,
[829] from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the molimo among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

[P. 257-C]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their 796
unity. Their means of communication are spe- 776
cial songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to 778
the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in 782
terms of explicit supplication. They merely call 575
on the God of the Forest by constant repetition 796
of his name (frequently changing from one 776
name to another, it seems for the sake of variety 778
and euphony), and an occasional recitation of 782
his qualities as the source of all good in the 533
Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the 575
molimo horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women 575
are members, and participation is compulsory 796
in one's own camp or when visiting another. [885]
Communication with the forest God is again
established by means of songs, special and sa- [533]
cred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. [776]
The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern [778]
to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of pu-
berty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and
death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are con-
cerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion
of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.)
Both associations meet in the forest camp but
out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in
the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring
huts. Young children may be present. The ex- [858]
ception, when the men take part in the meeting
of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* 881
initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the ini- 885
tiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere 224
for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," 575
he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[P 257-D]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

[P. 259-A]

533 any major crisis affecting the community as a
182 whole. But, as well as these religious activities, both major economic activities, hunting and gathering, are also consecrated by special types of song. It is inconceivable that the Mbuti, who accompany every important event in their lives with song, should not consecrate the initiation
533 of their boys in this same way. But for the
881 *nkumbi* they have no music at all. As we have
182 said, in 1954 the *molimo* horn was not heard, and no *molimo* songs were sung. I suggest that other initiations, in which the horn and songs are heard, are in connection with villager institutions to which the village boys are being initiated. The only conclusion we can draw is that for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is not sufficiently significant in their forest life to merit consecration by forest song.

533 This is closely paralleled by the absence of
182 forest music (songs of the *molimo* and *elima*,
181 hunting-and-gathering songs) when the Mbuti are camped on the edge of a village. When they do, the Mbuti themselves behave as different people. In the forest they feel and observe a
[078] certain restraint. Their songs are related to and emphasize their supreme value—the forest. Their daily activities are dominated by the forest and the hunt and the need for close cooperation.

[p. 272-A]

538 Mbuti on the food quest, their lack of interest
171 in the past, with a corresponding lack of inter-
181 est in lineage or tribal ancestry, and an opposi-
tion typical of forest people between the animal
and the human worlds, more significant differ-
[186] ences appear in the legends. One such difference
is, of course, the way the Mbuti tend to class
the villagers with the animals, in association
with the spiritual world, the world of trickery,
• [178] in opposition to the human world. Then there
is the contrast between the Pygmy attitude to
the forest as the provider of all that is good as
well as bad, and the attitude of the villagers
who regard the forest as a place to be feared,
the abode of evil. This contrast is heightened by
the different magical and religious approaches
538 of the two people. The legends tend to confirm
182 the validity of my suggestion that the prime
771 function of the Mbuti magico-religious system
171 is to maintain normality in the relationship be-
tween the people and the forest. The villagers
seem more concerned with disorders and ab-
normalities and appear to have no such use of
song as that I have described for the Mbuti,
making greater use of witchcraft and sorcery.

538 To understand the meaning fully in each type
121 of legend, we need to know who told it, to
whom, with what accompanying mime, to what
effect, and under what circumstances. Given
such surrounding details, we could use legends
and allied arts to analyze that extremely diffi-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

[P 272-87]

cult subject of sociological study, the magico-religious system. In the absence of such details we can do only as we have done above and indicate some of the general tendencies in the legends, where emphasis is given and where it is lacking, without being able to attempt any formal systematization. Even so, from this collection of legends there seems to be ample justification for supposing that the rejection of villager values which we saw in the *nkumbi* is real and not a mere psychological reaction. It is in fact an integral theme running through the legends. If the opposition is such as we suppose, it accounts for the lack of responsibility manifest by the Mbuti toward their villager hosts at all points where the two people come into contact.

The legends further emphasize the sanctity of the forest. This emphasis is one of the main ways in which the Pygmy maintains his distinctness from the villager. But the importance of the forest is not confined to the Mbuti-villager relationship. It is the central theme of the Mbuti magico-religious system, a glimmering of which we get in the legends relating to the supernatural, a system that is evidently quite distinct from that of the villagers, despite the common usage of certain names and practices. At this point perhaps, the two people are farthest apart.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

no villager boys present. But even more obvious, and ever manifesting itself, is the difference between the two people in their attitude to the forest. In the legends as told by the Mbuti we see something of the Mbuti attitude to the forest as the provider of all that is good and bad, as the source of the essentially good life of the Mbuti people. The forest is a place to be trusted (witness the *molimo* invocation to the God of the Forest) and loved. The villagers, on the other hand, fear the forest and people it with malevolent spirits. In their fear of the forest, there is necessarily an element of fear of the Mbuti, whom they recognize as its original inhabitants, as forest people. It is perhaps worth mentioning that Possoz (1954, 257) claims that the term "*Batwa*," derived from "*Batoa*," was originally applied by the Bantu-speaking tribes to the Pygmies, denoting that the latter were of older stock, closer to the ancestors and so worthy of veneration. The more recent term "*Batswa*," however, means "those in the course of disappearing." It would be difficult to prove or disprove such etymological deductions, but there is other evidence that the villager inhabitants of the Ituri Forest do not entirely lack respect for the Mbuti. There

P 178 181 Z 176 186 P Z 101 Z 829 Z 186 829

[p. 274-D]

pure hunting and gathering economy at work not only side by side with, but in opposition to, a cultivation economy. With the pygmoid Twa and Tswa, and possibly only excepting a few small groups in the Gabon and among the Ubangi Binga pygmies, the rest of the population of pygmy hunters and gatherers has become largely dependent for food upon cultivation, either by adopting it themselves or by entering into symbiosis with neighboring village farmers. The Mbuti solution to the contact situation is very different, and so it is in its contemporary context that we study it; any light the study may throw on an earlier form of pygmy society is incidental.

The habitat of the Mbuti is the Ituri Forest. This is a primary rain forest that runs across the equator from the fringes of the Saharan desert, in the north, into the Kivu mountains, in the south. To the east it is bounded clearly by a succession of lakes (Lake Albert, Lake Edward and Lake Kivu) but to the west the boundary is less definable, the forest thinning out as it approaches the Congo River's commercial centers. Effectively, the Mbuti occupy only the dense forest where the migration of game and the nature of vegetation have alike been virtually unaffected by outside influences. Their forest home, some 50,000 square miles in extent, is traversed by a number of roads built, for the most part, since the 1930's, but the purpose of the roads has been merely for transport and has not led to any significant exploitation of the forest, which in most places comes right to the very edge of the roadway (see Map 4).[1]

There are a number of significant features concerning the forest that have to be taken into account. In general it is considered as generous and friendly from the point of view of the Mbuti hunters and gatherers, and as niggardly and hostile from the point of view of the villager cultivators.

For example, the forest is, in most places, gently undulating, though even the mountainous sections in the east and in the south are as thickly wooded at their highest points as at the lowest. In all the territory to the north of the Kivu mountains the average height above sea level is somewhere around a thousand meters. This height, together with the over-all denseness of the forest, and an almost daily rainfall that averages from 70 to 80 inches per year, makes the temperatures within the forest remain remarkably constant and agreeable, seldom departing far from either side of 80° F., never below 70° or above 90°. The relative humidity is fairly constant at 95 per cent.

[1] [see page 319 -- Analysis]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1966) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

132 Where in the villages, and in the plantations that surround them, the midday temperatures soar well into the nineties, and the ground is covered with a dry, choking dust that quickly turns to mud, in the shade of the forest the world is cool and fresh, with only rare places, such as along river banks or at salt licks, where sunlight reaches the
136 ground without first being filtered through a leafy roof. Also from the point of view of comfort, and of health, where village conditions lead to gatherings of flies and mosquitoes, these disease bearers are seldom if ever seen in the depths of the forest, except at such sites as are
[186] easily avoided. The Mbuti frequently compare their lot, in these respects, with that of the villagers, who in turn grudgingly admit to some advantages of forest life.

312 Another important contrast between forest and village life is in the water supply. The forest is interlaced with innumerable streams, any of which can be drunk from with impunity. A hunting camp is always located near a stream, but never stays in the one vicinity long enough to foul the water. A village remains in the same location, however, for three years or so, and the local water supply invariably becomes polluted. The villagers have some resistance to infection, but the Mbuti often have none and quickly become sick if they stay too long in a village.

136 But it is with regard to food even more than shelter or water that
262 the forest seems to favor the Mbuti. Throughout the year, without fail, there is an abundant supply of game and of vegetable foods. There are half a dozen different kinds of antelope that are particularly abundant, apart from supplementary sources of meat such as birds,
[137] monkeys, chimpanzees, and divers grubs and insects. The forest also supplies a number of edible roots, notably the sweet *itaba*, and many different varieties of mushrooms, nuts, berries and fruits. All the latter may vary in abundance the one from the other, according to the time of year, but throughout the year at any one time there will be an ample supply, in both quantity and variety.

262 The only truly seasonal food in the forest economy of the Mbuti is honey, and it is of major importance in the diet. It is also of major
[621] importance as a focal point in the constant process of fission and fusion that characterizes Mbuti society.

• 778 The apparent benevolence of the forest towards the Mbuti extends still further. The materials for the making of shelter, clothing, and all other necessary items of material culture are all to hand at a mo-
[313] ment's notice. Firewood, equally, is everywhere in abundance. It is

2:Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

not surprising, then, that the Mbuti recognize their dependence upon the forest and refer to it as "Father" or "Mother" (I have heard both used, it seems without discrimination) because, as they say, it gives them food, warmth, shelter and clothing, just like their parents. What is, perhaps, surprising is that the Mbuti add that the forest also, like their parents, gives them affection. 778 •

If it has been thought that this stress on the environmental factor is overweighted, the last observation should make it clear why. The forest is more than mere environment to the Mbuti. It is a living, conscious thing, both natural and supernatural, something that has to be depended upon, respected, trusted, obeyed and loved. The love demanded of the Mbuti is no romanticism, and perhaps it might be better included under "respect," but I make the distinction here because the Mbuti make the distinction, and because it is all part of the structural relationship of opposition between the Mbuti and the villagers. 778 182

More of the intimacy of the relationship between the Mbuti and the forest will emerge as we proceed; indeed there is not a single aspect of their lives where it is not evident. Here let us take a quick look at the relationship of the neighboring villagers to the same forest.

In the Ituri the tribal composition is thoroughly confused, a succession of invasions from different directions having taken place over the past four hundred years. From the north came the Mangbetu, pursued later and driven westward by the Zande. At the present day these two large tribes stretch right across the northern edges of the forest, a large proportion of each remaining in relatively open savannah. Also in the north and in the east are the populous Budo and the Mamvu-Lesé. From the southeast came the Bira, a Bantu-speaking plains people who split on reaching the forest, some pressing up by Lake Albert and retaining something of their cattle culture[1], the others turning westward through the middle of the forest, segmenting into a number of isolated villages loosely held together by the principle of patrilineal descent and recognition of a common ancestor manifest in the chiefs and sub-chiefs. In recent years, apparently since the imposition of Belgian authority, the Forest Bira (the Plains Bira do not concern us here, directly) divided into two main chieftainships, with territorial headquarters at Koki and Bahaha. (Map 5 illustrates C 101

[1] There is some uncertainty as to whether the Bira were originally cultivators or pastoralists. Among the present Plains Bira, however, cattle plays an important role and the people themselves claim to have always had cattle. They now practice a mixed economy.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal relationship with the forest, but a very different one. The forest surrounds them on all sides, but they do not live in it or by it, only despite it. Their initial act is one of destruction, the cutting down of the forest to make way for village and plantation which in turn are destroyed in the final act. The hostility is mutual, as the villagers see it. They have to fight not only the forest itself, but also the creatures that live in it. Elephants, leopards, baboons and Mbuti, all are a menace to life and livelihood. A whole plantation can be destroyed in a few hours by even a modest sprinkling of elephants. The excessive and sometimes erratic rainfall can cause hunger for a whole season. Baboons and Mbuti come in the night and steal the ripening fruit. Leopards prey on the few scrawny goats and chickens the villagers manage to raise.

As for the Mbuti, so for the villagers is the forest an entity to be reckoned with, upon which life and death depend; it is also an entity that is natural and supernatural. But instead of acceding to the natural, the villagers with their superior technology combat it; and instead of respecting the supernatural in the sense that the Mbuti respect it, the villagers oppose it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate. They people the forest with evil spirits, and they fill their lives with magic, witchcraft and a belief in sorcery.

The forest achieves the establishment of two virtually irreconcilable systems of values. It further determines, for both Mbuti and villagers, a certain degree of nomadism, and it tends to fragment large populations into small, relatively isolated bands or villages. For the Mbuti the forest merely indicates natural boundaries, such as valleys, ridges, rivers, caves and so forth, within which a band can conveniently roam at will throughout the years, economically self-sufficient. Within that nomadic framework there is an enormous sense of permanence and of territory. But for the villagers the forest announces, at the end of every three years or so, that the village must pack up and move, it does not much matter where. The move will inevitably bring the village into renewed conflict with the forest, and may well bring it into conflict with a neighboring village which has also been forced to move. In spite of the vast size of the forest and its small population, the villagers are unwilling to go off entirely on their own. At the present time they move up and down the long road that connects Stanleyville with Irumu, or Wamba with Nia-Nia and Mambasa. Formerly it seems that villages were similarly stretched out along recognized trails, and seldom moved away from them. On any given trail, or road, the number of suitable sites for a semi-permanent village is limited, but fric-

2: Turnbull B-5 (1961-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 824 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

Ⓑ2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
951 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
[751] of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies-FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bull, 1960[1]), I shall keep the description here to those essentials 881
concerned with the structural implications of the *elima*.

The fact that it is not an individual family affair, to be concealed with shame as best possible, is doubly emphasized when two girls in a band, of quite different lineages, "see the blood" within a few days of each other. There will then be a joint *elima*. And there is also the selection by the girl or girls of the *bamelima*, the friends she likes and wants to accompany her for the duration of the festival, living with her in the *elima* hut. They will be drawn from her female age mates, [561] and may or may not already have had their own *elima*. If they have not yet seen the blood, participation in their friend's *elima* will excuse them from having one of their own when the time comes. If a girl sees the blood, and a close friend thinks she is about to see it as well, the *elima* will be delayed, perhaps for several weeks.

As with birth, this life-cycle crisis does not evoke any sense of need 881
for urgent ritual action, protective or otherwise. Its significance is of 182
a different order. It is regarded as essentially natural and therefore good. Also as with birth, the personal importance of the occasion [778] leads to an establishment of personal contact with the forest, a reification of the direct bond between the individual and the forest world; but the social importance of puberty for the band is recognized, so the band as such takes certain measures, both social and ritual, to mark the occasion.

The girl or girls with blood are expected to keep to their homes and 881
an extension may be built onto one of their huts, or onto that of any friend or relative who is willing to house the *bamelima*. Every *elima* girl with blood has to choose a personal assistant, and the choice is left entirely to her, and again may fall on a relative, though more often it is a very close friend, of the same age group. They then invite other friends to join them in the *elima* hut, when it is ready. The assistants share such restrictions as are placed upon the *elima* girls, except that they are more free to leave the hut unaccompanied. There are few restrictions anyway, it seems, and they are mainly concerned with maintaining adherence to the schedule of instruction and activities. There are some minor food prohibitions, based on the 881
personal taboos of the *elima* girls and their assistants, which in turn 262
are based on their individual reactions to these foods as young children. If a certain food makes a child sick it may be forbidden to him until puberty, when he may try it again and abandon the taboo if it no longer affects him adversely. Sometimes, but not always, there is 881

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

766 [768] two or three yards of the hut, which in that case continues to be occupied. The main difference between the death of a child and that of an adult is that the death of an adult is likely to be made into an occasion for a *molimo* festival; a child's death is seldom marked in this way, and if at all then only briefly.

761 765 621 Because the *molimo* has more to do with life than death it is dealt with separately in the section on religious life of the Mbuti. Here it should simply be noted that it coincides with the efforts of the elders to restore normality as quickly as possible. While personal grief is recognized and allowed, it is still resented and every effort is made to minimize it by those not so directly concerned. The majority of the band make every attempt to maintain a normal daily routine, and to ignore the death as far as possible. The *molimo* itself calls for vigorous hunting during the daytime, and equally vigorous singing and dancing at night. It involves the entire band except the children and through its very emphasis on life it reinforces band solidarity. Through the sheer pleasure found in *molimo* activities personal grief is lessened, and through the symbolic nature of some of the songs and dances the despair that death could otherwise awaken is averted. Death is acknowledged, in the *molimo* fire dance, as inevitable and as being unconnected with any unnatural force. The *molimo* songs stress that if death occurs it must occur at the will of the forest, and since the forest is good then death must be good. The *molimo*, however, goes [778] beyond a mere acceptance of death, and many of the songs and dances are sheer expressions of joy in life, and the stated objective of the *molimo* is to make the forest happy, "to rejoice the forest."

76 621 594 Thus death affects the nuclear family through the personal nature of the loss, and it is the duty of the nuclear family, in the forest context, to dispose of the dead. They are prevented by the rest of the band from giving way to any prolonged exhibition of grief, and in any case by the time death takes place much of their grief has been spent in the last moments of sickness. The family may be aided by others in the burial, though help is not generally needed. But from that moment on, the band takes charge of the situation and concentrates on restoring the normality of life. The extent to which the *molimo* is a band affair rather than the affair of the nuclear family concerned will be seen later. It will also be seen, then, how death is made into an occasion for reaffirming the bonds of age groups, and for establishing their distinct responsibilities.

761 765 If life begins, for the Mbuti, with little fanfare, it ends with one

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 224 372 789 rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

P 224 372 789 * 177 There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider *anjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

P 224 * 177 834 One clear example of village influence is that in any village context the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt. These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating P [841] woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

P * 778 * 177 However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of actual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the C 778 belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

death, will be kept well clear of the forest, whose malign influence could adversely affect the outcome of the crisis.

While the net-hunt divides the band into nuclear-family units insofar as each net clearly belongs to a nuclear family, there is no particular order for setting out on the hunt. Nuclear families may split up right at the beginning, children joining their age mates, women going off together, the menfolk forming clusters of friends or brothers, in much the order in which they will hunt. It is always decided the night before, by common discussion and consent, where the hunt is to take place, and everyone makes his way there of his own accord, generally passing by the hunting fire on the way. On arrival the women will already be mostly separated from the men, and invisibly take up their stations while the men silently stretch their nets out through the undergrowth, supporting them on the foliage, the ends of each net being tied to those on either side of it.

The hunters generally take up their stand near the center of their net, but the practice varies according to their relationship with their hunting neighbors, and also according to whether they have any sons with them at the net. When the extremes are ready (the setting up begins in the middle of the semicircle) a signal is given to the women, who immediately start closing in from their opposing semicircle, beating the ground with branches, shouting, yelling and hooting. The men remain concealed until the very last moment. They always lie in wait behind the nets, and will only cross into the circle to go to someone's assistance when game is caught. Game is not generally shot at or speared until it is in the net or until it shows signs of escaping. It is then that the Mbuti must know the likely whereabouts of all his fellows, as the strophanthus poison used most widely is as deadly to human beings as to animals.[3]

Once an animal is killed, and each cast of the nets may bring in several animals, it is taken by the wife of the lucky net-owner and put into her carrying basket, to be shared out on return to the camp. If the animal is a large one, and too heavy to put in a basket, either one

[3] When the poison is prepared, one test for its strength is to make a slight cut in the forearm and to allow the blood to trickle down for an inch. The poisoned wooden tip of an arrow is then touched to the blood below the wound. If, as the Mbuti say, the poison "walks up the arm," they claim to feel a tickling sensation and hurriedly wipe the blood away. If the poison does not "walk up the arm" it is not strong enough. So wary are the Mbuti of poisoned arrows that they carry them thoroughly sheathed in a bundle of leaves, in case they accidentally scratch themselves. Also, when they have fired and lost a poisoned arrow, they may spend a considerable time trying to find it rather than leave it as a possible danger to other hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties in one or two [illegible] throughout the year. The sweet [illegible] and [illegible] roots, which are found by following its tubers [illegible] along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end, roots, of which there are quite many varieties at one time of year and those [illegible]. There are [illegible] incidental fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter are rarely used except as herbs. However, they are thought to be [illegible] to the village [illegible] tree, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of [illegible] that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt and between [illegible] out of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a [illegible] tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters in the same way that the boys born on age group during the hunt as do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle. Likewise the girls split into two groups and hold at each end of the semicircle of hunters. Only the adult boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even then need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging sorties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Ituri tribes, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age, this is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are too idle to gather effectively, but if they pass a bunch of mushrooms they will pick them, they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their wives and [illegible].

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not employed on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same function is allowed to the men to gather when ever they have the opportunity. The girls or unmarried women could [illegible] more as individual property than as communal, though sharing may take place.

There are no rituals and no songs associated with gathering, no [illegible] as it is primarily a women's occupation. Alone songs are frequently sung on gathering expeditions, as with hunting songs, but alone songs are composed to attract the attention of the [illegible]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to secure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game. When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally. We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

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band to the village as its *capita* or *sultani*. In the Epulu band, Njobo was an undisputed great hunter, knew the territory as well as anyone and had killed four elephants single-handed. He was a good enough Mbuti not to attempt to dominate any hunting discussion in the forest, merely to take a normal part. If he ever appeared to be overly aggressive or insistent he was shouted down and ridiculed, although highly popular. He was also the one chosen to represent the band to the villagers. Ekianga, on the other hand, was less generally popular and was the source of some friction, having three wives (one the sister of another prominent member of the band), but he was a fine hunter, endowed with exceptional physical stamina, and he too knew the territory well. Even at the height of his unpopularity he was one of the most effective "leaders" of the hunt. So was Nikiabo, a youth who had achieved some notoriety by killing a buffalo when barely out of childhood. Although a bachelor, he had a net of his own and took a prominent part in all hunting discussions. Makubasi, a young married hunter, was also accorded special respect because of his hunting prowess and his physical strength, combined with his knowledge of the territory. But while these four can be singled out as exceptional, they could either separately or together be outvoted by the rest of the hunters. On such occasions they were compelled either to give their assent to the popular decision or to refrain from joining the hunt that day. None of them had the slightest authority over any others. Nor was any moral pressure brought to bear in influencing a decision through personal considerations or respect. The only such moral consideration ever mentioned was that when the band arrived at a decision, it was considered "good," and that it would "please the forest." Anyone not associating himself with the decision was, then, likely to displease the forest, and this was considered "bad." Any individual intent on strengthening his own argument might appeal to the forest on grounds that his point of view was "good" and "pleasing"; only the ultimate general decision, however, would determine the validity of his claim.

Finally, it has to be pointed out that while the forest is appealed to almost as an arbiter, and is considered as imposing the standards and even the leadership, which all Mbuti follow, this only holds good in the forest, where the forest directly "feeds its children." Once in the village, actions concerning the village are never judged by whether or not they are pleasing to the forest; a totally different set of values pertains.

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CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

began more and more frequently to talk from midcamp. Like Asuku, he complained about laziness and bad hunting, common enough complaints but seldom aired from midcamp. When he began to claim special attention by virtue of being Njobo's "son," however, he was promptly ridiculed. People stopped listening to him, even from midcamp, and dared him to name them—a procedure that commands attention. Even unmarried youths called out, "Your noise will kill us all," and children began to imitate his whining voice. Masisi, a cousin of Njobo and, with Manyalibo, about to move from the status of hunter to that of elder, took Mbaaka aside at one point and talked to him quietly, recalling what had happened to Asuku.

Seeing that Mbaaka at last had begun to listen to reason, his brother, who up till then had never interfered, made a loud and rude joke that brought the whole camp down with laughter, then said, "Everyone is crazy—I'm going to sleep," and promptly went to sleep. Masisi then returned to midcamp with Mbaaka and said that if anyone else tried to be funny he would turn himself into a villager and bewitch everyone. A youth took up the thread and said that the village was responsible for all the noise anyway, because his girl friend never listened to him any more and was a bad cook (a typical pygmaean non sequitur). This rather forced good humor persisted throughout the next day, with the women telling jokes and laughing loudly the moment the conversation drifted in the direction of Mbaaka's former complaints. There were a few more remarks to the effect that the village was indeed responsible for all the noise, and the rest of Mbaaka's stay (two further months) was unmarred by any repeated claims to privilege through kinship to Njobo.

It is plain, then, that while any movement toward individual authority, conscious or otherwise, is sharply countered, and while individual authority is virtually nil, there is nonetheless a clear basic framework to support the values of the hunting band. There is the division of leadership, according to field, throughout the entire band, yet there is the midcamp site from which anyone may harangue all present. Although he has no means of compelling attention, it is generally accorded, and may be further compelled by pointing to or naming the individuals concerned. Further it is plain that the elders, including those hunters whose position is being gradually taken over by their children, act as final arbitrators, always careful to stress that what they say is a matter of their opinion, or of their heart. Only when unanimity is beyond question is an opinion or an action con-

554 sidered "pleasing to the forest." Asuku had placed himself, physically
620 and morally, beyond the forest.

In the two instances cited so far, although the kin relationship of
602 Asuku and Mbaaka to Njobo was the source of their claim to special
604 privileges, this was recognized as a village attitude, and a valid vil-
554 lage argument. It is noteworthy that the details of the relationship were never spelled out once, except by Asuku and Mbaaka. The attitude of all the Mbuti was one of respect for Njobo, but of equal recognition of all those who shared the same central hearth, including some who were not even affines. It was stated very clearly by Moké that though Asuku was a member of the band by virtue of having shared the same hearth, he had no more privileges than anyone else of that hearth, and was under the same obligations of respect and responsibility to his elders.

554 There was one other elder who could claim the same respect as
602 Moké, by reason of age, and that was Tungana. But Moké had the added advantages of being a widower and virtually unrelated to anyone in the band. He claimed fictitious relationship with Tungana, it being said that the same foster mother fed them both, and he frequently gave Tungana's "clan" name as being his own. Clan names were seldom mentioned in disputes, except in a village context, and even then they in fact referred to a unit that was either nonlineal or cognatic, and not confined to one clan. Rather than differentiate between lineal units, the Mbuti used the concept of the hearth (*kuma*). Each family had its own hearth, but there were also several central hearths, each shared by a number of families.

602 Each camp, except the smallest, was distinguished by several such
621 central hearths, effectively breaking the camp into subcamps that usually revealed a line of fission or fusion, but which frequently ran counter to all kinship considerations. As far as the Epulu band was concerned (and I believe this to be true of many other bands), authority was again, as with other aspects of life, more associated with age and territory than with kinship. Each section of the camp was,
621 in a limited sense, a political unit, and sometimes disputes would
578 remain confined to one section without spreading to others. A man
626 could invoke kinship or friendship to go to the aid of a disputant in another section, if he wished, but somebody like Moké was even more free to wander wherever he liked. The rules of self-help among the Mbuti are quite simple. It is perfectly proper to hit someone with anything wooden; it is not at all proper to draw blood, nor to hit any-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Teningbengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and discomfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

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that this was not customary during the honey season, and was displeasing to the forest. He also added that as his section was too small to hunt, Manyalibo was under an obligation to send him a share of all the meat caught by his part of the band. At the same time he set about trying to encourage the usually unwanted Cephu to join him, and swell his section to an economic hunting size. Cephu, always unpredictable, refused, though he agreed to send three nets as a token of goodwill. He never did. These communications were made through a series of visits made by Kelemoké, Cephu's nephew, between the three sections. The fourth section was in the village, and did not enter the dispute.

Two neighboring bands, hearing[2] that (a) the Epulu territory was exceptionally well endowed with honey that year, and that (b) Masisi was looking for reinforcement, took advantage of the situation to trespass judicially in the southeastern extreme of the territory, well away from all the others. Their overtures, made in the one instance by a meeting on neutral ground, and in the other by a personal visit to Masisi's camp by Herafu, a distant affine, were coldly rejected, and they were told to leave the territory or there would be war. In each case they responded that the territory was not Masisi's, and that in any case they had rights to the territory through affinal ties. They added that in view of the surplus of honey Masisi was offending the forest by trying to steal it all for himself.

This put Masisi very much in the wrong. He then raised an issue, long known, to divert attention from himself. He pointed out to his own section that Manyalibo's camp had a drying rack in it, sure indication that he was trading with the village. This was a major crime, and two youths went to investigate. They found it indeed to be so, and without much argument Manyalibo offered them food to take back to Masisi. After a great deal of further argument, and threats by the youths that they would tell the rest of the villagers of what appeared to be a secret alliance between two of their members and Manyalibo's section, the youths were allowed to take all the meat they could see, and Manyalibo promised to send a net to his "brother" so he could hunt for himself. Two days later he did this. Attracted by the meat, Cephu sent two of his section to join Masisi, and eventually joined himself. The rift between Masisi and Manyalibo, however, remained, and they did not re-form in the same camp again that

[2] News of this kind travels between bands via the villages, and through the constant exchange of visits between cognates and friends.

year. While Manyalibo's crime was serious enough, desecrating the forest in the honey season by hunting for the villagers, Masisi's was equally, if not more, serious, in his attitude to the trespassing bands. The night before Cephu joined him, Masisi was made the subject of discussion, from the middle of his own camp, by several youths and young hunters. They all asserted the right of their in-laws to enter their own territory, to hunt or gather honey, whether they were wanted or not. They agreed that permission should have been asked first, but that in light of the surplus of honey in the forest it was hardly necessary. The discussion ended by everyone agreeing that all the noise[3] of the past weeks was plainly the fault of the villagers who wanted the meat that caused the rift to begin with. This decision was followed by a plea from Masisi for much singing to make the forest happy again. The honey songs were immediately taken up with renewed vigor, and Masisi was prominent in maintaining them right to the end of the honey season.

6. Largely through preoccupation with Cephu, Manyalibo and Herafu, with the Effundi Somali band and now yet another trespassing band from the neighboring Eboyo territory, Masisi's camp had several days with little honey and little food of any kind. All men in the group took turns in stating their complaints from midcamp, each promising to find out who was responsible and threatening to name them. On the fourth successive day of such "noise," the singing having deteriorated, much to the disgust of the youths and the women, Masisi was particularly irritable and began a long harangue about how bad the whole thing was, including his present camp, and saying that he could name those who were responsible for it all being bad, but instead he was going to name those who must go out the next day and collect lots of honey and make it well again. He then named all the hunters. But he continued arguing and, getting more and more irate, began to imply that those he had just named were in fact those responsible. There were growing murmurs of protest, which only excited Masisi further, and there would almost certainly have been a fight had it not been for the intervention of the youths and the young women. Two of the women and one youth seized the *ngbengbe*,

[3] "Noise" is a direct translation of the word *akami* in the local dialect of KiBira, or *kelelé* in KiNgwana. It is used in ordinary parlance, but always with an unfavorable connotation. It is given special significance by adding the comment that noise is bad (*sinana*). This is tantamount to a moral judgment, invoking the supernatural sanctions of the forest, for noise is also said to kill the forest (*akami a mu ndura*), just as it is said to kill the hunt (*akami a mu mukira*).

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had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

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village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *esumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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627 attempt is made to settle the issue in question one way or the other,
[126] even verbally, and the equally small number in which direct action is taken. The percentages are given as follows:

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DISPUTE	*Number Recorded*	*Number of Decisions or Judgments made*	*Instances of Positive Action*
Food	67	5 (7.5%)	4 (5.9%)
Sex	37	4 (10.8%)	5 (13.5%)
Village	11	1 (9.1%)	1 (9.1%)
Theft	5	3 (60%)	
Territory	4		3 (75%)

These figures indicate the greatest degree of decision, either by the passing of opinions (judgments) or by the taking of action, in the least frequent types of dispute.

In the most common disputes of all, those arising out of trivia and having no particular direction and no specific purpose, it is only about one in a hundred that comes to a head in a way that calls for action or decision, such as the case of the two brothers (34). Such
[686] disputes gave frequent opportunity for the voicing of opinions on al-
[182] most any matter, and acted as a mechanism by which most incipient disputes of a more serious nature were detected and aired before they grew to major proportions.

627 An examination of all the recorded disputes shows that without a
626 doubt there are forces working toward order in Mbuti society, de-
578 spite its unformalized nature and the absence of political or legal
121 "systems." Such forces include the compelling demands of the stom-
182 ach, which suffers directly from any dispute that interrupts the hunting and gathering economy, as any major dispute will; the weight of public opinion, expressed verbally, or through ridicule or mime, or in action such as thrashing (rare, and only for youths) or ostracism and exile. These are the negative forces against antisocial behavior.
626 There are equally positive forces toward social behavior, including
121 the esteem of one's age mates and elders, the affection of children, the
182 contentment of a full stomach and, perhaps above all, the belief in
778 the personal benevolence of the forest.[10] The positive aspect of the

[171] [10] Fortune (1935) describes a parallel situation among the Manus, who, like the Mbuti, respect morality beyond the pressures of social sanctions. Fortune claims that the religious sanctions provide a socially established way of keeping the social sentiment "quick," and of bringing offenders to book without seeming to be personal. The latter aspect of religious sanctions is probably more vital for the Mbuti, where any dispute is

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forest as an incentive toward good behavior is far more important and far more strong than its negative aspect as a deterrent against bad behavior.

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likely to be highly disruptive but where disputes nonetheless occur. Any personal intervention or judgment would only be likely to lead to further disputes. The impersonal nature of the forest as arbitrator and judge maintains the impersonality of the laws; or if the forest is considered as endowed with personality, it is a spiritual personality and owes no more allegiance to one Mbuti than to another, and so is still impersonal in this context.

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uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [775]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunting in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 181 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo, keti, boru, roho, satani.* These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers, [192]

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nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

This power derives from a single source whose physical manifestation is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*ndura*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essentially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 761 776 828 772 776 828 159 534

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers. 535 765

but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

ROHO

The personality of the individual lies with the roho, and is the combination of a particular hora and mapo. A [illegible] heart and is spoken of as being hot or cold, [illegible] quiet. Hot and noisy are generally bad qualities, cool and quiet are good. But properly controlled hot and noisy can be quite [illegible] dangerous, for both are sometimes thought of as being 'strong'. The state of an individual's roho may be cited as contributory for his actions, and nobody can garner him, for it is bad to go against roho. However, a man or woman who is constantly acting in his or her roho to inflict antisocial acts such as homicide or witchcraft may be said to have a bad roho, and will be shunned.

SATANI (also Shetani)

This is a concept derived from the villagers, and is for the Mbuti more in the realm of folklore than belief. For them, as for the villagers, malevolent and dangerous forest spirits. The Mbuti use the term in this sense only when accounting a village tale or a tale concerning villagers, for they essentially disbelieve in such evil spirits. However, they sometimes use the term, particularly if talking to Ngwana (to which language it belongs), in conversation with me. An additional complication: When talking to Bira they may use the (a Bira word) in the sense of the village Bira, which is the same as the Ngwana satani, or evil spirits. However, as the forest contains there is no concept of hell to which to consider by the villagers, the evil spirits being the hell as described above, invisible voices sought of the Mbuti themselves, no better and no worse. (Conversely, in the village world all the spirits of the forest are malevolent and dangerous; there is no concept parallel to that of the Mbuti concept of forest spirit.)

THE GODHEAD

As the Mbuti themselves necessarily adhere to which there is no sense in trying to describe what we have call 'the godhead' unless you have seen it, there is not much sense in our trying to do so further, by looking at various aspects of Mbuti life we can discern the nature

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776 tence of a belief in such a spiritual being, and its nature as being gen-
778 erally that of "the forest." From the foregoing description of the two levels of existence, human and *keti*, and of the generally accepted principle of spiritual animation, it is plain that there should be a source of such spiritual force. The mobility of the Mbuti, the com-
621 posite nature of the bands and the frequency of interchange between
628 bands all lead to a confused scattering of the various terms that appear in the village religious systems. I have been utterly unable to discern any pattern in which the godhead is divided into entities concerned with different aspects of Mbuti life, each with a distinct name; e.g., a god of the hunt known by one name, a god of the bush known by another, and so forth. Even within any one band it seemed singularly clear that there is only one godhead, though different individuals in that band may well use different names.[2] The forest *is* that godhead (*ndura nde kalisia*, or *ndura nde mungu*), rather than being thought of merely as its abode; hence the sanctity of the forest, and the profanity of anything that is not of the forest. That this is so is seen in the almost universal answer given when faced, either among themselves in the course of discussion or directly, by the question of where *pepo* derives from. The answer is that it derives from the forest itself (*pepo a kidi suba ndura*). Not just the trees or streams, or the sky or the soil, but from the totality, down to the last grain of sand.

778 We have shown earlier how the Mbuti frequently sing and shout to the forest, addressing it as "father" or "mother." They also sometimes address it as "friend," or even "lover." They are perfectly well able to explain this, for they say that "the forest is everything"

114 [2] Schebesta (1952, 303) says that the Basua (net-hunters) refer to the divinity as
776 *mungu*, *keti*, *kalisia*, and *songé*. I have found all these terms used, but without any
778 different significance in the forest context, while they each have a special and separate significance among the villagers. The important point is that Schebesta recognizes that
184 the divinity "loves" the Mbuti, who owe everything to him, while the villagers are afraid of him. Here I believe Schebesta to have come across the forest as it is considered by the Mbuti in the evening *molimo*, the source of all good. In discussing the archer concept of the divinity, Schebesta (1952, 305–6) refers to the different visualizations they have of *toré*, frequently ugly, noisy and menacing. I found these same interpretations of *toré* among the archers, but always in reference to the other aspect of the forest, not as the mother provider but as the father lawgiver. Among the net-hunters, when the morning *molimo* comes into camp to wreak havoc, it is greeted with cries of *e téré*, *e téré*, it being openly agreed that this was a form of the archer word *toré* and referred only to this aspect of the *molimo*. But my informants would add, "It is all the same thing, it is all the forest." Schebesta's description of *toré* not only corresponds to a different aspect of the Mbuti *molimo*, but it also corresponds closely to the description given by Vergiat (1936, 53–7) of the "génie de la brousse" among the Ubangi villagers, to the northwest. Here, as by the Lesé/Efe, that divinity is described as a grotesque caricature of an Mbuti, fearful to all villagers but strangely friendly to the Mbuti hunters.

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(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778 ●
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- [114]
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon [776]
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

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This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinand'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound.

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti.

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.)

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*.

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ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765]
I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *berai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

822 "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to de-
[198] scribe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira
[192] term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed.
822 The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed
198 pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general,
[178] but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the
[161] song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so
[533] touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and
[533] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also,
[165] whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely
[821] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them
[189] to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of
824 seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles
[198] are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki*, *segbe*)
[192] have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt-
[222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe*
[825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

• 778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
718 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is 796
taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and sim- [533]
ply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser [224]
molimo, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may [76]
develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*) 765

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is [828]
largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of [778]
poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in pro- [261]
viding food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the
761 one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
• 778 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74
[594] *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

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tled, how good the weather is, and whether or not visiting relatives or 765
friends are expected. Within a few days, however, the festival will be- 765
gin, and from the moment of its inception its stated concern is to 778
awaken and, even more important, to rejoice the forest. The lesser *molimo* is more often spoken of as "awakening" the forest (*su kongi ndura*), though that too has to be done in a way that will rejoice it. The greater *molimo* should ideally be a festival of sheer joy. The 765
course of the festival becomes more and more a symbolic triumph of 372
life over death, the death of the individual being recognized in the final dramatic stamping out of the *molimo* fire, the fire of life. This is [525]
not done, however, until time and time again the fire has been attacked in an effort to destroy it, but has been regenerated by the dances of the men, who in a dance that imitates the act of copulation, with the fire as their partner, fan the scattered fire back into a blaze of life.

It is normally the old woman, who is an integral part of every greater 765
molimo, who either by herself or with a girl attacks the fire, dancing 372
through it and scattering it all around. Thus the woman who gives 661
birth to life also seeks to destroy it. She is referred to by no title other 462
than "mother," the same term of address used for the forest in its capacity as giver of life and death. It is primarily the young men who hastily rebuild the fire and fan it back into a blaze with their dance of life. It is frequently said that the women used to possess the *molimo*, but it was stolen from them by the men, and this dance, together with the tying up of the men by the old lady (Turnbull, *ibid.*, p. 323), may well represent in part this early conflict, and the attempt of the women to regain possession of the *molimo*. Whatever the symbolism, it is nowhere clearly stated by the Mbuti, each individual claiming to see something different in the performance. It is generally agreed, however, that it shows how strong the women are, and that they have to be respected by men.

Whether or not there is thought to be any correlation with *pepo* 765
(breath), the power of breath to fan sparks into fire is demonstrated 372
when coals are placed in the end of the *molimo* trumpet. The singer 661
blows as he sings, and the sparks that fly out of the end of the trumpet 778
are greeted by murmurs or even shouts of acclaim. 534

The trumpet is sometimes referred to as an "animal" of the forest, 765
though this is generally in connection with its morning appearance. 534
Nonetheless it is referred to as needing food and water, and these it symbolically receives. It is also passed through the *molimo* fire and [372]

765 534 778 It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as sacred in itself, hidden though it may be. There was one instance when a trumpet was stolen by a member of a different family and a different band, simply because it had such a good "voice" and could sing so well. Whatever power it possesses it is believed to possess through the quality of its "voice." The fact that it can be stolen or lost (they sometimes get washed away in the floods that follow a particularly torrential downpour), without causing any ritual crisis, is in keeping with the lack of concern for inheritance of the trumpet. It is said by youths that anyone who wants to make one can have it, but that if they do not want to be bothered they need not, for "the *molimo* is a lot of work." Elders, however, say clearly that there used [43] to be one for each family, and by family they plainly defined a minimal lineage, all male members descended from a single living grandfather or from the same father, living or dead.

765 534 [611] [174] The fact that they also say that the *molimo* used to be the concern of the band only, perhaps indicates an earlier but now less pronounced emphasis on the principle of patrilineal descent; be that as it may, a noted feature of *molimo* festivals today is their utterly nonlineal nature (Tables 9 and 10).[1] With reference to the greater *molimo* held for Balekimito, there were at one time three *molimo* trumpets in action, only one of which belonged to a member of Balekimito's lineage, the second belonging to her son, the third to Kokoyo, whose wife's stepmother's brother was married to a woman of the same clan as Balekimito—a rather distant claim to lineage—but Kokoyo and Ekianga brought out their *molimo* trumpets because their *roho* wanted it. [621] Thus, by this means they emphasized the importance not of lineage membership but of membership of the band, and the *molimo*, as of old, was at least a band festival, if not a lineage festival.

765 621 771 778 181 182 A more systematic analysis in the next chapter shows the importance of the *molimo* festival as an integrating factor in Mbuti life, and indeed the importance of their whole religious system, based as it is upon a belief in the benevolence of a forest spirit or power. It can, for the moment, be seen clearly enough that it expresses among other things the latent antagonisms that exist between the sexes, because of the same lack of clear, formal sex delineations that characterize the *molimo* itself. It also unites the band (regardless of kinship considerations) in a common expression of the dependence of the Mbuti upon the forest, not only as an economic entity but also as a spiritual entity, a spiritual power that looks after their needs but which is also able to inflict hardship and punishment. The *molimo* heightens

[1] [see page 331 -- Analysis]

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the practical economic dependency of the Mbuti upon the forest, which is felt and acknowledged, by forcing an acknowledgment of the most basic dependency of all, that of life and death. The association with the festival of all the basic elements—fire, water, air and earth—and the central importance of food and sex, all combine to create a highly direct, personal and intimate relationship between the Mbuti and the forest, while at the same time binding them together as a band, the one individual dependent upon the next.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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is essential, and gathering, though done mostly by women, may also be done by men when opportunity affords. Perhaps the most significant activity that is generally performed by women is that of house-building. The only men I have seen build their own houses have been bachelors or widowers, and even then they will frequently get women to do this for them. The woman builds the house; she has the final say in selecting the site. She is in charge of the family hearth, where the cooking is done and around which the family eats and sleeps. Her husband may eat with other men at the central hearth, so the family fire may be said to be of major importance to her and her children. And it is precisely at the parental level that the personal terminology differentiates the sexes.

Looking for significant differences in attitudes and relationships between a child and its mother and father, it is plain that the mother is regarded as the source of food, despite the fact that the father is the prime force in the hunt. It might be worth mentioning again here that vegetable foods (entirely discounting village influence) form the bulk of any forest diet, and their nutritive value is probably equal at least to that of the game consumed. In any case, the father gives the game and any vegetables he may have gathered to his wife, who cooks the food and distributes it. A hungry child looks to any one of his classificatory mothers for food, not to his fathers. His most likely chance of finding it will be at the hearth of his nuclear family, but any mother is under as strong an obligation to feed him as the mother from whose stomach he came.

There is no doubting the difference in the emotional connotations of *ema* and *eba*, differences that are not found to exist in attitudes to the sexes at other age levels. *Ema* (mother) is associated with love (*ekondi*); *eba* (father) is associated with authority (*mota*). We have referred a number of times to the habit of the Mbuti addressing the forest as *ema* and *eba*, and although I can adduce no body of evidence to indicate on what occasions it is addressed by which term, it would seem to reflect the attitude of the individual at the moment of address, and the frequency with which the forest is addressed, as both indicate something of great importance in understanding the Mbuti value system, upon which social order so largely depends. The forest is not only the provider, it is also the ruler; it is to be regarded with affection and respect, and under all circumstances to be trusted.[3]

[3] Schebesta (1952, 340) asserts: "*Les noms attribués à Dieu relèvent de deux catégories. Ou bien on l'invoque simplement sous ceux d'*afa, bapapa, odu . . . *père, grand-*

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

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group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

114 patterns produce "features typical of the patrilineal band," for the
182 patterns differ from group to group, and within each group from one
621 time of the year to the next. At one time or another, each group, net-hunters or archers, will be able to present bands that resemble patrilineal units; at other times the same bands will be utterly nonlineal, even though the exploitative pattern may not have changed.

182 Nonetheless, the environment itself does play a vital structural role, and while not necessarily determining the exploitative activity, or the dependence of the Mbuti upon it, is determinant of their value system so long as that dependence is felt. For, feeling that way, re-
[778] garding the forest as *ema* the provider, and as *eba* the ruler, believing that any deviation from the way of life ordained for them by the forest would be fatal, the Mbuti effect what control they can over their lives by a constant effort to "rejoice the forest."

183 Conceiving that the forest is intelligent, the Mbuti conceive that it
778 is like them, and consequently the ideal that they hold for themselves
[621] is the ideal they attribute to the forest. While age and territory are effective in organizing the band, dividing it into significant units, binding it together as a whole, and determining the general nature of interpersonal relationships, the territory enlarged into the forest seen as mother and father acts as the ultimate sanction of all behavior. There are certain recognized forms of behavior that lead to a "good" band, and others that lead to a "bad" band. The appropriate positive and negative sanctions are formulated in such a way that all actions are either pleasing to the forest—leading to the ideal of *ekimi*, or quietness—or displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami*, or noise. (*Ekimi* and *akami* are, in practice, essential elements in determining the success or failure of the hunt.)

183 Thus it is recognized that cooperation is essential for the success
577 of the hunt, so it is stated that laziness and aggressiveness and dis-
778 putatiousness are all displeasing to the forest, leading to *akami* (as indeed they do). The *akami* is their own reward, for *akami* destroys
[157] the hunt and "kills" the Mbuti. On the contrary, to hunt well, to have
[224] a full stomach, to sing and dance, is to please the forest and lead to *ekimi*, or "quietness," and *ekimi* in turn brings good hunting, and is associated with singing and dancing and feasting.

579 Here is a very clear example of the closest possible association be-
778 tween religious belief and ethical behavior. The distinction made by
622 Radcliffe-Brown (1952, p. 172) between law, morality and religion,
[621] upheld by legal sanctions, sanctions of public opinion, and religious
[114]

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sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
• 778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[793] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by 131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, [192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep- 778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a tree or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they are [illegible] the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise, that is, to be disputatious. For the counterwalue, *ekima*, is only "good" and thus not only is *ekima* (*kobowanga*), which is considered as an indication of peace and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the bad mess is destroyed by destroying the *ekima*, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only be scribed as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys *ekima* and "[illegible] the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of *ekima*, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its more common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is uncommon among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but our length of time is not long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is probability not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the men if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *ekima* value. Youths and elders will slide down at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together to some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amolima, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amolima, with unusual vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered quite, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amolima was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own [illegible]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

577 deavor of this kind, however, is recognized as being fraught with dif-
183 ficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure,
828 for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the
533 forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist,
778 of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

577 The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa*
183 *ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being
828 no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English
192 concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

577 Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best de-
183 scribed by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing
828 gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel
533 good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even
778 when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a
152 mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

533 While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well,
778 for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from
224 shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

2: Tumbuli E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that offered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

765 ceremonies of the local Negro tribes, nor did it follow any prescribed ritualistic details beyond a general over-all pattern. It was plain that [534] the molimo trumpets were not considered as highly sacred objects in [538] themselves; what was important, for some reason, was the sound they produced. It was also very clear that the people of the forest [186] wanted to be quite sure that the village world was well sealed off, because before the men gathered together that evening I found that the path leading out of the camp toward the village had been closed. A fallen branch and some logs had been dragged across it, shutting out the profane outside world.

The molimo of the Pygmies is not concerned with ritual or magic. In fact, it is so devoid of ritual, expressed either in action or words, that it is difficult to see what it *is* concerned with. Every day, around midday, a couple of youths would go around the camp, just as they had done this day, collecting offerings of food and firewood from hut to hut, for the molimo concerns everyone, and everyone must contribute. And each evening the women and children shut themselves up in their huts after the evening meal, for the molimo is mainly the concern of the men. And when the women have retired the men sit around the kumamolimo—the hearth of the molimo—and gaze into the molimo fire. Nearby a basket hangs, full of the offerings of food that will be eaten later. But first the men must sing, for this is the real work of the molimo, as they say; to eat and to sing, to eat and to sing. Yet behind these apparently simple outer trappings of the festival there was an atmosphere of almost overwhelming expectancy.

765 That first night, after I had eaten my meal, I went over to the 533 molimo fire, halfway between Manyalibo's hut and that of his daugh- 534 ter Kondabate and her husband Ausu, where the men were already gathering. I noticed that Amabosu, the singer, was not there. I knew why when, a few minutes after the singing had begun, I heard the voice of the molimo answering, way off by itself in the forest. It

115 But, most important, he[1] told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not
[533] looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[1] [i.e. Moke - analyst]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know 621 that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But 626 578 the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he 626 does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his 593 friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group 584 will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they 626 are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that 157 they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a 181 husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, 621 no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, 829 "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great pro- 778 vider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food, showing that it was a kumamolimo, the only outward indication that the God of the Forest had been invoked and was waiting silently nearby, in the trees or in the Lelo itself, ready to enter the camp at night and join his people in their songs of joy and praise. The casual observer might have thought the youngsters were playing a game when they went around from hut to hut with a fishing line and a basket, collecting food from everyone. There was certainly nothing about their demeanor to indicate that this was an essential part of a great act of communion. And if the same observer were told that this was so, he would probably form the opinion that the molimo, whatever it was, could not mean very much if it was treated so lightly and casually.

This, in fact, is the opinion of the villagers. For them the ritual act is the important thing. In their religious rites it is the correct performance of the ceremonial that counts most. If correctly performed it is bound to bring the desired results, regardless of the accompanying thought, if indeed there is any. All attention is focused on the act itself. And it must not only be performed correctly, but with a solemnity that betrays fear.

The difference between the two attitudes is perhaps one of those fine shades of difference that divide magic from religion, though there is so much overlapping that they can seldom be divided in practice. Whereas the villagers believe that the act itself brings about results in a way they cannot explain, which is what we call magic, the BaMbuti do not believe this at all. They believe in a benevolent deity or supernatural power which they identify with the forest. To this they owe as much respect and affection and consideration as they owe to their own parents, and from it they can expect the same in return. So, for the Pygmies, it is not so much the act itself that counts, or the manner in which the act is performed, but the thought that goes with it. The collecting of food from hut to hut is not a

on us all and disappeared into his hut. The molimo, surrounded by 765
a triumphant entourage, now left the village, and we escorted it 534
back to the forest. Dawn was breaking, streaking the sky with gold and crimson, and as soon as we had found a suitable temporary hiding place we returned to the village.

It was in a dreadful state of chaos. Black ashes and cinders covered 765
the ground everywhere; manioc plants were uprooted, sugar cane trampled down, chairs smashed, leaves torn off roofs and the mud from many walls crumbled on the ground. The Negro villagers were full of complaints, but in the Pygmy village men and women were silent, sleepily clearing up the wreckage and preparing for the midday feast. Nobles and headmen began arriving from neighboring villages, and as even the four poles that represented the Pygmy baraza had been smashed to the ground, they took possession of my veranda. They had come to supervise the ritual feast which, according to their custom, marked the end of the mourning ceremonies for Balekimito. They were a little surprised to find that the elima occupied the house in which Balekimito had died, but the Pygmies were in no mood to argue. They just shrugged their shoulders and said it was a good house. As far as they were concerned they had finished mourning their personal loss as soon as their mother had been buried. From then onward they had been fulfilling their duty 761
to the forest by rejoicing with the molimo for the long and good 765
life that had been granted to the old lady. They had acknowledged 372
the gift of the fire of life from the forest, and the forest's right and 778
power to withdraw it; they had acknowledged and accepted the facts of life and death as both being, equally, the gift of their god.

But if the villagers wanted them to have a formal feast to end 765
the mourning, and were willing to give the food, they did not object. 594
177

The food was cooked and laid out in the center of my veranda, which when the sun was high was the only cool and shady place in the village. This meant that the villagers were pushed to the edge as

222 527 517 [588] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

• [778] [821] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 602 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

114 or chirp of a cricket tells you that the forest is alive with some presence.

As I splashed my way through the last stream and climbed to the top of the rise above Apa Lelo, the sounds of the forest grew louder. This was a friendly sign, but somehow it made me feel even more lonely. Then I came down into the old camp. The huts were rotted and collapsed, the clearing overgrown. As I roamed about, tracing where huts had been and remembering who had lived there, kicking idly with my feet in the hopes of finding some familiar object, it all began to live again. I wandered down to the Lelo, as calm and placid and beautiful as ever, and I thought of the molimo. As I looked into the waters where the trumpet had once been hidden, it was as if I heard its voice in the distance, gentle but insistent.

181 When I had bade my farewell to that very special river and returned to the camp, I saw it as it really was in the timelessness of the forest world—the huts strong and green, the fires burning brightly, and the air heavy with the scent of cooking. Lizabeti was running about with the other children, swinging happily on her crutches. The men helped one another to examine and repair their nets, while the women cooked and gossiped. Masisi was shouting at someone, and Manyalibo was trying to pacify him in his usual gruff, good-natured way. Old Moke sat back in his chair and puffed at his pipe, gazing up at the tree tops so very high above. I heard him murmur once more, "You will see things you have never seen before. . . . You [FN8] will understand why we are called People of the Forest. . . . When the Forest dies, we shall die." And for the last time I heard the chorus of that great song of praise: "If Darkness *is*, Darkness is Good."

000 The camp and the people disappeared, leaving only a shimmering haze over Apa Lelo, but the song remained, for the song is the soul of the people and the soul of the forest. The molimo trumpet, now

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

575 special *elima* songs by initiated girls and women, to mark any event of special importance to the womenfolk of the camp. The *elima* is an association that serves to bind women of otherwise different backgrounds together. It not only emphasizes their unity as a group opposed to the group of men, but also emphasizes their identification with the hunting band as a whole. It serves as a means of religious expression for the women just as the *molimo* does for the men. It operates separately, but simultaneously, on occasions of common religious significance. Unfortunately, details are lacking in the Putnam material as to the exact occasions on which each of these associations functions.

[781]

[P. 224-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
562 every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
825 they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals; every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
825 about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
522 washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

765
know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765
534
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
322
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting

115 But, most important, he[1] told me, or rather
778 showed me, how the Pygmies believe in the goodness of the forest.
182 "The forest is a father and mother to us," he said, "and like a
181 father or mother it gives us everything we need—food, clothing, shelter, warmth . . . and affection. Normally everything goes well, because the forest is good to its children, but when things go wrong there must be a reason."

I wondered what he would say now, because I knew that the village people, in times of crisis, believe that they have been cursed either by some evil spirit or by a witch or sorcerer. But not the Pygmies; their logic is simpler and their faith stronger, because their world is kinder.

Moke showed me this when he said, "Normally everything goes well in our world. But at night when we are sleeping, sometimes things go wrong, because we are not awake to stop them from going
[136] wrong. Army ants invade the camp; leopards may come in and steal a hunting dog or even a child. If we were awake these things would not happen. So when something big goes wrong, like illness or bad hunting or death, it must be because the forest is sleeping and not
[533] looking after its children. So what do we do? We wake it up. We wake it up by singing to it, and we do this because we want it to awaken happy. Then everything will be well and good again. So when our world is going well then also we sing to the forest because we want it to share our happiness."

115 All this I had heard before, but I had not realized quite so clearly
778 that this was what the molimo was all about. It was as though the
776 nightly chorus were an intimate communion between a people and
• 781 their god, the forest. Moke even talked about this, but when he did
182 so he stopped working on his bow and turned his wrinkled old face to stare at me with his deep, brown, smiling eyes. He told me how all Pygmies have different names for their god, but how they all know that it is really the same one. Just what it is, of course, they don't know, and that is why the name really does not matter very

[1] [i.e, Moke - analyst]

much. "How can we know?" he asked. "We can't see him; perhaps only when we die will we know and then we can't tell anyone. So how can we say what he is like or what his name is? But he must be good to give us so many things. He must be of the forest. So when we sing, we sing to the forest."

The complete faith of the Pygmies in the goodness of their forest world is perhaps best of all expressed in one of their great molimo songs, one of the songs that is sung fully only when someone has died. At no time do their songs ask for this or that to be done, for the hunt to be made better or for someone's illness to be cured; it is not necessary. All that is needful is to awaken the forest, and everything will come right. But suppose it does not, suppose that someone dies, then what? Then the men sit around their evening fire, as I had been doing with them for the past month, and they sing songs of devotion, songs of praise, to wake up the forest and rejoice it, to make it happy again. Of the disaster that has befallen them they sing, in this one great song, "There is darkness all around us; but if darkness *is*, and the darkness is of the forest, then the darkness must be good."

As Moke looked at me and spoke I wondered if this was how he had once explained things to his own son. Now I began to understand what happened at night when fifteen feet of drainpipe was carried into the camp and someone blew or sang into it; and I began to understand what the "presence" was—it was surely the presence of the Forest itself, in all its beauty and goodness.

Moke turned back to his bow and began whittling again.

"You will soon see things of which you have never heard, and which you have never seen. Then you will understand things that I can never tell you. But you must stay awake—you may see them only once."

He started humming to himself, and I left.

765 lage, and I heard leaves being ripped off roofs and the dried mud
534 beaten from walls.

765 There was a subtle change of atmosphere, and a tremendous air
533 of expectancy. By their insistent singing the older men seemed to
• 781 be trying to avert some disaster, as did the youths by their danc-
[513] ing. Moke allowed nobody to sleep or rest except for a very brief spell when he kept half a dozen men singing while the others dozed as best they could around the fire. Then he woke us up and goaded us all into singing harder than ever. The molimo had left and was evidently playing havoc in the Negro village. But as we sang it came sweeping back into the camp from behind Ekianga's house.
765 The two fire-dancers in front sent showers of sparks up into the air
781 and onto the ground. The molimo made straight for the central fire.
535 It knocked us aside—even old Tungana—and slowly and deliber-
534 ately it trampled through the fire, scattering it to all sides.
372

The men who had been sitting were on their feet at once, and hurriedly threw the scattered logs back into the center and joined the dancers in bringing life back to the fire. But the molimo was insistent, and the next time all the men joined with it. Reluctantly at first, then sharing the inevitability of the occasion they too danced and stamped among the flaming logs until there was nothing left but glowing coals. As the pace of the dance increased, the embers were scattered wider and wider, until the whole of the village seemed to be carpeted with winking red eyes. The molimo was once again blowing martial blasts, and the men accompanied it with a deep, rhythmic chant. All except a few of the elders followed it on its last tour of the camp, slow and majestic, tramping out the fire of life until there was only one glowing ember left. I saw Moke sadly sit down on the ground beside it, pick it up in his hands and fondle it.
[276] He took a cigarette butt from behind his ear and lighted it with the coal. He put the coal carefully back on the ground, stood up and stepped on it until it too was extinguished. Then he turned his back on us all and disappeared into his hut.

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *begbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magba*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

857 The direct contribution of the children to the 22 food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

183 (B)

[ARCHERS]

P M 764 177 171 P [621] [628] [613] M [782] [761]

Schebesta (1948, 545) cites this burial as evidence of band and lineal solidarity (e.g., the prominent part played by neighboring bands in the funeral), and of the importance of the *karé* relationship. Significant differences between the Mbuti and the Lese ceremonies were the absence, in the archer funeral, of the sacrifice of a hen over the grave, the absence of the official mourners in their clothes and white paint, of a goat offering, and above all of the absence of a long palaver, following the burial, to place the blame for the death. The question of blame did arise after the Mbuti burial described, but it was the Lese who were primarily interested. Nor, according to Schebesta, does a death have such far-reaching social consequences among the archers as among their villager neighbors.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Z P 177 439 608

The relationship between the Efe archers and their villager neighbors is mentioned above. The two peoples are associated in a hereditary system, based on trade, strengthened by the

[ARCHERS]

776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as the original possessor of fire (as is the chim-
825 panzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
76 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P 189-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 189-C]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates 776
the presence of Toré: mental confusion or dis- [827]
order, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad [828]
luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is [777]
absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and
human beings, of life and death. Everything
belongs to him because he created everything,
but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is [782]
offended by failure to make him offerings from
the chase, by quarrels within the band, by dis-
respect for elders, by infraction of lineage exog-
amy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices.
He punishes such actions or omissions by caus- [784]
ing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards
on the community (or individual) concerned,
by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore. 776 177 [114]

Schebesta believes that, though different groups of archers give precedence to one name or another, there is only one God of the Undergrowth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning. 776 82 [184] [825]

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good. 776 [171]

Cult Practices

776 782 •

A number of practices are associated with the

[P. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *toré* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
82 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
534 blowing of the *segbe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *segbe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his
782 "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
224 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
372 the apparently ancient *begbe* beat hunt, as is mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

[ARCHERS]

• 782 All Mbuti are said by Schebesta to offer a portion of food to the God of the Undergrowth. We can take this to apply to the archers. The practice seems to concern only food that has been hunted or gathered—game, honey, and vegetable products. The offering, never made with great fervor, may simply be thrown into the undergrowth, either in silence or with a brief comment such as "*Mugu! daó a iye!*" ("*Mugu!* This is for you!"). Alternatively, it may be placed on a leaf and taken with care into the forest and put in the fork of a tree, with or without an invocation. Stakes may be used, driven into the ground, forked into three or more branches at the upper end. Clay pots [415] (obtained from villagers) or potsherds are [177] placed in these forks for the offerings. Holes in the sides of trees are also used as a depository for offerings. The Mbuti do not usually use special shrines or spirit huts, affirms Schebesta, though in imitation of the villager ancestor shrines, they sometimes build crude shelters for the God of the Undergrowth and, on occasion, place offerings there.

According to one of Schebesta's archer in- [224] formants, sacrifice following the hunt is not to [769] Toré but to the *lodi* (the dead) who then inter- [776] cede with Toré.

Another important sacrifice is made for the 782 re-opening of the forest (*abo lese* or *sulia*). Con- 776 tinuously bad hunting may be attributed to the 224 anger of the God of the Undergrowth, caused by

[P. 190 - B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P.190-C]

some individual among Toré's children. In his anger he closes the forest so that the hunters can kill no game. Under the circumstances all the weapons in the camp are brought out and placed in a pile in the center of the clearing. The hunters stand around in a circle, each with an arm held over the weapons. As described by Schebesta, the transgressor, who had divided game he had caught without waiting for the elder, brandished a live chicken over the center of the circle praying for success in the hunt. In the invocation he mentioned Bali (local name for the God of the Undergrowth), "fathers," "grandfathers," and the name of his own father who had apparently been an outstanding hunter. Then the elder cut off the head of the chicken, sprinkled blood on the weapons and the arms of the hunters, and threw the fluttering carcass onto the ground. Everyone watched which way it moved, and when it finally fell with the stump of its neck pointing toward the forest, this was taken as a good omen and there was a

782 776 224 [789]

[ARCHERS]

shout of joy. The wife of the elder then took the carcass and invoked Bali and the ancestors, asking them to give their children game again. The dead chicken was then given to a woman married into another band who, together with her children, ate it. This woman's son, a nephew of the band concerned, built a small hut (*sa'a*) near the elder's hut, and placed in it the heart and liver of the chicken; the head was stuck on a stake above. The elder made an invocation for game to both Bali and the *befe* (sprites). 776 224 782

Schebesta came across this ceremony twice, once at Rodjo and once at Maseda, identical each time except for minor differences. Certain details, he claims, are borrowed from the villagers, such as the use of a chicken, which the Mbuti do not raise. He thinks that the sprinkling of blood is also foreign but that nonetheless there evidently was once an indigenous ceremony for opening the forest, involving the offering of the heart and entrails of game. 782 184 177 [235]

This practice of invocation and sacrifice to the "*Buschgott*" is held by Schebesta (1950, 209) to be the most significant feature of Mbuti religion, distinguishing it clearly from the religion of the villagers who have no cult to the forest God. 782 776 171

Costermans (1938), however, believes that the word "Toré" cannot be associated with "God," that the *toré* association has no religious 776 192 114

[P.190-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

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[P. 226-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 227-A]

575 reached a climax (drums were being used, un-
533 usual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*),
534 the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one
782 of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a
796 present tonight." Another said that there was nothing to give. Then one of the more important but younger hunters said, "We'll give it water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out and saw water being thrown over a figure that seemed to be white and that was playing the trumpet. The figure did not flinch and continued playing, while the hunter who suggested throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward the trumpet left, and the men sang without the drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this
796 kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Kalisia, if displeased with the Mbuti, will 776
close the forest to them, until they make the 782 •
propitiatory sacrifice *sulia*. The Mbuti are ex- [178]
pected to make offerings to Kalisia from their
food-gathering and hunting expeditions, and
Schebesta (1952, 304) mentions a shrine for this
purpose (*ende kela*). The hunters may less cere-
moniously throw offerings of food into the
forest. Schebesta says that no Mbuti in his right
mind would fail to make these propitiatory
sacrifices: "*à ce que m'a raconté un Nègre Bira*"
(Schebesta, 1952, 304). Unfortunately, Sche- 114
besta does not always identify his source of
information. However, from a number of ad- [124]
missions such as that noted above, we must
assume that his informants were frequently
villagers, not Pygmies, and that he also relied
on the question-and-answer technique among
both villagers and Mbuti (Schebesta, 1933,
171).

Both Schebesta and Putnam agree that the 776
forest God of the net hunters is feared by the [171]
villagers, who regard him in no way as benevo-
lent, in contrast to the Mbuti.

Schebesta also mentions the celestial divinity
Songe (the moon), with its own remote world,
as the sky God of the archers; also Keti, a bush

[P. 236-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with 731
water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and 821
snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have [823]
a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena.

As might be expected therefore, such ritual 788
as exists is most often connected with the storm [821]
and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. How- [778]
ever, cult practices are far less common, and he mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offer- 788
ings may be thrown into the undergrowth, 782.
though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or

[P. 237-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

788 any other god or spiritual being for protection
[782] or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A
[224] number of symbolic actions performed as parts of technological operations in order to smooth over the disturbance caused by some kind of change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in which the youngest male descendant of the hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and opens the operations dividing the meat for consumption (cf. p. 207).

771 Putnam, further, was never convinced that
[776] the Mbuti had any notion similar to the European notion of God. He disagrees strongly with Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious practice as indicating a belief in a personal god.
[789] He suggests that the ritual practices described by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sympathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct cause and effect in their magical practices is the only kind of "religious" belief that can safely be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or villager.

[NET HUNTERS]

two manifestations of the same spiritual being and that both this being and the *molimo* are in some way connected with death. The former causes death (whether in some or all cases is not known), but the latter seems to be different in that it appears only the day following death and can restore normality to the community in crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis. The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo* "animal" in times of crisis and brings it physically into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings of food, which is consumed by members of the *molimo*, and by dance and song. 761 776 [782]

No information is given as to any belief in the origin of death, or of any human failings that might cause it other than violation of the *molimo* by a woman or of the *elima* by a man. Infringement of rules of exogamy and other taboos may or may not cause death; individual opinion among the net hunters varies considerably on such matters. 761 784

According to local informants, the only villagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, Ndaka, and Bali. 776 171

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but not necessarily of death. When lightning comes at night, campfires may be covered so that the 821 [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esamba* for *lusumba*.

[P 238-0]

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skeptical amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
782 different attitude to the forest from that of the
575 villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*,
[829] from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[P 257-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 257-C]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their 796
unity. Their means of communication are spe- 776
cial songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to 778
the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in 782
terms of explicit supplication. They merely call 575
on the God of the Forest by constant repetition 796
of his name (frequently changing from one 776
name to another, it seems for the sake of variety 778
and euphony), and an occasional recitation of 782
his qualities as the source of all good in the 533
Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the 575
molimo horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

The function of these associations[1] is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1. [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

On the few occasions on which I have seen the Mbuti apparently go through with the act until the very end—that is, divining the witch, accusing him or her, trying the case, giving judgment and going through the necessary cleansing rituals and actually making the necessary restitutive payments—it was when they already had a grievance against a certain person and chose this way of expressing it. On each such occasion there was not, among the Mbuti, the slightest thought that the "witch" actually had anything to do with the death. On two occasions the accused was a woman singularly well equipped to appear as a witch, her face being almost entirely eaten away by yaws. She was actually extremely well liked, but nonetheless she belonged to the volatile Cephu family who were always joining and breaking away from the main band, and she was very loud in her comments about that main band. Further, her husband, Aberi, normally also well liked, was particularly quick-tempered and a disturbing element.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

are contradicted every day without necessarily causing any mention, but in the event of anything more serious happening later, the earlier incidents will be recalled and made into an issue that successfully embroils, ultimately, the entire camp.

But more curious than this slight emphasis on normal, or mildly abnormal and trivial patterns is the lack of emphasis at times where one would have thought the occasion to be of major concern to the band. Birth and marriage, for instance, provoke little comment, and concern primarily the nuclear families and not the band. The relationship between these particular attitudes and the nonlineal and fluid composition of the band is plain. The constant movement of families from one band to another, alone, opens up different and important avenues for recruitment that has the advantage of being selective.

With this in mind, let us look first at the daily life of the Mbuti, briefly, for it is of little structural significance, then at the life cycle.

Among both net-hunters and archers five days out of seven are likely to include some hunting. Even though it would be possible for the Mbuti to kill a surplus of game and dry the meat and store it for their own future use, as indeed they do for the benefit of the villagers, such measures are no more to their taste than to their advantage. On a hunting day the family rises at dawn, the mother and her older daughters who are at the age of puberty go to the stream to wash themselves and bring back water for drinking and cooking. The menfolk go to a different part of the stream, and generally slightly later. The older men might be excessively lazy and use the water brought back for drinking as bath water.

While the women cook the light morning meal and set food aside for taking with them on the hunt, the men shake out and inspect their nets, bows and arrows, their sons helping them or simply looking on. If the forest is dry, the hunt may start leaving within an hour of dawn, otherwise it may not leave until midday. Usually it sets off about two hours after sunrise and may return anytime between midday and dusk. There is no particular order for leaving the camp, but the youths usually go ahead, and not far away they light a fire at the base of a small tree, as an invocation to the forest for a good hunt. Men and women alike stop by the fire on their way, but with no ceremony. It does serve, however, as a place for a more cordial exchange of greetings than generally takes place in the still sleepy camp.

Back in the camp some old grandparents, or maybe only a handful

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, 851
including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social [17]
position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, [597]
regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among 856
the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of 854
disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar [751]
as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of [778]
forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of 844
supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication [782]
that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness de- [778]
rives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although [694]
birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the [621]
band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toengbe* wood. The *toengbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *engbe* (also *engbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

defined way, they do not hesitate to return at once to the forest. On the other hand, if they consider the death perfectly natural, they do not want to be bothered with a senseless preoccupation with causes. They know that in the course of the discussion the villagers will find opportunity to raise a number of issues better forgotten, such as unfulfilled obligations, and they are also uneasy at keeping the name of the dead person alive, in this way, for longer than is necessary. The forest procedure would simply be to bury the body, probably by pulling the hut down on top of it, then to abandon the camp and build a new one, never again mentioning the dead person by name.

On one occasion already cited (p. 10), an Mbuti funeral party returning from the grave converted itself into a wedding party. On another occasion, when the Mbuti were in a particularly festive mood and were bent on a long stay in the village, they played along with the witch-hunt even to the point of suggesting a second diviner from another village to check the findings of the first, stretching the proceedings out in this way for nearly a week. This meant that all the "mourners" (and Mbuti from villages up to twenty miles away came to this funeral) had to be fed for that long by the villagers. When the final act was done and the diviner had pointed out the witch that had "caused" the death, the Mbuti became annoyed that the villagers said something would have to be done about it, talking about a propitiation and a cleansing ceremony, with restitution. When the Mbuti saw they could not talk the villagers out of these less popular final rites, they returned to the forest, taking the "witch" with them.

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Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the 831
end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There 584
is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample [836]
opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such
experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last [832]
two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For 881
the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire 832
band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable 533
candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, 881
and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise 783
of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early 515
hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable op- 584
portunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

765 midst. Family members also openly comment on all the things they
152 should have done for the dead person but did not do. At times when one individual is particularly repentant, such as one old lady I saw who tied a noose around her neck, others will assist her. In this case the old lady was attacked by her own family, some of whom jumped on top of her, beating her to the ground, others grabbing the rope and tugging it, tightening the noose around her neck. There was never any question, however, that this was anything but a histrionic display. On a different occasion, when another old lady started stabbing herself with a knife, the band looked on unconcernedly because even when the blood was flowing freely they knew she would come to no harm; she was merely scratching the skin.

761 By contrast there is no actual attempt to lay the blame for death
765 at any individual's door. The occasion may be made one for blaming people for not having behaved as they should have behaved, but death itself is accepted by the Mbuti as being perfectly natural. It does not
• [783] seem to be thought of as unclean or contaminating, and there is no purification ritual, or any ritual to speed the soul of the departed on its way. On one occasion a procession of Mbuti returning from the burial of one of their band proceeded directly to the wedding of an-
[594] other member. The nuclear family concerned is under no restrictions, only under heavy pressure to forget the death as soon as possible. In wailing, instead of using the dead person's name the mourners will refer to him as "You who died in the morning," referring to whatever time the death took place. Those in the band not immediately related will not refer to the dead person even in this indirect way.

765 In various parts of the forest there are tales of a custom whereby
462 female relatives of a dead man used to close the trails leading to the camp and guard them, wailing and singing. Anyone wishing to pass had to pay by leaving an arrow in a piece of soft wood left there for the purpose. Among the Budo, in the north, this is known as *unai*, and the net-hunters in that region call it *butuma*. They say that while the girls are wailing and singing the men are silent. After a week the girls stop and the men take over and sing joyful songs. The women's job is "to remember," they say, the men's "to forget." The Budo and Mbuti insist this is an old Mbuti custom. (Among the Epulu Mbuti it is certainly true that most of the wailing is done by women, but it is not formalized in this way.)

[152] Among the Lesé the same custom is known as *ofa*. They say their
[171] women wailed for two or three months, and during this time the men

[ARCHERS]

[p.189-c]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates 776
the presence of Toré: mental confusion or dis- [827]
order, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad [828]
luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is [777]
absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and
human beings, of life and death. Everything
belongs to him because he created everything,
but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is [782]
offended by failure to make him offerings from
the chase, by quarrels within the band, by dis-
respect for elders, by infraction of lineage exog-
amy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices.
He punishes such actions or omissions by caus- [784]
ing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards
on the community (or individual) concerned,
by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

[ARCHERS]

613 larly a child, who is said always to respect his
614 patrilineal totem, respects his mother's totem
[608] when living with her group. A man also ob-
serves the totemic restrictions of his *kari*-
[784] brother. The totem is always taboo for the
[262] Mbuti. One may never eat it, and often not kill
it, touch it, or even eat the food normally eaten
[753] by the totemic species. Breach of taboo is be-
[761] lieved to involve serious illness or death.

The relationship of the Mbuti to their totem is one not of fear but rather of respect, which Schebesta says is evidenced by their addressing it as "father" or "grandfather," and by the belief that the totem animal gave birth to the first member of the lineal group observing that totem.

[775] To this belief that the clan ancestor descended from the totem is allied the belief that on death the Mbuti is transformed into his totem. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile this with his analysis of Mbuti religion, and to see just which vital principle it is that becomes the totem. Connected with this difficulty is the
[761] all-important belief in *megbe*, the vital force
[778] emanating from the totem and immanent, but in different degrees, in all human beings.

Schebesta cites no individual or sex totems. As he sees it, totemism follows strictly lineage lines.

MAGIC

761 Schebesta finds the link between the religious
778 [P. 192-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

two manifestations of the same spiritual being and that both this being and the *molimo* are in some way connected with death. The former causes death (whether in some or all cases is not known), but the latter seems to be different in that it appears only the day following death and can restore normality to the community in crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis. The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo* "animal" in times of crisis and brings it physically into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings of food, which is consumed by members of the *molimo*, and by dance and song. 761 776 [782]

No information is given as to any belief in the origin of death, or of any human failings that might cause it other than violation of the *molimo* by a woman or of the *elima* by a man. Infringement of rules of exogamy and other taboos may or may not cause death; individual opinion among the net hunters varies considerably on such matters. 761 784

According to local informants, the only villagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, Ndaka, and Bali. 776 171

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but not necessarily of death. When lightning comes at night, campfires may be covered so that the 821 [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esumba for lesumba*.

[P 238-0]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 The second kind of taboo mentioned by Put-
562 nam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences
[262] in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this
[825] difference is probably connected with the as-
[823] sociation between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patrician or gens.
[p. 239-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.23A-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympathetic magic, but this is informal and unsystematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in that the meeting of the association in proper circumstances is believed to restore normality to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
(858) seem to be the non-participation of women and
children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
(885) bers of the band, the use of special songs and
(533) the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meetings of the association, and constant reiteration of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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the forest, and metaphorically into further dependence upon the forest.

Witchcraft being such an important part of their own lives, the villagers are unable to conceive how the Mbuti can survive without knowledge of the necessary procedures, and as in other instances, they assume control of appropriate situations and provide the procedure. Upon death in a village, for example, the cause of death must be determined, and the cause is usually believed by the villagers to be witchcraft or sorcery. If they do not discover the cause, the witch or sorcerer may continue to kill. The Mbuti have no knowledge of divination of this kind, so it is done for them by the villagers, and the villagers believe that this places the Mbuti in a dependent position. In fact of course it does not, because the Mbuti believe in natural causes rather than supernatural.

Similarly the Mbuti have no need for the concept of witchcraft to enable them to exert social control. They have their own procedures in this respect, but nonetheless they do sometimes use the village concept of witchcraft to regulate relationships with the village, still denying any belief in "witchcraft substance." They are aware, then, of the social value of witchcraft.

VILLAGE SORCERY

While from the Mbuti point of view sorcery is effectively synonymous with witchcraft, from the village point of view sorcery, being quite different, is by its very nature more directly related to the problem of exerting control over the Mbuti. No villager will admit to being a sorcerer, but there is nothing particularly reprehensible in a villager claiming to hire a sorcerer to curse an Mbuti. All he does in fact is to say that he has had a curse laid. (He may go to the local doctor and persuade him to take action, but in that case his action is legal and is not technically "sorcery," though the net result is much the same.) The curse, alleged or actual, is sometimes followed by the sickness or death of the person cursed.[1] But even if it is not, sooner or later some disaster will come to the family or band of the person cursed, and the villagers will claim that this is the result of the curse.

Insofar as the Mbuti consider the two worlds as being apart, and do not feel bound by their own code of forest behavior to behave in

[1] I have known three young Mbuti who were cursed for not having fulfilled a bargain with an Ngwana villager and died within a few months.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

that way toward the villagers, who are like animals, they also are forced to recognize that the villagers may feel similarly released from laws that would otherwise prevent them from using sorcery as a means of revenge. The villagers, in point of fact, usually deny actually using sorcery, even against the Mbuti, but they admit to using the threat of it. They do, however, use the doctor, who also has access to supernatural powers for the social good, but this involves religion rather than witchcraft or sorcery. It is mentioned here because the Mbuti considers the power, not the agent. Be it witch, sorcerer or doctor, it makes no difference; the Mbuti still has no recourse but flight.

Even flight, however, will not entirely remove the sneaking fear that persists despite expressed disbelief in these supernatural powers. And that power is perhaps no small factor in effectively giving the villagers some measure of control, though the villagers happily do not realize it. They simply believe in the efficacy of their magic, and of their supernatural powers.

The extent of the control that comes this way is difficult to measure, and it has to be balanced against the extent to which the situation drives the Mbuti into an even greater reliance upon their forest world, separating the two worlds still further. It certainly can be seen to operate effectively in inducing reluctant Mbuti to fulfill specific bargains. I did not come across any instances where the actual or threatened use of supernatural powers was invoked to control the normal course of the exchange relationship. But there were a number of instances over a twelve-month period in which Epulu villagers invoked supernatural powers to revenge themselves against Mbuti who had behaved with particular irresponsibility.

Three of the cases were of alleged sorcery. Sefu of Epulu village claimed that two Mbuti had accepted beans from him and had not sent him the meat they had promised in return. He said he had employed a sorcerer to make the Mbuti bleed to death if they did not give him the meat. But he lost courage when he thought that the administrator might get to hear of it, and he recanted. The Mbuti concerned sent him a token amount of meat and the matter was considered as settled.

André, headman of the village known by the name of his late father, Effundi Somali, claimed to have himself invoked supernatural aid against an Mbuti who refused to pay him money received by him when he captured a live okapi and brought it to the government station de chasse.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

never lost sight of. The trumpet itself, while avowedly an "animal" 765
whose animal noises (mainly in imitation of elephant and leopard) 534
are designed to scare women and children and keep them in their huts, is the only sign of the presence of a supernatural power. The main function of the trumpet is to sing, and to pass on the song of the Mbuti into the forest. It is taken off to a distance from where it picks up the song from the men around the *molimo* hearth and echoes it on into the night. This way, the Mbuti say, the forest is sure to hear it and be pleased.

Normally a trumpet is kept high up, concealed in a tree. During a festival, however, it is kept in water except when in use, for it is considered to represent the power of the forest for chastisement. Keeping it in water keeps it "cool." It acts, it seems, as an intermediary, passing on the song of the Mbuti to the forest, but returning in the morning with power, and sometimes with anger. When it appears in the [533]
morning, just before dawn, the men have had at the most an hour's sleep, and this is a signal for them to begin singing again. An adult male who fails to sing during a greater *molimo* festival is allegedly killed, and when the trumpet appears in the morning its first act is to search for sleeping men. It is held by a number of youths, who run up and down the camp in search (this may also happen during the evening). But then, to show its power, the trumpet is carried from hut to hut, the youths beating on each with branches and tearing leaves off the roofs. The huts of any troublemakers are particularly singled out, though with due regard for the process described under "Government," by which individual blame is avoided. The older men and even the women may yell at the *molimo* to go away, or to go back to the water, but on this occasion the youths are effectively in charge. There is generally a mock battle in which some of the youths will try to block the path of the trumpet, borne by other youths, or to deflect it in another direction. There may even be a tug-of-war, with some youths pulling it in one direction, some in another, though such contests are formal and enacted more as a dance than as an actual test of strength. All the time, those carrying the trumpet keep it concealed behind leafy branches, or simply by holding it between them. In the end it is carried out of the camp triumphantly as dawn breaks, and with a few defiant bellows returns to its secret hiding place in the water. A vine stretched across the stream warns women [784]
and children to keep away.

It is noteworthy, however, that the trumpet is not considered as

2: Turnball E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-L]

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41. A spot like this, in the Lele River, was the resting place of the molimo trumpets used in honor of Balekimito. Vines are stretched across the stream to warn intruders to keep away. The precaution, however, is as much for fear of theft as for fear of desecration.

FKS
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with excessive vigor. It would be an insult as well as *mbafu* (stupidity) to take all the trouble to rejoice the forest by song and then displease it by not having a particularly vigorous hunt. A month of this leaves the stoutest Mbuti more than a little tired, so although the remedy for *akami* lies in their hands, through song, at all times, it can be arduous and, since it is *mota*, it can be dangerous. Thus the supernatural sanction on social behavior is in no way lessened: the Mbuti all state that the forest, in its manifestation through the morning *molimo*, may punish and kill.

The system as described can be seen easily enough to maintain internal order, and it can also be seen well enough how it operates, as an essentially forest-centered system based on age and forest values, to maintain separation from a village system based on kinship and anti-forest values—for one of the cardinal village beliefs is not simply that the village is better than the forest, but that the forest is the source of all evil. But now we have to see how these same elements that make for social order in the forest (the nonlineal band, age, territory, noise and song) operate within the village framework.

Winter (1956) describes the relationship between the eastern extension of the Mbuti, the few who live among the Amba on the Uganda/Congo border, and the Amba themselves. Each group denigrates the other's mode of existence, yet they evidently live in the closest association with each other, in what Winter calls symbiosis. More important, he describes how two Mbuti groups are fitted into the Amba lineage structure, but only partially so. They are both attached to Bulibuli lineages, each to a maximal lineage as a whole; yet they do not share full and equivalent relationships as Bulibuli with the other lineages of the same clan. Winter mentions that they stand in a joking relationship with only one of the maximal lineages.

Joking relationships are generally thought of as pertaining between individuals who stand in a specific relationship to each other, involving both proximity and distance. The proximity is thought of in terms of kinship, the distance is due to a difference, if not a conflict, of interests. The relationship can involve considerable amity and mutual cooperation, but nonetheless contain elements of hostility, particularly in its outer expression (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952, p. 91). The exact formularization varies from situation to situation, tolerating or compelling joking behavior, on a symmetrical or asymmetrical basis.

The essential elements of this form of relationship are all present

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from
534 the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be
422 bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twis-
[124] ting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had
534 originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights be-
422 longed to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off,
534 he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet.
123 He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost
[989] on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mon-
[139] gongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick
[924] bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about
[784] three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

• 784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation. 262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain [P.337-A]

[ARCHERS]

[P.190-C]

some individual among Toré's children. In his anger he closes the forest so that the hunters can kill no game. Under the circumstances all the weapons in the camp are brought out and placed in a pile in the center of the clearing. The hunters stand around in a circle, each with an arm held over the weapons. As described by Schebesta, the transgressor, who had divided game he had caught without waiting for the elder, brandished a live chicken over the center of the circle praying for success in the hunt. In the invocation he mentioned Bali (local name for the God of the Undergrowth), "fathers," "grandfathers," and the name of his own father who had apparently been an outstanding hunter. Then the elder cut off the head of the chicken, sprinkled blood on the weapons and the arms of the hunters, and threw the fluttering carcass onto the ground. Everyone watched which way it moved, and when it finally fell with the stump of its neck pointing toward the forest, this was taken as a good omen and there was a [787]

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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 236-C]

complete documentation places it in the realm 128
of hypothesis rather than fact.

The Chthonic God

Schebesta does not specify whether the par- 114
ticular Mbuti from whom he collected most of his Sua material are net hunters or archers. But, except for his remarks on the Kango and "village Sua" (1952, 49, footnote, 301) to the extreme west of the Ituri forest, he seems to have drawn largely on the southeastern Mbuti. His information (1950, 14–24) does not differ [184]
greatly from that for the archers. The names 176
given to the divinity are Mu(n)gu, Keti, Kalisia, and So(n)ge. Epulu net hunters also loosely use the term Mungu, as do the neighboring villagers. According to Schebesta, Kalisia is the lord of the forest and game, and patron of the hunters, whom he loves. They [324]
owe everything to him. Above all, he is a benevolent God, helping the Mbuti in the hunt, guiding their weapons and assisting the beat, preceding the beaters and opening the trail. He [187]
is also the lord of dreams, making his wishes known to the elder, telling the hunter where to find game.

[P. 261-C]

They went off into the Forest together. The one man lived with his wife, but time went by and still they had no children. The other Pygmy saw this and decided that he would go to the main hunting camp. There he found another woman. He lived with her, and in due course a child was born. The Pygmy ran to his friend in the Forest in great joy, and told him the news. His friend immediately left the Forest and also lived with the woman in the hunting camp. They too had a child. And that is how Pygmies began, and how they became so plentiful. 539

Bazi

Another legend tells how two brothers fought over an ax.

One was killed, so the other said to his nephews and nieces: "See, I have killed your father. From now on, your family and mine are enemies. We will live apart; you will live over there and I will live here." And they parted forever.

That, a social anthropologist might say, was the beginning of fission and fusion.

But apart from this, and one legend telling how a great dreamer dreamed and was told how the Pygmies should make nets out of *nkusa* vine and hunt with nets, the remainder of legends dealing with the traditional past refer to relationship with the villagers, a subject of much more interest to the Mbuti. 539 177 787.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

craft or to a breach of marital taboos, as indeed are any disasters, natural or unnatural, that befall the couple. The Mbuti, not having any traditional means of divination, are considered by the villagers to be dependent on them for help, though a few Mbuti have learned the art and become quite highly respected by the villagers. Sometimes if villagers come to hear of a marital dispute within a band, they will try to settle it by reference to divination, and if so the Mbuti appear to accept the settlement without question, in the village, but in no way allow it to impinge upon the reality of the situation in the forest. So once again the only dependency that exists is in the minds of the villagers.

DEATH

Even when it comes to the greatest crisis of all, death, the Mbuti seem to accept all the externals of village ritual but none of the implications. The invariable accusation of witchcraft and the equally invariable mention of supernatural sanctions as an alternative cause of death are made to remind the Mbuti not to falter in fulfilling their obligations to their *kpara*. Village insistence upon the unnatural causes of death serves to sow enough seeds of doubt in the mind of the Mbuti to cause at least momentary fear.

The actual ritual of burial is conducted under strict village supervision, the necessary payments being made by the *kpara*. The *kpara* and his family, as well as many other villagers, attend personally in the procession to the grave, and the *kpara* is almost certain to take a prominent part in the subsequent discussion as to the cause of the death and be present at the divination, if one is held. But whereas the Mbuti generally subject themselves to village ritual with the best of grace, they become quickly impatient following the burial of the dead and sometimes simply walk out of the *baraza* where the cause of death is being determined, leaving it entirely to the villagers to decide whatever pleases them. The village preoccupation with death and its unnatural causes disquiets the Mbuti, and when an Mbuti dies in a village there is frequently voiced suspicion that somehow the village is responsible; maybe one of the old curses is at work, perhaps a neglected *kpara* is employing a sorcerer to seek revenge, or, more likely, it is impersonally simply the village itself that caused the death.

Among themselves the Mbuti do not bother to settle the question, if they ask it, but if they feel that the village is to blame in some un-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it.

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created.

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her.

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

spot a telltale movement first. Kenge's eyes were sharper, but he was seldom able to identify anything that was more than a few hundred yards away, whereas Henri could tell at several miles.

Everywhere the view was different, and Kenge was as fascinated by this constant change as he was by the abundance of game. The sun shone warmly in a clear sky, but the Ruwenzori had hidden themselves once more in a bank of cloud. Looking at them from the north side of the park we could see only the forest-covered lower slopes.

[187] All at once Kenge said, "I dreamed of my mother last night, and of my wife Maliamo. My mother was crying for me."

I asked him if he wanted to stay another day or so in the park, or go back, and he said he wanted to go back just as soon as he could. When we got back to the guest houses we heard that the superintendent was on his way, so we decided to leave at once rather than have any arguments as to whether it was better for a white man to eat in the kitchen with a Pygmy, or a Pygmy to eat in the dining room with white men. Henri returned with us to the entrance to the park, where he and Kenge said a fond farewell, Kenge giving him some of our stock of rice as a present.

Where the road leaves the heights above the plains and crosses over to the forest plateau, we stopped the car and got out to have a last look. The scene was at its most beautiful, and I waited for several minutes while Kenge took it all in, shaking his head and clucking his tongue in amazement. When he spoke all he said was, "The [196] *Père* Longo was right, this God must be the same as our God in the forest. It must be one God."

Our homeward trip was a triumphant one. Kenge sang loudly as we got farther and farther into the forest. He was so happy to be back that he forgot temporarily about his mother and Maliamo, and himself suggested stopping in several places, which we did.

[NET HUNTERS]

776 775 the body (p. 238). There is also some confusion among the net-hunter Mbuti between the terms *mungu* and *satani*, which at times appear to be interchangeable. Schebesta (1948, 493) says that the local Bira refer to these forest sprites as "*molimo*," the name they also give to their secret association of men.

776 As with the archers, abnormal conditions of the physical world denote the presence of the chthonic God. At such times the net hunters are careful not to expose themselves to his sight, which would bring death, nor to attract his attention by unseemly behavior. He is a benevolent God but one best kept at a distance. There is no evidence of any connection between God and the lineage through the elder, but each hunting band seems to regard Mungu, while God of all Mbuti everywhere, as being particularly concerned with them.[1]

Cult Practices

• 788 182 In so far as ritual is a response to uncertainty or crisis, the net hunters have far less need of it than many other peoples. As we show above, their forest environment provides them with

[1] In view of the extremely loose usage of the term mungu, I interpret net-hunter expressed attitudes as indicating a belief in a local deity, not necessarily named Mungu, somehow related to the over-all God.

[P 237-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P-237-C]

the basic necessities of life. No seasonal change 788 •
involves them in any significant change of 182
activity (except possibly the honey season, when game hunting may be abandoned). The economy of the Mbuti further militates against elaborate ritual by preventing the easy manufacture of ritual trappings and by not allowing for any substantial form of sacrifice. Nor is it possible to provide time and men for ritual specialization. This much applies throughout the Ituri. However, the net hunters, by their [224] hunting techniques, are assured of a larger and [184] steadier supply of game than the archers. Nevertheless, crises occur. The Mbuti, for in- 731
stance, are frequently beset with the tempestu- 132
ous rainstorms that sweep the forest in the afternoons and, more rarely, during the night or early morning. Putnam (1948, 338) points out that these storms not only cause physical discomfort in the hunting camp, where huts may become flooded and the clearing so swamped in mud that the whole camp must be moved, but they also prevent hunting and bring death through lightning or through causing dead branches to fall on people. Putnam writes: "No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly" (1948, 338).

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with 731
water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and 821
snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have [823]
a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena.

As might be expected therefore, such ritual 788
as exists is most often connected with the storm [821]
and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. How- [778]
ever, cult practices are far less common, and he mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offer- 788
ings may be thrown into the undergrowth, 782
though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or

[P. 237-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

788 any other god or spiritual being for protection
[782] or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A
[224] number of symbolic actions performed as parts of technological operations in order to smooth over the disturbance caused by some kind of change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in which the youngest male descendant of the hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and opens the operations dividing the meat for consumption (cf. p. 207).

771 Putnam, further, was never convinced that
[776] the Mbuti had any notion similar to the European notion of God. He disagrees strongly with Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious practice as indicating a belief in a personal god.
[789] He suggests that the ritual practices described by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sympathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct cause and effect in their magical practices is the only kind of "religious" belief that can safely be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or villager.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-8]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

Ma to-
237 rials which could well be made use of, such as skin, bone, and shell, are hardly used at all. Putnam claims that they are not use in his [189] area, although he writes that sometimes the Pygmies wear horn charms borrowed or stolen from the villagers. Virtually no use other than magical is made of bone, horn, or shell, as far as one can tell from reports from any part of the Ituri. Among the archers there are few of the skin quivers and bow covers mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 124). Putnam (MS) further [152] states that he has never known these Pygmies [162] to skin game; they cook and eat the skin as well as the flesh.

237 Schebesta (1952, 124), however, writes that 41 hide quivers are plentiful, particularly in the western part of the forest, less so among the archers in the east, where arrows are always carried in a bundle held in the left hand. Schebesta (1952, 124) also mentions the wrist protector, made of monkey skin, used by 237 archers. He makes other reference to the use of [191] skin as belts and for adornment and, occasion- [301] ally, the use of the skin of a Colobus monkey to cover the back, but he does not specify to which [189] Mbuti his remarks apply. We assume that, unless he specifies otherwise, he refers to the archers among whom he worked on his second trip.

(P.165-B)

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION 291

Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

sued and shot with bow and arrow whenever the opportunity arises but are never the object of organized hunting. Other smaller animals and birds are hunted individually; those that take refuge in holes in trees are smoked out. 224 [262]

Schebesta's account suggests that, despite his proficiency at the hunt, the Pygmy takes care to protect himself against its attendant dangers and disappointments by securing the cooperation of the God of the Forest, and of his ancestors, and by making use of magic. He carries charms, observes various taboos, and performs certain rites—mostly sympathetic. It is not clearly stated, however, exactly which rites and charms are used by which particular Pygmies; there is obviously a great deal of variation. Schebesta clearly indicates, however, that among the archers there seems to be a considerable amount of hunting magic and ritual, witnessed by their use of the special whistles (*Efe: sgbe*), magic formulas, invocation, and ritual practices he describes. 224 [78] [176] [169]

[P. 173-C]

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [325]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

I: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1985 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[p.192-c]

notions and practices of the archers and their totemism in their belief in *meghe*, the vital force dispensed, in part, by the divinity. It is one of the life principles, distinct from that which becomes a star or a sprite after death. *Meghe* is transformed anew into the totem when the body dies. The divinity possesses it in totality; astral beings are endowed with far more *meghe* than mortals; hence, their greater power and strength which derive from *meghe*. Mortals, then, have to reinforce their store of this vital force to give themselves additional strength and power. There are certain practices by which this may be achieved, notably by the use of bells hung about different parts of the body. When a man dies, his son may put his lips to those of his father to capture the *meghe* as it passes from his body. 761 778 778 761 789

By increasing his store of *meghe* the Mbuti can place himself on the same level as supernatural beings with whom he must have dealings. Schebesta cites legends showing how the Mbuti managed to steal fire from Tore by the use of bells to increase their *meghe*. [773]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*magwda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *bawa e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Cosermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 197-A]

truly nomadic group. All metal knife and ax blades are obtained ready-made from the villagers, also metal arrow and spearheads (which are frequently used as knives). The hafting and fitting of shafts may be done by the Pygmy himself, and certainly the arrow shafts are Pygmy-made. Open-mesh baskets (Fig. 41) are made by the women, who also obtain close-mesh baskets (Fig. 42) from the villagers.

DRESS AND ORNAMENTATION

Clothing of the net hunters is also similar to that described by Schebesta, but with less ornamentation of fur and skin and less use of charms and amulets. Putnam denies the use of skins for clothing among the Pygmies he knows. Anne Putnam ranks the manufacture of barkcloth as the major industry in a net-hunting camp, occupying even more time than the making and repair of nets. Putnam once said that the Pygmies did not make nets, but obtained them from the villagers; later, he changed his opinion.[1] A net is never made complete, but in the course of repair pieces are added or removed to start a new net.

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.225-A]

224
789
534

FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akelea*, attached to fur headband; worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbela*. c. Antelope horn, *anjo*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, *madi*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madi*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyengi*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing in the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[237]
[128]
[222]

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *turé* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a ovi gawa* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 • 799 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

Ir Turnbull E-4.8 (1951-1955) 1955 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti
Bira PO11

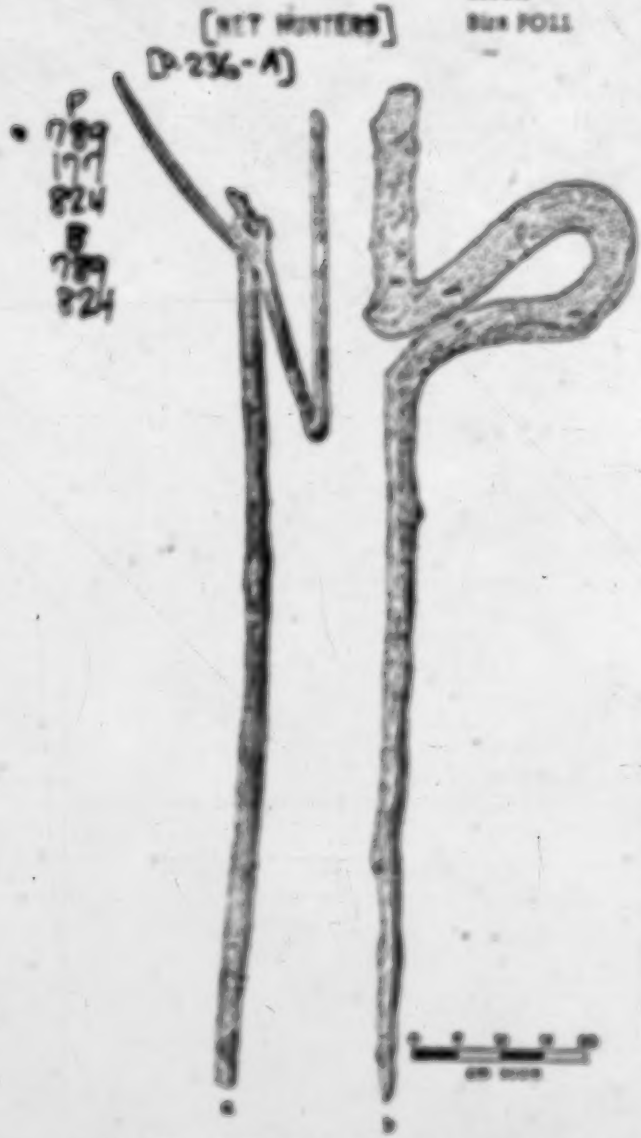

FIG. 11. a-b. Fetish sticks, *emani e ewi* pairs, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. "The tortoise saw the circumcision" is the name of the stick, but neither villagers nor Mbuti can give a coherent explanation of either the stick or its name. The villagers use it for protection against theft; the Mbuti net hunters on rare occasions may *illy* place it in the ground near a mallow hearth as an indication of spiritual presence.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

789
177
824
128

theft, but among the Mbuti is used as indication of spiritual presence during the *molimo* festival.

For this section we follow the same outline as that for the archers, but a fuller account of the net-hunters' magico-religious complex is given in the final section (pp. 248–259). It is excluded from the present survey because the lack of

[P. 236-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 238-A]

788 any other god or spiritual being for protection
[782] or aid. Mbuti ritual, such as it is, is simply "A
number of symbolic actions performed as parts
[224] of technological operations in order to smooth
over the disturbance caused by some kind of
change," e.g., the elephant-hunting ritual in
which the youngest male descendant of the
hunter ritually pierces the elephant's side and
opens the operations dividing the meat for
consumption (cf. p. 207).

771 Putnam, further, was never convinced that
[776] the Mbuti had any notion similar to the Euro-
pean notion of God. He disagrees strongly with
Schebesta's interpretation of Mbuti religious
practice as indicating a belief in a personal god.
[789] He suggests that the ritual practices described
by Schebesta were, in fact, no more than sym-
pathetic magic, and that a belief in the direct
cause and effect in their magical practices is the
only kind of "religious" belief that can safely
be ascribed to the forest dwellers, Pygmy or
villager.

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The dividing line between magic and religion, according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

The net hunters believe that death is caused by the water animal that is the rainbow that is, sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether

[P. 238-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

Magic

The Putnam material contains no information on any vital force corresponding to the *megbe* of the archer Mbuti, but the various practices of the net hunters indicate a belief in some form of force associated with the individual, which can be utilized by him during his life and which is released at death. It is by no means clear that this force can be acquired by magical means, such as by the use of bells and charms among the archers, or that it can be passed on from father to son by the latter's breathing in the breath from the dying man's mouth. There is mention in the Putnam material of this being done only once. 789 • 789

Putnam mentions magic in connection with the hunt and with the weather that might affect the hunt. Magical practices are not mentioned in other contexts, such as protection against one's enemies or, conversely, as aggressive action against them, or for the prevention of imminent disasters such as the falling of a 789

[p. 239-D]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 240-A]

789 tree limb on top of a hut. Such contexts evoke a
[184] different response, it seems, among the archers who actively influence the outcome of any critical situation by the use of their *megbe*, often by their *segbe* pipes. The magic described by the Putnams is essentially sympathetic and does not involve any belief in spiritual assis-
789 tance. Thus stones may not be dropped in the
821 water, or they will cause rain; a bright fire should be smothered until it is a mere glow during a storm, lest it attract the lightning (according to one informant) or in order to drive the lightning away (according to another, in the same discussion). All the magic that Putnam observed among the net hunters was connected with the weather and the prevention of rain, though he does not deny the possibility that magic might be used to stop the rain, once begun.

789 Mrs. Putnam describes a number of magical
224 practices, most of which are connected with either rain or the hunt. The latter simply involve the use of villager witch doctors to perform a ceremony to improve the hunting. The ceremony is never conducted by a Pygmy, nor is it clear on whose initiative it is usually per-

[NET HUNTERS]

789 824 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *sogle* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Sogle* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anje* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 *Sogle* are not to be confused with *wadl* (Fig. 541 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the 222 honey season.

Rain magic involves the covering of the 789 campfires with leaves but evidently without 821 much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as 372 putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P-240-3]

1: Turnbull E-4. 8 (1961-1963) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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CP. 240-C

leaves to cover fires is an effective way of keeping them burning during a rainstorm, is not always accompanied by the production of smoke (thought by some to be an offering), and is never described as being accompanied by any invocation. As far as the descriptions and my own observations go, it could be a simple precautionary measure taken to preserve the all-valuable fire.

Mrs. Putnam was told that barkcloth should not be beaten if it is going to rain, but this may also be for purely practical technological reasons. She once saw an old Pygmy blow a *seghe* pipe a number of times, looking at the sky, in an avowed attempt to avert the rain. When it rained the old man simply shrugged his shoulders and took shelter.

On another occasion, when it threatened to rain and spoil the dance one evening, the young men and boys all seized leaves and ran down to the stream and back, beating the leaves on the ground. They evidently did not wait to see if this magic would work, and all retired to their huts.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Magical Practice

P 177 789 It might be observed that the Pygmies have adopted a number of villager magical practices; certainly some individuals give the appearance of having done so. But we cannot accept this as significant, nor can we relate these practices to other practices in Pygmy society until we understand, for instance, the significance of the old Pygmy who blew his magic whistle vigorously at the sky to prevent rain and who, when it poured, simply shrugged his shoulders and P [829] retreated to the shelter of his hut. This incident may seem trivial, but there are many such incidents that indicate a lack of faith in the efficacy of such magical practices as the Pygmies attempt.

P 224 177 789 Also to be considered, and more important because it brings villager and Pygmy together more directly, is the reported resort to villager witch doctors to improve the hunting. Sche- 789 [P 250-B] 177 563 [791]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.250-C]

besta (1950, 80) mentions ceremonies performed by the archers themselves to "open" the forest. There is no evidence of such a practice among the net hunters, but they may call in a villager for the purpose. But here we should consider Pygmy acumen. If he has not been supplying the villagers with meat for some time, yet has been drawing supplies of bananas, he gives as his excuse the fact that the hunting has been poor. Such an excuse is safe enough, as the villagers never accompany the Pygmies on a hunt. Even if the villagers wait for them in the hunting camp, the Pygmies see to it that they never know how much game was actually caught. But the Pygmy may seek to reinforce his position by inviting the villager to improve the hunting. In doing this, he is a step ahead of the villager, who will himself insist on performing the ceremony if hunting is persistently bad. As far as one can judge from casual conversation among themselves after such a ceremony, the Mbuti have little faith in it. Further, they have their own method of dealing with any critical situation. If the hunting is really bad they convoke the *molimo*. In effect, they "sing" the hunting well: there is no supplication and no prayer. The song may or may not be accompanied by a dance re-enacting a successful hunt, but, even if so, the stress is laid on the song and the participation of all the hunters.

P 224 177 789 533 177 P [439] P 224 789 533

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

Dance and Festivity

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

[P. 250-D]

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social function at the moment because of insufficient information.) It fulfills its purpose through song and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The association may meet informally any evening as the men sit around the main campfire. They may sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but the horn will not be heard. Women and children are not excluded from the group, though, as is their normal habit, they usually keep to their own individual firesides. The association meets formally following any crisis such as death, serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting. Women and children are then rigidly excluded, and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occasions compel the attendance of all members. Adult members of the hunting band who are away come back; adult male visitors to the camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and practice among the net hunters, nor, according to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.

[P. 256-D]

[P. 257-A]

For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only means of dealing with the unknown, with situations for which they have no practical, immediately effective remedy. Individuals may and do indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympathetic magic, but this is informal and unsystematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in that the meeting of the association in proper circumstances is believed to restore normality to a situation that has in some way deviated. The "proper circumstances" to which I refer seem to be the non-participation of women and children, the attendance of all adult male members of the band, the use of special songs and the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meetings of the association, and constant reiteration of the songs until normality is restored. As far as is known, although certainty is lacking, the meeting of the association, which may last for a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity. Some doubt exists also as to the position of women with regard to the *molimo*.

1: Turnbull E 4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers.

538 771 [128]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There

538 789 182 [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

[P270-D]

[P.271-A]

538 is no standard body of folklore; it is rather a
182 matter for individual, spontaneous invention or
adaptation. Now it is reasonable to suppose
• 789 that a standard folklore is associated with
magical belief, for magical belief is no more than
a socially accepted way of explaining the other-
wise inexplicable. If the reason cannot be clearly
seen, it is invented and at least clearly under-
stood. With the Mbuti such is not the case.
[76] There is no common explanation of death or
[154] illness in terms of witchcraft or sorcery. A man
[154] invents his own legends; he invents his own
explanations for abnormal occurrences. The
538 nearest approach to standard mythological
776 rationalization is perhaps the popularly ac-
cepted myth concerning *satani*. Yet *satani* are
not malevolent (they do not wish disease and
death on people). Though it is their nature to
be dangerous, they are dangerous only when
seen. They are essentially tangible. They work
in a perfectly understandable way and can be
counteracted in an equally intelligible manner.

538 776 Whatever their nature, the essential thing is that, in counteracting *satani* danger the Pygmy in his behavior is absolutely pragmatic. He uses his spear or his bow and arrow and his cleverness. At most the Pygmy will use the common belief in *satani* as an explanation of some minor mishap, the real explanation of which he probably knows but is not willing to admit (carelessness during the hunt, failure while looking for honey, and so on). The belief in *satani* is never used to explain anything more. Yet it is the only common belief of this kind. We are undoubtedly faced, as the legends themselves indicate, with a people with no standard body of magical belief and practice.

[769]

It will need further field work and analysis to determine the connection here between myth and magic.

533 771 772 I mention one further factor, which in a way may be said to be magical, and that is the power of song. Yet it is so unlike magic in the accepted sense of that term (with connotations of witchcraft and sorcery) that I do not feel it affects the foregoing hypothesis. Here we enter another world, mentioned again and again in the legends. Unlike the world of animals and *satani*, with which the Pygmy can cope by cultivating cleverness, this world is one in which at first it seems that he has no such weapon. This is perhaps more truly the "supernatural." This is the world of water animals and

[P. 271-B]

(p. 271-c)

rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. [p. 5] 533 533 538 789

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex-

plained. But there is a feeling, and I cannot say 533
that it is more than that, that song has power. 538
The song may have no words; it may be a mix- 789
ture of meaningless sounds; but plainly it is
esthetically satisfying to the Mbuti. These
wordless songs are among the most powerful.
When the father killed the bird, he killed the
song, and he dropped down dead, completely
dead, dead forever. In real life, also, song is
powerful. Membership in the religious associa-
tions of the women and the men gives the
Pygmy the right to take part in the singing of
songs peculiar to those associations. In fact, it
imposes a duty to do so. The songs are distin-
guished not by their content but by their
musical style and the technique of performance.
It is the *sound*, rather than the word content,
that matters. These songs are sung, in their
most powerful form, only on occasions of the
greatest distress, such as sickness or death of
one of the great hunters, or failure in the chase.
These are departures from normality. It has
been my contention from an analysis of the
function of music among the Mbuti that song is
believed to restore that normality.

As well as several more obvious differences 538
from villager values, such as emphasis by the 171
[p 271-D] 181

2: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tions, even in the strictest village context, but it is outweighed by what at first seems little more than a lively desire to have all the advantages of village life with none of the disadvantages. Again, it is only through an examination of the interrelationship of the institutions adopted by the Mbuti, and their relationship with the indigenous Mbuti social system, that we can arrive at any true understanding of the apparent process of acculturation.

The attempt by the villagers to assert supernatural control is structurally the most significant, for it involves elements with which the Mbuti have no institutionalized means of dealing. Political pressure the Mbuti can counter by changing allegiance; economic pressure can also be countered, by reverting to the always available pure hunting and gathering economy; as we shall see in the next section, pressure through absorption into the village kinship system is repelled quite simply by the maintenance of an opposed kinship system. However, the Mbuti have no magic with which to counter magic, no witchcraft or sorcery with which to counter witchcraft and sorcery. They do have belief with which to counter belief, but it is part of the belief of both Mbuti and villagers that in a war between the gods, no man can safely predict the outcome. It is in this situation that the villagers do manage to effect some extent of control, but it is also in this context that they come up against the ultimate bedrock of opposition.

Let us look at the various ways in which the magico-religious life of the villagers impinges upon that of the Mbuti, and the extent to which it exerts some measure of control over the hunters and gatherers. Fully recognizing that a clear division of the subject matter is difficult, if not impossible, to make, we nonetheless have to attempt such a division for the purposes of discussion. There is a great deal of overlapping, but nonetheless at the extremes, in this case, the division used here between magic and religion is legitimate.

By *magic* I refer to activities involving, on the part of the African, villager or Mbuti, a conviction in the pragmatic relationship between a cause and an effect which, in terms of Western science, is not demonstrable. The term in its usual sense has meaning only as far as we are concerned, for as far as the Africans here are concerned, magical activities are as scientifically valid as any other. They may not always be able to explain the exact way in which the effect is related to the cause, any more than everyone who drives a motorcar can explain the mechanism. Indeed, the corresponding term "medicine"

Tr Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
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is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as curative, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [554] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 476 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 476 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there • 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

P 224 372 789 rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

P 224 372 789 * 177 There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider *anjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

P 224 * 177 834 One clear example of village influence is that in any village context the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt. These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating P [841] woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

P 778 * 177 However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of actual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the C 778 belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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mushrooms, of which there are many edible varieties at any one time throughout the year; the sweet *itaba* and similar roots, which are found by following its telltale vine along the ground, then grubbing with a stick for the roots at the end; nuts, of which there are again many varieties at any time of year; and divers berries. There are also succulent fruits and a few leafy vegetables, though the latter seem rarely used except as herbs. However, they are likened by the Mbuti to the village manioc top, which is cooked as a spinach, and perhaps it is because of the availability of manioc tops and their more pleasant taste that the indigenous vegetable is falling into disuse.

Among the net-hunters, gathering takes place during the course of the net-hunt, on the way to and from the hunt, and between each cast of the nets. Women carry baskets on their backs, with a bark tumpline over their foreheads, as do their young daughters. In the same way that the boys form an age group during the hunt, so do the girls. The boys split into two sections and guard each extremity of their hunting semicircle; likewise the girls split into two groups and beat at each end of the semicircle of beaters. Only the older boys and girls are expected to act as adults, and even they need not necessarily act with their parents. The girls go off on foraging parties on their own, and women go off in twos and threes to do their gathering. There is no recognizable kinship pattern, at least among the Epulu band, to these gathering associations. Women or girls who gather together are likely to be friends of approximately the same age; that is about the only generalization possible.

Men, not having baskets with them, are less able to gather effectively, but if they pass a bank of mushrooms they will pick whatever they can carry without encumbering themselves, and they will send the younger boys back to camp with their arms full.

Gathering, then, is a much more individual affair than hunting among the net-hunters. Even among the archers, where the women are not required on the hunt, they only go off in twos or threes to gather, and the same freedom is allowed for the men to gather whenever they have the opportunity. The spoils are similarly regarded much more as individual property than as communal, though sharing does take place.

There are no rituals and no magic associated with gathering, but insofar as it is primarily a woman's occupation, *elima* songs are frequently sung on gathering expeditions. As with hunting songs, the *elima* songs are designed to attract the attention of the forest deity,

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222 and since the forest is benevolent the songs thus are thought to se-
533 cure protection. In point of fact they do, for the throaty chorus of
789 even two or three Mbuti women is enough to scare away any game.
[778] When not singing the women beat their hands together, shout or talk
[776] loudly to each other, for the same purpose. I know of only one woman injured while gathering. She was alone, which was the first mistake, and the first question asked when news came back to camp that she had been attacked by a buffalo was the apparently surprising one, "Was she not singing?" She was not, nor was she "talking to the forest," and that was her second mistake, the consequence of which was death. The Mbuti are practical enough to recognize the "noise" value of song, but they see more in it than that.

262 When the Mbuti are near a source of plantation foods and can acquire them by one means or another, then their daily diet is largely vegetable. The meal taken before going hunting and the snack on the hunt are both likely to be entirely vegetarian, meat being eaten only at the evening meal. Even then it may be served with one or another
[222] vegetable. Even when the Mbuti are far away from a supply of village foods and living entirely on the forest they still rely heavily on vegetable foods, and gathering must be considered at least equally important with hunting as a subsistence activity. From what I was able to see, this is true among the archers as well as among the net-hunters. It is also true that throughout the forest the supply of forest vegetable foods, though varying, is constant and sufficient, frequently ample. If there is any time when there is a greater abundance than at other times, it is during the honey season.

HONEY

221
222 Falling approximately in the middle of our calendar year, and lasting a full two months, the honey season is of vital importance to the Mbuti not only from a nutritional point of view but structurally.
[621] We have already seen how at this time the net-hunting bands split up
[578] into minimal sections, separating hostile or factious elements and consolidating existing friendships, so that when the band re-forms it will have resolved most of the internal dissensions built up over the previous year, on the whole reaffirming old loyalties but always asserting some that are new. The archer band, normally segmented, joins together during the honey season in what is essentially the same process. It is significant that the honey season should be marked

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

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Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

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626 621 578 222 152 wooden clappers used only for the accompaniment of honey songs, and started clapping them vigorously while singing. Masisi found the competition too strong, shrugged his shoulders, chased the women away and, taking a pair of *ngbengbe* himself, joined in the singing.

[533] [534] [431] The next day the men and the older youths went honey gathering and brought back enough honey to send some as a gift to Cephu.

157 461 536 [261] [789] 7. Laziness is highly criticized among the Mbuti, and is always related to hunger. It is one of the few qualities (noisy hunting is another, "blindness" in the honey season a third) that is countered by public assertion, in mime, dance and song, of the opposite value. One morning, shortly after dawn, there were murmurings of discontent because of the dampness of the forest, and suggestions that there was enough food in camp to allow for a day without hunting. One of the older hunter's wives stalked out into the center of the camp and began an elaborate wordless mime, showing that she was not going to be lazy and stay behind and play and dance "empty" games and dances. She was going to take her husband's spear and go off and hunt (she reenacted a successful hunt) and return with lots of food and share it all around and make her *roho* good and make the forest happy. Then when *she* sang and danced, it would not be empty.

It was a good show, and the whole camp looked on and laughed, then went hunting.

224 461 626 578 8. One morning, at the beginning of the honey season, a number of hunters set out, as usual, at scattered intervals. Several seemed to be staying behind, so I also remained. After about half an hour the hunters returned, one by one throwing their nets on the ground in the center of the camp. When they were all back, a bachelor youth who had gone with them began a tirade against the hunters who had stayed behind. Hearing his voice, and wondering why he was taking such a prominent part in a hunting issue, women began sleepily coming out of their huts. It was evident that too many had decided to stay home, and the hunt had not had enough beaters. The youth, Pepei, not only criticized the women as lazy animals for not coming on the hunt but also criticized the rest of the hunters, pointing out they had been even too lazy to send their sons with their nets, and had left people like himself, an orphaned youth, to do the work of men.

The hunters had nothing to say, but the women responded vigorously that they were not going to carry nets and spears for the men, they had work of their own to do, and that if enough youths had

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village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *essumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

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CHAPTER 13

Magic, Witchcraft and Sorcery

MAGIC

To separate the world of magic from the world of religion is perhaps a dangerous pursuit, and not always profitable. In this instance it is done because we can thereby achieve a significant contrast between the world of the village and the world of the forest. By and large the village world is full of magic, witchcraft and sorcery, leaving little room for what might be considered the more spiritual, or religious, aspects of belief, faith or even hope, and certainly none for worship in the sense of devotion.

The forest world, on the other hand, is remarkably lacking in the former elements, and filled with the latter. But there is an overlapping and, necessarily, a meeting ground where any further overlapping is rejected and which becomes an area of conflict. The Mbuti have their own very simple forms of magic, but no witchcraft or sorcery, which they utterly reject. However, when faced with it in a village context, they are forced to come to terms with it and they have learned to turn these village institutions to their own advantage, in much the same way that they accept other village institutions such as the *nkumbi* initiation.

Increasingly one is aware of a curious ambivalence in the Mbuti attitude toward the village. This is not surprising in itself, when two opposed societies are in such close juxtaposition. But the vehemence of the Mbuti denial of witchcraft and sorcery seems at odds with the meekness of their acceptance, however nominal, of village domination in the village context. The answer lies mainly in the Mbuti attitude to the unknown, an attitude that is optimistic but open. In the realm of the known they can afford to be vehement, and they are perfectly aware of the social values of an institution such as witchcraft, and make use of it without accepting the belief. Similarly with the

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Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

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uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

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222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 56 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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the power believed in. There is not a solitary instance to show the belief in a malevolent power against which protection must be sought. This is plainly different from village magic, which is essentially pragmatic and not in any way related to a central value system. We showed earlier (pp. 53–62) how magic does not provide a means by which the villagers can control the Mbuti. By a comparison of the two systems of magic we can see in effect how clearly they indicate major value differences despite initial outward similarities. In particular, the Mbuti attitude to the forest as a benevolent central value in their lives can be seen, and while in village magic we see only the lack of such a central value, when we examine witchcraft and sorcery we see its exact polar opposite.

And it will be remembered how (pp. 57–59) the Mbuti recognize the difference in attitudes toward magic, and put it to good use. The villagers regard Mbuti culture as impoverished in all respects, and the lack of the magic so abundant in village life is part of their argument. In making this lack of magic an excuse for the allegedly poor hunting that has deprived their *kpara* of meat, the Mbuti turn the situation nicely to their advantage, and turn the argument of the villagers against them. Thus although village magic and forest magic are different and distinct, the areas overlap in such a way as to deepen the opposition between the two worlds.

WITCHCRAFT

With witchcraft the situation is different, for this is something peculiar to the village world. Earlier (pp. 59–60) we showed some of the ways in which village witchcraft (often confused by the Mbuti with sorcery) impinges on forest life. Again, the villagers regard the lack of witchcraft in Mbuti culture as a sign of cultural poverty, and in their own belief in the power of witchcraft they seek to use it in their constant struggle to impose some kind of control over the hunters. However, the Mbuti again make use of the village belief in witchcraft for their own ends, using it as a means of escape from situations in which they would otherwise be culpable and stand to lose a good exchange relationship.

In their own forest world, however, witchcraft plays no part, except insofar as it is recognized as a useful device for deflecting blame, and is thus occasionally used, tongue in cheek, to resolve a dispute. As indicated in the foregoing chapter, the prime objective in the settle-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

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Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

822 [198] [192] "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. 822 198 [178] [161] [533] The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and [533] [165] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely [821] [189] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 824 [198] [192] All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki*, *segbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunting dance. [222] [825] Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the molimo and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

40. Balekimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long molimo festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sanctions, does not hold good for Mbuti society, where the three principles are inextricably fused. One might be able to talk of law, even if law implies sanction by force, for the Mbuti believe that the forest has such power and force and will use it. Indeed, in their experience it does, for transgression is met with the force of *akami*, which kills. This is thought of as a very direct and practical response on the part of the forest as the law. On the other hand, public opinion can hardly be said to exist, for there is no public spokesman, and every opinion on behavior is expressed in terms of pleasing or displeasing the forest. Such public action as may be taken—ridicule or ostracism—is taken in the name of the forest. Exile is literally being sent to the forest to meet it directly. Religious sanctions are not differentiated from any others; the threat is the same—noise and displeasure.

Ultimately, then, in our consideration of territory, despite the obvious practical values involved and a certain extent of ecological determination of behavior patterns, the territory as a principle of organization must be regarded as a religious principle. Indeed, life itself, for the Mbuti, can almost be regarded as a ritual designed to please the forest and secure *ekimi*. There is, as noted, an almost total absence of magic, and the only ritual that can be truly considered as such, and is not otherwise a necessary daily activity, is song. We have seen that song is designed specifically to rejoice the forest, and to draw its attention to its children, but beyond this and its reinforcement, through musical technique, of the values of age and cooperation, there is nothing particularly remarkable about it as a social institution.

It is only when we come to death that there is a marked departure from the normal tenor of life, and a ritual, the *molimo*, that might be regarded as a ritual in the Durkheimean sense of recreating society and reaffirming the social sentiment. While any interpretation of religious ritual of this kind is highly questionable, the attempt has to be made.

Leaving aside the "legal" aspect of the *molimo* when it appears in the early hours of the morning to wreak havoc in the camp, there are few rituals that could be more explicitly concerned with the "recreation of society" in the most literal sense. Death is the most final and inescapable of all crises, and for it there is no remedy. But it threatens more than the life of the individual; it threatens the continuity of the band, and so threatens the ritual of life by which the forest is pleased. Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside, and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 F04 Pygmies F04 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH But at the central fireplace there was always a basket of food, P 765 showing that it was a kumamolimo, the only outward indication that the God of the Forest had been invoked and was waiting silently [776] nearby, in the trees or in the Lelo itself, ready to enter the camp at night and join his people in their songs of joy and praise. The casual observer might have thought the youngsters were playing a game when they went around from hut to hut with a fishing line and a basket, collecting food from everyone. There was certainly nothing about their demeanor to indicate that this was an essential part of a great act of communion. And if the same observer were told that this was so, he would probably form the opinion that the molimo, whatever it was, could not mean very much if it was treated so lightly and casually.

This, in fact, is the opinion of the villagers. For them the ritual C 765 act is the important thing. In their religious rites it is the correct performance of the ceremonial that counts most. If correctly performed it is bound to bring the desired results, regardless of the accompanying thought, if indeed there is any. All attention is focused on the act itself. And it must not only be performed correctly, but with a solemnity that betrays fear.

The difference between the two attitudes is perhaps one of those P C 765 fine shades of difference that divide magic from religion, though 771 there is so much overlapping that they can seldom be divided in 789 • practice. Whereas the villagers believe that the act itself brings about P results in a way they cannot explain, which is what we call magic, 778 the BaMbuti do not believe this at all. They believe in a benevolent deity or supernatural power which they identify with the forest. To this they owe as much respect and affection and consideration as they owe to their own parents, and from it they can expect the same in return. So, for the Pygmies, it is not so much the act itself that P 765 counts, or the manner in which the act is performed, but the thought 771 that goes with it. The collecting of food from hut to hut is not a

either a pth helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 172 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *sitana*." [192] The word *sitana* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

• 789 821 **Weather magic.**—One class of weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta [2] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[113] [2] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933, p. 243.

[P.339-A]

789 821 especially those taken from a wild pepper plant, to stop storms; and the lighting of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[3] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude [811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 789 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is usually a simple business. During the division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[4] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women 862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they 000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 157.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[P.339-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

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Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[For information on the Molimo and Elima religious associations, see category 575.]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
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[P.184-C]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives. Z P 575 196 • 534 [535] P Z [533] P Z [562] [858]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 to status in the band and the fact that young
561 men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed
88 particular prowess as hunters may take a prom-
[554] inent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence
[224] of any detailed information on formal initiation
into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some
certainty, from the available material, that
among the net hunters membership is associa-
ted primarily with hunting skill.

575 With regard to the proceedings of the associ-
ation, all reports from this district indicate that
796 the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the
greatest importance to the community: various
crises, and particularly death. A fuller account
is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340);
a summary is given here.

534 The word *molimo* is used to denote the asso-
ciation, its proceedings, and a musical instru-
[192] ment. Only one instrument is reported by the
Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet.
But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions hav-
ing heard the trumpet one night and thinking
that it sounded very different from the one she
had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-B]

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

ble then that there may be different types of instrument, but evidently not used in conjunction. Anne Putnam further mentions having heard sounds that she took to be animal sounds but that may in fact have been singing pots as described by Schebesta (1952, 279). The only instrument that she or her husband mentions, however, is the trumpet, and no description of it is given. 534

This instrument is an essential part of the proceedings; its use marks the difference between two grades of *molimo* meeting. A meeting in which the trumpet is not used does not carry the significance that one with the trumpet does. There is no information as to exactly when it is used and when not, but it is recorded that the trumpet is heard during meetings following death, during serious illness, or during some crisis affecting the welfare of the band as a whole. It is frequently associated with song, accompanied by split-stick clappers, *banja* (Fig. 52) that are apparently peculiar to the *molimo*. 534 575 796 [533]

A third grade of meeting is that from which women and children are not excluded, during 533 575 796

[P. 225-C]

FIG. 52. Split clappers, *banja*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

533 which *molimo* songs may or may not be sung.
575 Such a meeting may be said to be religious, in
796 that it is known by all that the songs effect
[796] some kind of communion with the God of the Forest, but they are not held with any specific purpose. After an evening meal the men sit together around the main fire, talking and smoking. The subject of conversation may take a serious turn, or there may simply be a long silence during which one or another of the men starts singing. In either case someone quite spontaneously starts singing a *molimo* song, and the others join in. At such times the women and children remain sitting, as is their habit, around their individual fires outside their huts; they

[NET HUNTERS]

533 are not expected to retire to their huts. Only if
575 the singing develops a certain turn do they re-
treat. They know that certain songs have more
796 significance than others, and, on hearing these, they retire. It is unusual, however, for an ordinary meeting of the men to develop to this extent.

575 Usually the trumpet is heard at about the
533 time the band normally retires for the night.
534 The women in any case have been aware of
whatever crisis is the occasion for the meeting
796 and are prepared for it. On hearing the trumpet, they take their children and shut themselves in their huts. None will come out, even to cross the clearing. The men sit close together around one of the fires. As they sing, the *molimo* trumpet echoes their song, sometimes coming close, sometimes going far away into the forest. The *molimo* may come right into the camp itself and install itself, unseen, close to where the men are
[535] sitting. At a given point the men may suddenly start dancing through the fire, scattering the ashes and cinders to all sides. Shortly afterwards the participants go to bed. The singing may last only two or three hours, or may con-

[P. 226-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 226-C]

tinue until first light, according to the Putnam material. Once a meeting is begun, it may continue nightly for as long as a month. It is obligatory for all members to attend, and those who are away visiting return to take part. Visitors in the camp also take part if they qualify as hunters. Men, and more particularly youths, sometimes improvise headdresses of cane and feathers (Fig. 50), similar to those worn by village men and women during initiation festivities. Putnam says that food may be prepared for the men by a woman (it is not known who), but that she never appears and has no other function in the proceedings.

575 796 [533] [534] [574] [292]

In my own experience the words of the songs that are sung by the *molimo* are not supplicatory but are mainly repetitions of one or other of the names of the God of the Forest, or affirmations of his goodness and omnipotence. The songs are, nonetheless, effective means, as far as the Mbuti are concerned, of securing an end to the crisis. The purpose of these meetings is undoubtedly to restore the normality to a community which in some way or another has deviated.

575 796 533 776 [182]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

There is, however, some evidence that indicates another usage of the *molimo* society, more in accord with Schebesta's interpretation of its social function. Anne Putnam reports having once been in a hunting camp when there was some commotion, fairly early in the evening, and the women shouted that the *molimo* was coming. All the women and children promptly fled to their huts and shut themselves in, with much loud complaining. Shortly afterward, the trumpet was heard in the distance and then, closer at hand, the sound of a chicken being killed, which evidently called forth a renewed burst of anger from the women. The men in the camp started singing, and the women became quiet. The singing lasted until nearly dawn. In the morning it was explained to Mrs. Putnam that the *molimo* had taken a chicken and would not pay. "But that is the way of the *molimo*," explained her male informant.

That evening a basket appeared in the camp, hung up in a prominent place, filled with plantains—a gift for the *molimo*. Members were able to help themselves from the basket, and the women were expected to keep it filled. After all the women had gone to bed, the men started singing, although they had said that they were not going to sing that night. As the singing

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[P. 226-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 227-A]

575 reached a climax (drums were being used, un-
533 usual for a religious meeting of the *molimo*),
534 the trumpet arrived. Anne Putnam heard one
782 of the hunters say, "We shall give the *molimo* a
796 present tonight." Another said that there was
nothing to give. Then one of the more important but younger hunters said, "We'll give it water." At this point Anne Putnam looked out and saw water being thrown over a figure that seemed to be white and that was playing the trumpet. The figure did not flinch and continued playing, while the hunter who suggested throwing the water laughed. Shortly afterward the trumpet left, and the men sang without the drums before going to bed.

During this same meeting of the *molimo*, the basket was kept filled with food for the men of the association. The singing went on each night, sometimes with drums, sometimes without. On some occasions the singing, particularly when there were no drums, appears to have been serious. At other times the meeting seems to have been more in the nature of a joke, as in the case of the water throwing, and on another occasion when the *molimo* kept moving about in the bush

[NET HUNTERS]

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

796 Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and [823] the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at 575 533 that time. 765 796

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not 575 clear and which took place down near the vil- 534 lage. One villager took part. The trumpet and 533 the performer, covered with a cloth, were car- 796 ried in from the forest on a crude litter and dis- [114] appeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have 765 witnessed were of the more serious kind, follow- 533 ing the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, [534] even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally [535] a period, early in the night, during which the [831] men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coincidence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meeting, described by Anne Putnam. It is the custom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

575 881 796 533 [534] [765]

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the women, and all the men had to run away every time they saw it. But then the men caught the

173 534 825 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initia- 177
tion of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between
Pygmy and villager initiates among the net
hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers,
probably because of his insistence (1952, 281)
on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an ini-
tiation into the religious association of *toré* for
both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is con-
tradicted by my own experience among the net
hunters. In any case, if there is a difference be-
tween the two groups over the significance of
nkumbi initiation (and it may well be only a dif-
ference of interpretation rather than of fact), it
does not seem directly related to any difference
in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 296
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more
directly with prevailing differences in villager
custom rather than with any inherent differ-
ences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the
nature and function of the closed associations,
are more properly the subject of discussion of
the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the
difference between net hunters and archers,
which is our main concern here.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

Z 563 796
P 177 796
P Z [844] [796] [765]
P 583 585 177
Z 563 585

[P.251-D]

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[P. 256-D]

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
(858) seem to be the non-participation of women and
[885] children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
(533) bers of the band, the use of special songs and
the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[P 257-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 257-c]

physical disposition they are emphasizing their unity. Their means of communication are special songs, as mentioned in the survey, sacred to the *molimo*. These songs are not phrased in terms of explicit supplication. They merely call on the God of the Forest by constant repetition of his name (frequently changing from one name to another, it seems for the sake of variety and euphony), and an occasional recitation of his qualities as the source of all good in the Mbuti life is given. This song is echoed by the *molimo* horn, which is far off in the forest, though it may, in the course of the meeting, visit the camp. The song is picked up by the lone performer who follows it, singing it into the horn, passing it on still farther into the forest, finally letting it die away into the distance.

796 776 778 782 575 796 776 778 782 533 575

In this way the Mbuti make sure that their song is heard. Sung in this way, the song itself rouses their God from an apparent state of sleep or detachment, bringing him to a consciousness of the plight of his children. This, for the Mbuti, is sufficient. There is no attempt to ask for favors. The God of the Forest is the source of all that is good and bad, so that, as long as he is conscious of what is happening, the Mbuti are content. But they say that sometimes he sleeps, and when he is asleep things come to pass that might have been prevented had he been awake. The *molimo* makes sure he is awake.

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women 575
are members, and participation is compulsory 796
in one's own camp or when visiting another. [885]
Communication with the forest God is again
established by means of songs, special and sa- [533]
cred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. [776]
The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern [778]
to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of pu-
berty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and
death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are con-
cerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion
of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.)
Both associations meet in the forest camp but
out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in
the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring
huts. Young children may be present. The ex- [858]
ception, when the men take part in the meeting
of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* 881
initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the ini- 885
tiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere 224
for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," 575
he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[P. 257-D]

The function of these associations is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

575 182 796 778 776 533 [782]

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

575 177 [439] [881] [554] [711] [181]

1, [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[p. 258-C]

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881
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PLATE 38 1

GIRLS' HOOP DANCE, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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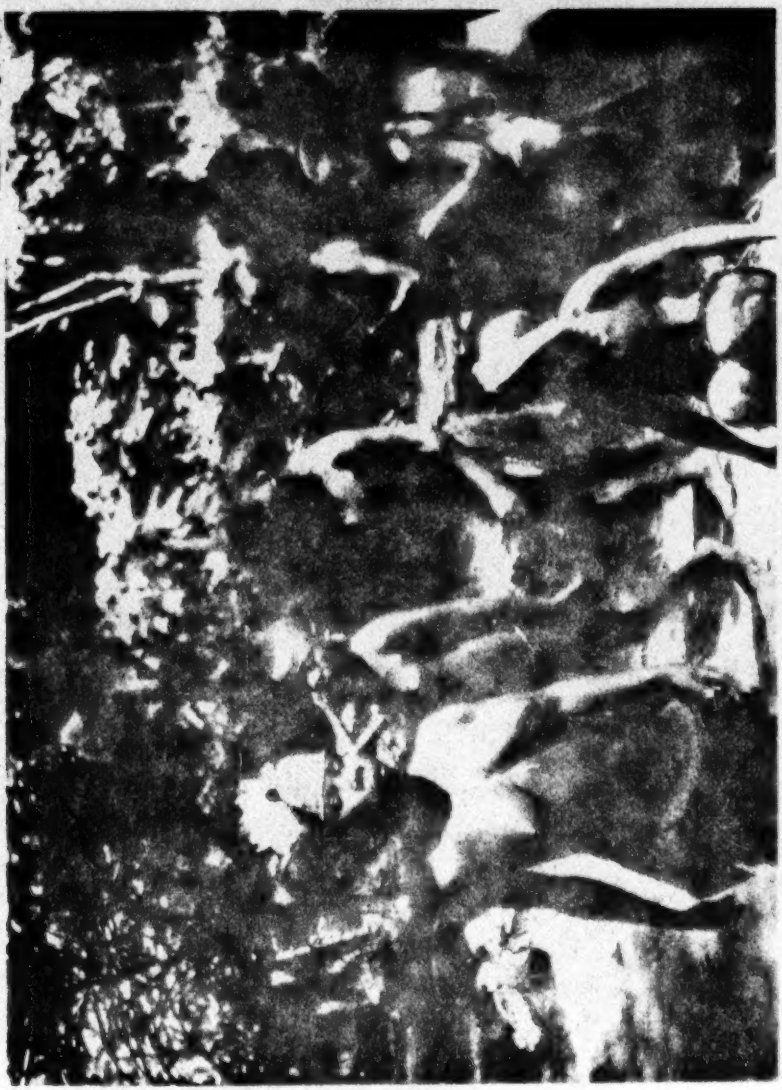

[P309] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621
the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771
pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 296
evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try [881]
to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the [965]
picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar [177]*
names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121
a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177*
the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621
any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti, and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently lawless, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

[P. 30 is blank]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

[P.63]

CHAPTER 6

Village Religion

NKUMBI

Both villagers and Mbuti have notions concerning spirits and spiritual intervention, and associated religious systems. Once again, however, even where the facts coincide, the systems do not. One of the major differences is the lack of ritual ceremony among the Mbuti and the importance of it among the villagers. Thus, though manhood is every bit as important to the Mbuti as to the villagers, there is no formal Mbuti initiation ritual. And although marriage is considered just as sacred, and is recognized by the Mbuti as having profound social implications, it takes place in the forest in an apparently utterly casual manner without any ceremony or ritual joining of the boy and girl or of their families. The ritual attitude of Mbuti and villagers toward death again is totally different.

But in the lack of ceremony the villagers once again see a chance for acting as intermediaries, as though this made them indispensable. The Mbuti are continually being subjected to one or another ritual ceremony at the hands of the villagers, even when the affair is entirely domestic and apparently does not in any way directly concern the villagers.

According to the notion of hereditary ownership, of course, the villagers also have a responsibility, and by virtually assimilating or, better, adopting the Mbuti into the villager tribe they are obliged to adopt them also into the religious system. The parallel kinship system, while never opening the way to complete integration, nonetheless demands an extension of the parallelism in all directions. The villagers have no qualms about this, and it is certainly no indication of friendly intimacy, for in this way they hope to secure the inferior status of the Mbuti not only in the present but also in the afterlife. At the same time the villagers believe they have found another source of control over their wayward servants.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which should be mentioned here, though it seems unique and known only to net-hunters as far as I could ascertain. The ritual involves the building of a fire, with much greater care and concern than the hunting fire or the *molimo* fire, and it is believed specifically that the correct performance of this ritual will lead the Mbuti to honey and/or bring the bees, and their honey, closer to the Mbuti. A full description is given in the section on religion and magic (pp. 231–33). Here it need only be said that the preparations, including the digging of small trenches for water and the use of special woods and leaves, are designed to give the maximum amount of smoke. The lighting of the fire is accompanied by blowing on the *madé*[4] (efe: *segbe*) whistles, through which water is first poured.

All being taken into consideration, the relative lack of magic or ritual associated with food quest, the lack of interest shown in certain readily available forms of food supply such as fish, and the lack of food taboos all confirm the abundance of forest foods and the adequacy of Mbuti technology. This is important in considering the over-all economic system.

ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TERRITORY

While the environment does not, through areas of shortage or abundance, determine the location of hunting bands, it does provide natural boundaries which form convenient borders between each hunting band. The total territory is more than ample for the total population, and the even distribution of game and vegetable foods means that there are no preferential areas that might make for rivalry between one band and the next. There is, in any case, a safety factor in that the bands are arranged side by side, in several vast circles, in the center of each of which the boundaries are so loosely drawn that there is effectively a no-man's-land, in which anyone may hunt and where bands occasionally, though rarely, may come in contact with each other.

The only territory to be considered, then, is that of the individual hunting band. This is again, in all cases except possibly the area

[4] The *madé* is a conical pipe, open at both ends, made of two hollowed-out cross-sections cut lengthwise, bound together either by *nkusa* twine or by strips of vine. The pouring of water, which is comparable to the pouring of water through the *molimo* trumpet (see Chapter 14) may have ritual significance, but is explained invariably and unhesitatingly as being necessary simply to get a better sound. It swells the wood and binds the sections closer to each other.

THE LESSER *MOLIMO* (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry
752 for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many
757 remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snakebite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or
778 ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire
796 and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest
533 to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the
[782] Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

796 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not
[533] accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*,
[535] nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and
[765] there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater molimo.

greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and simply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser *molimo*, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*)

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in providing food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

224 away he stabs him, and every time the elephant turns he stands still. The elephant can run faster than a man, and the pygmy's only hope is to wound the animal so badly that it will be unable to catch him before he gets away.

Finally the elephant goes charging off with one or more wounds in his intestines. The hunter, with his spear in his hand, returns to the camp. Perhaps the other men will be there, but they may be out net hunting. In the latter case he waits until they have all assembled, and as soon as they are together he tells them his story. There is much excitement; men, women, and children crowd around him and inspect the spear. They may say, "Hmmm, only that much of the tip is bloody, probably he won't die. Let it go." But if the spear is bloody way down to such and such a point, then the elephant has a serious wound and they will follow him.

[484] In the latter case the whole camp goes together. The women load on their babies and cooking pots, and their bunches of plantains. The men take their weapons, and they leave only an old man or two to watch the camp while they are away. They will follow the elephant two or three days, until he finally lies down and dies of peritonitis. Sometimes he has been dead for some time when they reach him, and he may be blown up like a balloon and rotten. Still they will eat him, for rotten meat, if thoroughly boiled, is edible.

224 • 796 When a group of pygmies reaches a blown-up elephant, a special ceremony takes place. A man other than the elephant hunter cuts a square of skin off the elephant's side. He cuts this up and puts pieces into the mouths of everyone. Then he cuts another layer, and passes this around, and another layer, until he comes down to a point where the body wall is very thin, and

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224 everyone has had a taste of the raw
796 skin.

Then a small male child, squalling and screaming, is thrust on the elephant's side; he is told to bite, which he does, and the balloon bursts.

This ceremony is repugnant to the pygmies, as they do not like raw meat; it is especially repugnant to the child, who does not enjoy having the whole rotten insides of the elephant burst in his face.

[611] The child is the youngest son of the man who killed the elephant. If the man has no suitable son, it may be his nephew; or, if he has several young sons and the youngest is too small, either to understand the order or to bite, it will be the next older son.

224 Now that the elephant has burst, the ceremony is over, and a free-for-all takes place; the men cut the sides open, pull out the entrails, and climb inside to hack away at the meat. Other men rush to the head and chop away the tusks. The women take the pieces of meat which their men hand to them, and boil them. As soon as they have cooked one chunk, they will start to
[251] boil another. Everyone eats as much of the boiled meat as he is able, and they spread out the rest on drying racks; when it has dried they will take it into the village to the Negroes, who keep it and eat it gradually, for the combination of boiling and drying serves as a means of preserving it, the only food preservation the pygmies practice, and then not for themselves. The tusks go to the special patron of the elephant hunter, and the patron sells them to the Greek or Hindu trader; the patron gives the pygmy a small share of what he receives.

Division of meat.—The need of giving some of the meat to their Negro hosts, and the knowledge that no one will starve as long as they can get bananas, makes the problem of meat di-

[P. 332-A]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

491 middle to get a better view of the way the supporting lianas were fastened, he urged me on, saying that it was not natural to be standing there in the middle of the air over a dangerous river.

114 On the far side we came to a camp, and there we found some relatives of the Epulu Pygmies, including one girl who was well known to us both—Makubasi's first wife.

797 We stayed there for the night and then moved on up a trail that
177 led to the Protestant mission of Biasiku. This was headed by an American missionary, the Reverend Charles Bell, and his wife. They had been in the Ituri for about as long as Father Longo and Pat Putnam had. As soon as they heard that we were staying in the camp down by the river they made arrangements for us to stay at the mission, and without knowing that we were on our way Mr. Bell set out on foot to issue the invitation in person. I had a special reason for accepting it; I wanted Kenge to have a fair notion of the way different missions operated. I certainly had no desire to see him converted, but having given him a taste of missions it seemed fair that he should have an all-round picture, and earlier during our trip we had had an unfortunate experience with a different Protestant mission.

At that mission prayers were said in public about five times a day, mention always being made of any converts who might be ill, however slightly. Prayers were also made requesting the Almighty to provide a road into the forest so that the mission could have easier access to the Pygmies, and thanks were offered for a new automobile that had been acquired. All this was perfectly understandable to the villagers, with their own tradition of witchcraft. They merely thought this a particularly powerful form of magic. Kenge was skeptical. "How is their god going to put a road into the forest when the white man can't do it?" he asked.

But one day, while we were there, a wounded Pygmy was brought in. He had been gored while hunting and was groaning with pain.

FOREST HORIZONS

The missionary and I were sitting outside at the time, going through his morning ritual of drinking tea. I went over to see what had happened, and to ask if they wanted any medicine. They said no, but they would like something to make the pain go away until they could prepare their own medicine. All I had was aspirin, but in any case I had more faith in their powers of healing than in mine. Kenge asked in a whisper why the missionary had not come over, but was continuing to sip his tea, keeping his back to us. I did not know, and I said nothing until after the next prayer meeting. As usual, prayers were offered for all those converts who had minor ailments, and for the new road, but not a word was said about the injured Pygmy, lying in a hut not more than ten yards away. Then I did ask, and I was told, "Why should I pray for him? He is not a Christian." The Pygmies were all standing around, and heard, as they were meant to hear. They had little idea of what Christianity was, but from that moment I doubt if any of them thought that it had much to offer them.

At the end of our stay there, the missionary asked Kenge what he thought of the Christian God now that he had been privileged to live in a Christian community. Kenge said with his usual frankness, "It is the biggest falsehood I know." And so I was glad for Kenge to meet other Christians who had a better idea of what their religion stood for, and the Bells were certainly such.

It was while we were with them that Kenge first began to realize that there really was another world, beyond the forest. He had often heard people talk about it, and up at Paulis the forest was thinned almost to mere savannah; but nowhere had he really seen beyond the forest. The mission was built on a high hill, cleared of vegetation so that crops could be planted to supply the mission school and hospital with food. Usually the distant horizons were hazy, and everywhere we looked down only on a sea of trees. Several times I tried to tell Kenge that beyond this lay another world, a world of lakes and mountains and open plains, but he just nodded disbelievingly. He

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The lineage defends itself equally against 613
antisocial tendencies, says Schebesta. Sluggards 689
find that they receive no share when game from 626
the hunt is divided; the selfish woman who does
not share any of her gathering products with
others is ostracized. Incorrigible thieves, and [685]
above all those suspected of sorcery, who are [754]
considered the worst types of antisocials, are
punished relentlessly, exiled from the camp,
and left to die if they are not executed by some
means or another. Unfortunately, Schebesta [114]
cites neither examples in detail nor enough
cases to substantiate fully his conclusions. He
seems, however, to be generally in accord with
what is known of Mbuti groups elsewhere, ex-
cept with regard to the position and authority
of the elder and the alleged "system" of law
and punishment.

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge 802

There is little information on division of time
and space among the archers. Maes (1934) gives
the result of his work among five Mamvu-
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[P. 187-A]

802 speaking archer bands in the northeastern part of the Ituri, near Gombari. He finds the only common characteristic to be the habit of counting in pairs and the use of the term "many" for anything over five. Finger signs for numbers up to five and a separate sign for 10 are used also by the Mamvu villagers. Thus 15 arrows would be "many times two arrows and one." Some of the examples that he gives show either the disinterest or lack of skill of these archers in exact numeration—such as the woman who for totals of four and seven arrows (the article used by Maes for his tests) gave, respectively, the numbers 40 and 10.

278 824 The use of effective poisons is well attested. Geil (1905), who reported reliably on other aspects of the life of Efe archers, mentions their knowledge of antidotes. Schebesta (1941, 65) denies having come across these. He (1941, 228 ff.) does, however, give details of various effective medicines prepared from forest plants. In [755] some instances these medicines, or the methods of application, have magical significance. They [757] seem unable to cure such afflictions as certain types of fever, leprosy, advanced dysentery, and gout.

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411

[P. 231-D]

361 widows; there are no ritual structures.
621 There is simply one hut for each individual family. The relation of huts
361 in the circle seems fortuitous, but it is
621 dictated more than anything else by the
572 friendship of women. Women are home most of the day; the men are out hunting. Women perform tasks that require no interaction, but they help each other for company. Friendship among the women generally takes the form of pairs, although subsidiary friendships may make larger groups. Hence the position of the huts, or rather the determination of who lives in which hut in what part of the circle, is determined purely on the intimacy of women in their daily work routines.

621 Once they are in this camp they will
361 stay on another three months or so until the game is scarce, the fruit gone, the camp ringed by high refuse heaps and pungent with the smell of rotting food and human refuse. Or they will perhaps move on a little earlier if someone dies and is buried there. They do
[805] not count time; they simply respond to the practical needs of the moment, the way lower organisms respond automatically to changes in intensity of light. Moreover, they will never go back to exactly the same place. One reason for this may be the presence of funeral remains; but there may be other reasons. The pygmies do not say why, and probably do not know.

628 **Intercamp visits.**—For various
574 reasons, individual pygmies and even whole families often visit neighboring
[583] camps. With exchange marriage it is necessary to know the people with whom an exchange is to be made. Thus, the need of finding wives makes it necessary to establish relationships between members of different camp units. Aside from marriage, other circumstances sometimes inspire these visits, as, for example, when an individual

[P. 336-A]

789 especially those taken from a wild pep-
821 per plant, to stop storms; and the light-
ing of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[3] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude
[811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is usually a simple business. During the
789 division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[4] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women
862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they
000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 157.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[P.339-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

Mrs. Putnam mentions a villager chief who called in a Pygmy "doctor" who made an incision in the chief's knee from which he withdrew antelope bones and some bugs. Putnam (1948, 340), as does Schebesta (1941, 236), mentions Pygmies' going to villager doctors for treatment of ailments for which the Pygmies have no remedy. This is the only instance quoted of the reverse process, and the only mention of any Pygmy specialist. No further details are known as to how and where the Pygmy acquired his art and reputation. 759 177 171

The villagers recognize the Mbuti knowledge of forest lore. There is one incident known among the net hunters of Pygmies' being called to treat a village girl bitten by a Gaboon viper. The venom of this snake is both hemotoxic and neurotoxic and is normally fatal. The girl was bitten in the face, which was swollen like a balloon by the time she was treated. She was cured quickly and completely. Details of the snake-bite antidotes of these Mbuti are not known. 752

Rationalization

As in the parallel section for the archers, speculation on problems of life and death are considered under Religious Life (p. 235). A word of warning, however, should be offered. Mimicry is a widely attested Mbuti practice. Their great ability in the art is equally well confirmed on all sides. They are equally able to imitate speech as well as action and, with true 128 536 177 157 811

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[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 233-A]

536 artistic flair, even enter into the thought pro-
177 cesses of their subjects. They answer questions
157 in precisely the way they want to answer them,
• 81 without necessarily any regard for the truth. They will give a villager the answers that they think he wants, and similarly with the European. Even among themselves Pygmies may appear to be conducting a serious discussion in their own terms, but one or another will, in fact, be talking, consciously or unconsciously, as a villager or a European might talk. Single or even several instances of what individual Mbuti say therefore must be taken only with extreme caution merely as general indications of what they really mean, particularly when they are replying to questions. While we may be able to talk with some certainty about "rationalization among the Mbuti," we do not have nearly enough evidence to talk about "Mbuti rationalization."[1]

538 Putnam, despite his long sojourn among the
114 Mbuti of the Ituri, was always extremely cautious concerning questions of origin and was very alert to the difficulty presented by the Mbuti mastery of imitation. The problem, as he saw it, was concerned not in the least

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CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

114 771 In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

+177 184 771 Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

771 18 822 813 This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [175]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunt- 181
ing in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo, keti, boru, roho, satani.* [192] These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187- C]
nor do the archers seem to rely on the villagers for any medical help. 75 628

Rationalization

Speculation on problems of life and death are dealt with under Religious Life (p. 188). Here we can say only that Schebesta does not give a special account of legends or legend telling. However, from the legends that he quotes, and from those given by Joset (1948), it appears that among the archers this is an important means not only of reinforcing a system of values, or of commenting on individual behavior in the band, but also of rationalizing the strange and unknown. 538 82.

Joset divides his collection of legends into four categories: (1) the Pygmy and his life; (2) animals: happy and unhappy relations between animals and Pygmies; (3) legends concerning the stars and sky; and (4) legends revealing individual psychological traits. Schebesta (1936b) says that legends tend to be spontaneous creations of individuals; there is no formal body of standard folklore.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 260-C]

of villager legends. The legends of tradition are 539 somewhat more original and are told in a 128 slightly less summary way but still without any great show of interest or enthusiasm.

Most of the tales concern the Mbuti and 539 their relationship with the three planes of exis- [82] tence that they acknowledge: the human, ani- [772] mal, and supernatural worlds. By various notable omissions and commissions they add to our understanding of their social and religious life. Whether the tales are villager in origin or not is for the present purpose not particularly significant. In practice they are never told the same way twice. They are often spontaneous creations arising from a certain set of circumstances, or they may be adaptations of dimly remembered tales, or of traditional villager tales, again made to fit certain sets of circumstances. One of the weaknesses of the present collection is the absence of such surrounding details.

A full analysis of legends and the circum- 539 stances under which they are told, together 121 with a similar analysis of other Mbuti arts, such as music and drama (all vitally important means of expression to the Pygmy), would give

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

"There is no more, Grandmother." "Yes there is, give it, my bad child." I was very afraid. I threw it all down and said, "That is all, Grandmother, take it and go. There is no more. Take it and return to your place. I shall stay here."

"Thank you, my child, I shall return. Stay well."

"Go well, Grandmother."

I sat with eyes [i.e., watchfully] and waited for daylight. When daylight came I climbed down. I looked for the footprints of my grandmother. There were no footprints. "Ah!" I said. "It was truly an evil spirit. I did well to throw down all my honey, or it would have killed me completely."

That is why I returned empty-handed.

If in telling the stories the Mbuti do so to such good effect that they half convince themselves, they more than convince the villagers. The advantages of the situation to the Mbuti are as obvious as they are considerable. But at the same time it has to be pointed out that the forest itself *is* hostile to the villagers, and they have very real reason to dislike and fear it. It not only makes their life as cultivators hard and uncertain but it makes communication through the forest highly dangerous, to the extent that, until the road along which the villages are now eagerly clustered was built across the middle of the forest, the villages were very self-contained units with little intercommunication. Even now villagers will walk twice as far or more by road to reach another village, rather than take a simple shortcut across the forest. Unversed as they are in forest lore, its dangers are real to the villagers and there are frequent instances of villagers disappearing without trace even while on a relatively short trip. They are promptly added to the legion of forest spirits by their relatives, who have an even greater fear of the forest from then on.

The Mbuti, however, know the forest and its ways, and the dangers it has to offer are exceptionally few and far between. There is certainly nothing in the course of natural events in the forest to suggest to hunters and gatherers any trace of hostility. There is a great abundance of material goods, and of health and security, all of which suggest benevolence. This is taken up in the final section on the forest world, dealing with the religious life of the Mbuti.

One of the best examples of the kind of use to which the Mbuti put village beliefs that do not tally with their own is seen in the following legend (quoted in *The Forest People*, Chapter 7). It makes

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*).

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role,

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokomea* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

172 Archeological sources tell us nothing concerning the origin or history of the African Pygmies. Putnam reports that neolithic axheads are frequently found throughout the Ituri, often revealed when a tree is split by lightning. The [B21] Mbuti, however, do not appear to recognize their origin or use, and refer to them as "turds of lightning" (Patrick Putnam, 1948, 339). Haene (1949) reports the finding of round stones with holes, which might have been currency, in the Ituri Forest, and appeals for engineers and others concerned in exploitation of the forest to be made aware of the possibility of such finds. Soors (1950a, 59), commenting on this appeal, writes that he met an engineer who, in the course of excavation in the Rega Forest, had found a large flat stone bearing hieroglyphic inscriptions. Asked what had become of it, the engineer replied: "*Nous l'avons cassée en mille morceaux—nous ne tenons pas d'être dérangés dans nos travaux par des amateurs d'antiquités.*"

174 175 Recorded history is, of course, nil, so any reliable historical reconstruction is ruled out for the moment and must remain so until there is much more physiological, demographic, or archeological evidence. Even the date and direction of migrations among the various village tribes are uncertain, though a considerable amount of research has been done in this direction (Moeller, 1934, 1936). We have 174 merely traditions of origin and history, and even this material is scanty and unenlightening.

[P. 162-B]

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to 776 a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of 177 Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans [114] (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore.

Schebesta believes that, though different 776 groups of archers give precedence to one name 82 or another, there is only one God of the Under- [184] growth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The [825] chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning.

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, 776 whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The [171] Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good.

Cult Practices

776 A number of practices are associated with the 782

[P. 189-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 190-A]

782 God of the Undergrowth in the form of invoca-
776 tions, offerings, propitiatory sacrifice, and perhaps also a number of the practices of the *toré* association. There is no cult to any celestial divinity, of which the Mbuti have only vague notions.

782 Invocations usually concern the weather (re-
82 quests for a storm to pass over speedily or to be
372 diverted) and are often accompanied by the
534 blowing of the *segbe* magic pipe, indicating with the arm the direction the storm should take. The archers also may light a special fire and cover it with leaves so that a thick smoke rises. The God of the Undergrowth sees the smoke, smells its fragrance, and hears the *segbe* pipes. His attention is thus drawn to the plight of his
782 "children." There is a similar ritual of fire and
224 smoke in connection with the hunt, particularly
372 the apparently ancient *begbe* beat hunt, as is mentioned above (p. 172). Invocations frequently use the term "father" or "grandfather."

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

[P 191-D]

[P. 193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses. 776 [821] • [761]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.) 776 772 761 821 [372] [841]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with 731
water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and 821
snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have [823]
a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena.

As might be expected therefore, such ritual 788
as exists is most often connected with the storm [821]
and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. How- [778]
ever, cult practices are far less common, and he mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offer- 788
ings may be thrown into the undergrowth, 782
though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or

[P. 237-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

781 The dividing line between magic and religion,
789 according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

775 There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is
[761] some indication, both from Mbuti informants and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

761 The net hunters believe that death is caused
776 by the water animal that is the rainbow that is,
[821] sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether
[825] [P. 238-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

two manifestations of the same spiritual being and that both this being and the *molimo* are in some way connected with death. The former causes death (whether in some or all cases is not known), but the latter seems to be different in that it appears only the day following death and can restore normality to the community in crisis (not only death) rather than cause crisis. The *molimo* association calls to the *molimo* "animal" in times of crisis and brings it physically into the camp, according to Mrs. Putnam's notes. It appears to be propitiated by offerings of food, which is consumed by members of the *molimo*, and by dance and song. 761 776 [782]

No information is given as to any belief in the origin of death, or of any human failings that might cause it other than violation of the *molimo* by a woman or of the *elima* by a man. Infringement of rules of exogamy and other taboos may or may not cause death; individual opinion among the net hunters varies considerably on such matters. 761 784

According to local informants, the only villagers that have the *molimo* are the Bira, Lese, Ndaka, and Bali. 776 171

Lightning is also a symbol of misfortune but not necessarily of death. When lightning comes at night, campfires may be covered so that the 821 [372]

[1] In her notes, Mrs. Putnam invariably uses the term *esumba* or *esamba* for *lusumba*.

[P 238-0]

[NET HUNTERS]
[P.239-A]

821 flames will not be seen, then the lightning will
372 pass. Mrs. Putnam reports that on one occasion a particularly large and bright fire was built during the night because, according to the Mbuti, a Lese woman who had died recently was "tapping in the trees." Fire is reported to be extinguished in one of the *molimo* dances, among the net hunters as well as among the archers.

Totem and Taboo

614 Putnam distinguishes four kinds of taboo for
825 the net hunters. The first is related to what he calls the clan totem.[1] Each clan, he says, has its own private totemic animal. This is believed to be not the clan ancestor but, rather, connected with that ancestor in mythology, as having rescued him from danger or helped him in some enterprise. Putnam mentions seven species of antelope and 12 species of monkey that appear as totemic animals among the Mbuti bands in his area. Other animals, not important as food to the Pygmy, are also totemic animals but, according to Putnam, less frequently. Slow game and vegetables, that is, food collected by women, are never used as totems.

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[P. 240-A]

789 tree limb on top of a hut. Such contexts evoke a
[184] different response, it seems, among the archers who actively influence the outcome of any critical situation by the use of their *megbe*, often by their *segbe* pipes. The magic described by the Putnams is essentially sympathetic and does not involve any belief in spiritual assis-
789 tance. Thus stones may not be dropped in the
• 821 water, or they will cause rain; a bright fire should be smothered until it is a mere glow during a storm, lest it attract the lightning (according to one informant) or in order to drive the lightning away (according to another, in the same discussion). All the magic that Putnam observed among the net hunters was connected with the weather and the prevention of rain, though he does not deny the possibility that magic might be used to stop the rain, once begun.

789 Mrs. Putnam describes a number of magical
224 practices, most of which are connected with either rain or the hunt. The latter simply involve the use of villager witch doctors to perform a ceremony to improve the hunting. The ceremony is never conducted by a Pygmy, nor is it clear on whose initiative it is usually per-

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789 224 formed. Mrs. Putnam says that the Pygmies may ask the villager to perform the ceremony, but it is also certain that the villagers themselves, if they do not get enough meat from the Pygmies, insist on performing it. The use of a [534] *segbe* whistle is mentioned only once by Patrick Putnam. It was incorporated in a hunting net (Figs. 34–35) for the hunter to blow into to attract the antelope. This hunter was the camp joker. *Segbe* whistles and pipes may assume many forms, being incorporated in fur headbands (Fig. 51a) or left loose (Fig. 51b). Other [237] hunting magic found among the net hunters, not mentioned by Putnam, is *anjo* (Fig. 51c), an antelope horn in which is kept a paste made of animal parts, rubbed over the eyes and head of the hunter before the hunt.

789 534 222 *Segbe* are not to be confused with *madé* (Fig. 51d–e) pipes, which are used only during the honey season.

789 821 372 Rain magic involves the covering of the campfires with leaves but evidently without much faith in the efficacy of this action, as all practical precautions are taken as well, such as putting hunting nets under cover, bringing fire inside the huts, and taking in barkcloth that has been left outside to dry. Further, the use of

[P. 240-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 240-C]

leaves to cover fires is an effective way of keeping them burning during a rainstorm, is not always accompanied by the production of smoke (thought by some to be an offering), and is never described as being accompanied by any invocation. As far as the descriptions and my own observations go, it could be a simple precautionary measure taken to preserve the all-valuable fire. 789 82 372

Mrs. Putnam was told that barkcloth should not be beaten if it is going to rain, but this may also be for purely practical technological reasons. She once saw an old Pygmy blow a *segbe* pipe a number of times, looking at the sky, in an avowed attempt to avert the rain. When it rained the old man simply shrugged his shoulders and took shelter. 789 82 [287]

On another occasion, when it threatened to rain and spoil the dance one evening, the young men and boys all seized leaves and ran down to the stream and back, beating the leaves on the ground. They evidently did not wait to see if this magic would work, and all retired to their huts.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 241-8]

dence among the net hunters of a belief in a personal god. He asserts that all their ritual actions can be explained in terms of direct cause-and-effect belief, without any reference to spiritual beings. The Putnam material itself, however, indicates some notion of spiritual existence and power, although in nothing like the highly formalized system that Schebesta attributes to the archers. Coon, in his notes on an interview with Putnam (*in* Patrick Putnam, 1948), points out that the water animal is in a sense a personification of the storm, as is the belief that the neolithic axheads found throughout the forest are excreta dropped by lightning.

It is largely a question of degree. The material available is not sufficient for us to make any useful observations on the net-hunters' theology or cosmology. All that can be said is that there is a belief in a benevolent power associated with the forest (which may or may not be the *molimo*) and a power symbolized by the rainbow, or as a water animal, and associated with death. Whether these are two aspects of the same divinity, two distinct divinities, or unconnected with any notion of divinity cannot be said.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

us a body of facts on which we could draw in a study of the Mbuti system of values, joining such an analysis to a more formal anthropological study. It is not intended to attempt such an analysis here; there is insufficient detail and further field work is needed. However, a study of the legends we have at our disposal, if it cannot provide the detailed systematization we would like, does at least give us a clearer picture of Mbuti values than could be had by merely observing their behavior.

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1. Creation Myths: Legends of Origin and Tradition

539

As mentioned, for the Pygmy these subjects seem barely worth mention in legend. I give all three legends that deal with creation and with the sun and moon. None concerned the stars.

The Water and the Earth

Many, many moons ago the Water was down below, and the Earth was way up in the sky. When it rained it rained dirt, and the dirt ruined all the water vegetables and spoiled all the water food, so that it had to be thrown away. The Water said to the Earth: "You are spoiling my water gardens by raining dirt. You come down here and I'll go up there."

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The Earth agreed, and so the Water moved up and the Earth came down. When they had changed

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[P. 261-A]

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• 821

places, the Water said: "Now I'm going to rain on *you*, but *I'm* going to rain water." And the Water rained on the Earth. The earth vegetables flourished and the earth gardens grew. The Water said: "See, when I rain I don't spoil your food like you spoiled mine. It is good like this."

And from then onward the Water stayed up in the sky and the Earth stayed down below.

Basi

The Sun and the Moon

The Sun and the Moon, who were close friends, had a big discussion. The Sun said to the Moon: "Come on up, high, high up; you and I will be higher than anything else—but now we should part. I will be high up over there in the east, and you will be high up over there in the west."

The Moon said: "Yes, I would like that, and it is good that we should stay apart because you are bright and shine like I do."

And so they divided the Heavens between them. When the Sun disappeared in the hours of the night, then the Moon passed by, all by itself. The Sun said: "This is very good. Your path is there, and mine is over here, but we must never cross at the same time; that would be very, very bad."

So they parted forever. That is why the Sun always shines in the daytime, and the Moon at night.

Basi

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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The Pygmy and the Sun

There was a Pygmy who saw the sun in the middle of one afternoon. He thought it was a pigskin, so of course he tried to chase it and catch it. The Pygmy kept following, but the sun would not stay still. Still, the Pygmy followed until the sun disappeared from sight and night arrived. The Pygmy couldn't understand what had happened to the pigskin. He went to sleep.

When dawn came, the sun was way off in another direction. The Pygmy woke up and said to himself: "How did the pigskin get way over there?" He went toward the east and the sun kept coming toward him. They got nearer and nearer . . . then suddenly the sun passed the Pygmy. The Pygmy said: "Now, how did I pass the pigskin?" He turned and chased after the sun. He walked to the west. He walked and walked and walked, until the sun disappeared from sight and night arrived. The Pygmy couldn't understand what had happened to the pigskin. He went to sleep.

Basi

539 The first beginnings of the Pygmies receive scant attention. The single legend in the collection referring to them runs as follows:

Way, way back, when the Great Forest was young, there were two Pygmy men and one Pygmy woman.

[P. 261- B]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

which only the villagers *need* a cure. There are a number of such minor crises. Even if the action appears to be protective, it is still basically curative. For instance, theft is common in villages, and villagers have a number of magical cures for theft that prevent it by curing the situation that might give rise to this antisocial act. This may seem like an academic quibble, justifying the inclusion of protective magic under the definition of magic as curative activity, but it is more basic than that. If the Mbuti saw themselves in a future context they might be interested in protection, but one of their characteristics is to think in terms of the present. Theft is not a part of their behavior toward each other; there is nothing they have that the villagers can steal from them, so there is no immediate situation to be cured. But the danger of poor hunting is more real.

For the hunt the Mbuti themselves have divers cures, but mostly of a sympathetic nature and, considering the importance of the hunt, remarkably few. The villagers, on the other hand, have a great number of cures to offer, and if convenient the Mbuti accept them. But once again the question is one of need. From his experience the hunter sees no need to concern himself with the future: it is rare that the hunting is so poor that he goes hungry. It is rare indeed even that there could not be a surplus to trade with the villagers. But lack of meat for trade is always excused by a plea of bad hunting. In fact, the Mbuti even go further and point to the fact that they have no elaborate cures for bad hunting, so how can the villagers blame them for not bringing in meat? The villager then supplies the cures, and if these do not work he will even be told by the Mbuti that it must be witchcraft, and asked to call out a diviner. I know of three cases where Mbuti have been trained by villagers to divine witchcraft and are believed, by villagers, to be highly effective. But once again there is no question of dependence.

Other situations that need curing and that may be cured by empirical (i.e., "magical") means available to villagers alone include poor weather, attack by lightning, attack by a witch, or by the spirits of the forest (*keti*). The cures consist of divers charms and fetish bundles, but they are considered as effective only by the villagers. The Mbuti recognize man's inability to control the weather, though they have a small amount of very simple sympathetic weather magic; lightning strikes where it will, though again fires are covered by the Mbuti during a storm in case the flames attract lightning. As for attack by a witch, their attitude is somewhat ambivalent, but they do not place

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

much faith in a charm against a witch's power, if such power exists; their own remedy is retreat to the forest, where there are no witches. They do not believe in the existence of malevolent *keti*, or spirits, as do the villagers.

In the realm of curative magic, then, the villager has nothing to offer that the Mbuti needs, and has no means of utilizing magic or exclusive village knowledge of magical techniques to control the Mbuti.

WITCHCRAFT

If it were not for their own misconception of village witchcraft, the Mbuti would be at no disadvantage through their own lack of it. As it is, however, they tend to confuse witchcraft and sorcery, and consequently find themselves dealing with a phenomenon totally outside their forest-world experience—conscious malevolence.

Their confusion is visible in their constant usage of the terms associated with sorcery, even when only witchcraft is implied. The forest hunters are aware of the theoretical difference, but simply do not believe in the existence of witchcraft substance. They are unwilling enough to believe in malevolent supernatural powers, but events combine to persuade them to belief.

Unlike magic, which applies to natural phenomena, witchcraft and sorcery deal necessarily with the supernatural, and create their own need for protection. But whereas the villagers, in their acceptance of the theory of witchcraft substance, can happily accept a fetish bundle as adequate protection, the Mbuti, seeing the whole thing as malevolent sorcery, cannot believe that a bundle of sticks and bones is going to afford much help. Looking at witchcraft—and sorcery—as something belonging essentially to the village world, however, they do have recourse in flight to the forest, where, in their experience, these supernatural powers cannot easily reach. In the village world they can find no protection, and can only hope for an end to the underlying hostility.

Thus witchcraft, which among the villagers is essentially a mechanism for social control, being a concept employed usefully to bring to light hidden sources of dispute and to publicly shame troublemakers, inadvertently gives the villagers a weapon against the Mbuti, while at the same time it drives the Mbuti both literally back into

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 dred yards across. However, thirty nets would form a circle, with beaters, which in diameter could be as much as a mile. Such a large area becomes difficult to control and dangerous. Since it is customary for [422] nets to be owned only by married men, and exceptionally by a bache- [654] lor who has proved himself as a particularly fine hunter, it can be seen [162] that a net-hunting band, to be an efficient economic unit, must be limited to between six or seven and thirty nuclear families.

224 Insofar as brothers tend to learn to hunt from their father they 496 make ideal hunting partners, and frequently stand in line in the hunt. [593] It is important to know the habits of the hunter next to you, as he will be hidden by the undergrowth and his movements must be anticipated before shooting an arrow or throwing a spear in the direction of any game. Even when game falls into a net there is still danger, since the smallest antelope is vicious when trapped, and the larger animals capable of inflicting serious injury with their teeth and horns. A trapped animal has to be killed as quickly as possible, and anyone nearby will run to the spot with his spear at the ready. Injuries resulting to Mbuti in the resultant melee are not frequent, but when they occur it is almost always between two people who do not commonly hunt close to each other, and who have misjudged each other's movements.

224 However, there is no rule about brothers setting up their nets next 496 to each other; the order of nets is determined primarily by age, the 561 older hunters occupying the center of the semicircle of nets, the younger hunters at the fringes (conveniently separating fathers from their older sons, with whom there may be some rivalry). A young man is much more likely to choose to hunt beside an unrelated friend of the same age than beside a brother who is much older or younger than he is. A dispute in camp may upset the customary order, but generally the order, once established, remains fairly constant except for the retirement of older men from the center, and the movement inward from the younger men at the extremities. Temporary visitors to the camp usually hunt near the ends of the semicircle, but older men will probably be invited to join those in the center.

224 Magic associated with the net-hunt is slight. If rain threatens there 789 are a few hunters who will try to blow the rain away by allowing moss 821 to fall from their fingers while they blow at it and wave their arms in the direction they wish the clouds to go. Sometimes a whistle is blown, with the same arm-waving. If rain comes despite these activities, there is generally laughter, and the "magician" shrugs his shoulders as though he expected as much.

meaningless trivia. Such disputes I have put in a class by themselves, 627
though wherever a deeper underlying dispute was known to have lain 578
behind an apparently trivial dispute, it has been classified accordingly.

DISPUTES CONCERNING FOOD

1. A mortar was borrowed by Njobo's sister, Teningbengé, from 252
Amaloku, Amabosu's wife. There is no kin relationship. Tening- 152
bengé's subsequent cooking did not please her son (Maipé, actually 578
her nephew), who complained that the mortar must have been dirty. Amaloku, who by then had retrieved the mortar, said that on the contrary it was the food put into the mortar that was dirty, and not the mortar itself. Maipé promptly seized a log of wood and started fighting with Amabosu. Amaloku and Teningbengé fought with sticks. Amabosu's mother, Sau, joined the fight, against her daughter-in-law's oldest sister, old Asofalinda. The dispute remained thus confined and [626]
was watched with much enthusiasm and laughter by the rest of the camp until Ekianga, brother to Amaloku and Asofalinda, stepped in and stopped the fighting by seizing the sticks and logs and throwing them away. Everyone returned to his hut and continued the evening meal.

2. Masisi, a great hunter, complained that the hunting was bad 224
and said the band should move to the village and eat there. His 578
cousin, Manyalibo, moved to midcamp and began a tirade against Masisi and everyone else for always complaining there was not enough food. He cited ten antelope caught that morning as evidence of the good hunting, and said that everyone should be happy and should be making the forest happy by singing, with so much food. And if they wanted more food they should hunt more and make the hunt even better. He said that if Masisi's noise continued he was going to leave.

Moké then took his place and quietly told everyone that nobody 224
should leave for anywhere, that nobody could deny that the hunt was 626
reasonably good, and that therefore the forest was pleased. If they [578]
moved or made too much noise it would be displeased. The forest would be happy if the whole band were to set out the next day on the biggest hunt of all. Then when the weather was better (it had [824] [052] been raining for some days, always a cause of discontent and dis- [166] comfort) and nobody was making a noise, the whole band could move [648] wherever it liked (knowing that in such a mood it would move fur-

224 626 ther away from the village, and thus further away from a source of
[821] friction).
158
166 There was no singing, but it was done as Moké suggested. Mur-
[648] murs of assent came from all over camp, with both Masisi and Manyalibo agreeing loudly.

578 3. Particularly at the beginning of the honey season, when ten-
621 dencies to fission are already well marked, disputes over food, par-
221 ticularly over hunger attributable to poor hunting, are made occasions for enlarging the rift between the camp segments. Thus one day old
578 Tungana's younger son, named after his distant relative Njobo, came
593 flying back from the hunt in hot pursuit of his wife, Nakoranja.
158 Nakoranja, much to everyone's surprise, had lost her bark cloth and
221 was holding a leaf in front of her private parts, occasionally removing
621 it to emphasize her cry of "I am naked!"

Having made her point she disappeared into her hut and modestly continued her description as to how her husband had torn her bark cloth off to shame her because she wanted to join her "sister" (who was a member of another segment), Ekianga's youngest wife. Young
[224] Njobo, standing outside the hut, told the camp that his wife was useless on the hunt, that she could not run as fast as even the slowest animal and let them all escape. Now they had no food and they would be hungry all day. Evidently she could not run as fast as her husband either, for he had caught her and given her a sound beating, ripping off her bark cloth when she tried to escape. He did not deny this, and Nakoranja said that this entitled her to pack up and leave.

578 Evidently this was something that had been brewing for some
593 time, and when the hunt came back and it was seen that the dispute
621 was forming along the line of fission, Tungana intervened and said
166 that there was no sense in everyone making so much noise, that the next day he and his wife were going to leave for the village, and that young Njobo and Nakoranja were coming with them to look after them. The discussion immediately turned to the dangers of the trail, with the two segments siding with each other in common and equally insincere but polite opposition to Tungana's suggestion.

621 4. At a later stage, when fission became inevitable, discontent being
626 so high that the sections were not uniting in the hunt and therefore not getting any meat, old Moké intervened. He stood in midcamp and harangued each section in turn, facing it and naming its mem-
[221] bers. He emphasized that this was the honey season and that hunting should be stopped anyway, and everyone go to the forest in search of their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[3]

3 *Kanga me bi akilé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 82
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 84
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- [114]
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon [176]
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okiru ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowra (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

822 [198] [192] "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. 822 198 [178] [761] [533] The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and [533] [765] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely [821] [789] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 824 [198] [192] All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki*, *segbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt- [222] [825] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
• [821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for
[141] belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

night, when it is cold, the fire gives not only warmth but protection, 372 484 keeping the animals away.

It was midday when we waded through a marshy patch left by 484 recent floods. Usually there is little marsh or swamp, but every now 133 and again dead branches and fallen trees will block a stream and the whole area will be flooded, perhaps for miles, until a heavy rain washes the obstruction away. We had to splash knee-deep through mud and water for several hundred yards before we reached dry land. The first thing Kenge and the others did then was to find the main [515] stream and wash themselves clean before going any farther.

From here the ground rose steadily and although we could hear streams below us we did not cross any more until just before we got to the Lelo. Up on the ridge the forest was a little thinner, more light filtered through to the ground below, and the world was alive with dancing shadows as the breeze rippled the leaves. But the sun still raised the temperature only to the point where it was pleasantly warm. As we were picking our way down into the Lelo valley we heard distant rumbles of thunder. Kenge stopped and looked up into [821] the tree tops to see which way the wind was blowing. He muttered that it would not rain yet, but if those lazy women didn't hurry up and come and build the huts we would have a very wet night.

But for the moment the sun was shining, and when we finally 361 arrived at the site for our camp it was bright and green and cheerful. 484 It was a natural clearing a couple of hundred yards across, with a patch of trees and bush in the center breaking up the clearing so that it was really two. As large and as open as it was, the trees still almost met overhead. The ground, instead of being covered with leaves, was covered with a kind of grass. Kenge dumped his bundle on top of a little hillock several yards across and said that this was where we would have our house built. He then told me to come and see the Lelo itself, hinting that I should have a good bath.

Apa Lelo, or the Camp of Lelo, will always be one of the most 361 114

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and 361
leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that 342
she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we 412
would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and [123]
Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could 342
tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a 314
large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we 481
hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, 114
looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had 123
long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I [821] •
would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them
put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and [487]
the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cut- 314
ting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about 114
four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The 123
others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so [412]
they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their 476
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But [622]
I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855]
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

spirit-animal and he was going to attack you so I drove him into the hole and I dare not leave it or he will come out and kill you! Run and get your spear and save me, your poor Pygmy!" The villager was scared out of his wits and ran away. Asofalinda promptly hid the plantains elsewhere and quickly returned to the hole.

At this point in the story, Masamba, Njobo's wife, came to help act out the rest. Asofalinda crouched at the foot of a tree, pretending that she was covering a hole in the ground, and Masamba, acting the part of the villager, crept onto the scene, carrying a spear and looking very frightened. As they acted the scene, the villager came up behind Asofalinda and asked timidly if the spirit-animal was still there. "Yes," said Asofalinda, over her shoulder. "But I have used my magic and sung it to sleep so that you will be able to kill it. But you must be very quiet and very careful. You are the only one who could do it, you are so big and strong and clever, not like we poor Pygmies."

Saying this, she slowly uncovered the hole and whispered to the villager to stoop down and peer in. Masamba then cautiously bent over and peered into the imaginary hole. "No," said Asofalinda, "you will have to look deeper. It is a big hole and the spirit-animal is right at the back. But you must be very quiet or it will wake up and kill you first." So Masamba stooped lower and Asofalinda finished the scene with no further commentary. It was hardly necessary. She crept behind Masamba and kicked her heartily in the backside and ran off laughing and clapping her hands with mirth. Even Masamba, who suffered the brunt of the joke, enjoyed it so much that the two of them re-enacted it four times that one afternoon.

In ways like this, even on a rainy day when there is no hunting or gathering to be done, a camp can be made lively and entertaining. But generally rain brings depression. People sit in their huts and peer out miserably. On the whole, however, the tenor of life is even, wet

or dry, with few real ups and downs that affect the life of the group as a whole.

Occasionally an elephant is killed, and that means the entire camp will be abandoned at once and a new one built around the dead animal, so that it can be eaten on the spot. The Pygmies point out that this is easier than bringing the elephant to the camp. It means a week of merry-making, of singing and dancing and no hunting. The only trouble is that it also means visits from the villagers. On such occasions they will pluck up their courage and venture into the forest, feeling that with such an abundance of meat the Pygmies will be in a generous frame of mind. The Pygmies try to avoid this by immediately sending meat to the village. But when villagers do come, they are generally courteously received and allowed to stay for a day or two. After that, if they are slow with gifts of rice or tobacco, the Pygmies have various ways of making them move on. The forest is the world of the Pygmy, and he is not bashful about telling a villager who outstays his welcome just what he thinks of him.

I stayed in one camp which was only a few hours from the village and on the way to a Negro fishing ground. We were constantly beset by villagers passing through, and after a while the Pygmies got tired of feeding them, tired of being used as a convenient stopping place. So when they were asked for food, the Pygmies would agree on condition that the villagers join them in a game of *panda*. This is a gambling game in which beans are thrown on a mat, or on a flat piece of ground. Some of them are quickly scooped up by one of the two players. The other, looking to see how many are left, has to estimate at a glance how many his opponent has taken. He then tells his opponent to throw down one, two, or three beans, or to stay as he is. The count is then made—also at a glance—and if the player has an exact multiple of four he wins. But against villagers Pygmies always win. For one thing they have an uncanny sense of

OOO Kenge could not believe they were the same mountains that we had seen from the forest; there they had seemed just like large hills to him. I tried to explain what the snow was—he thought it was some kind of white rock. Henri said that it was water that turned [821] [822] color when it was high up, but Kenge wanted to know why it didn't run down the mountainside like any other water. When Henri told him it also turned solid at that height, Kenge gave him a long steady look and said, *"Bongo yako!"* ("You liar!")

With typical Pygmy philosophy, he accepted what he could not understand and turned his back on the mountains to look more closely at what lay all around him. He picked up a handful of grass, tasted it and smelled it. He said that it was bad grass and that the mud was bad mud. He sniffed at the air and said it was bad air. In fact, as he had stated at the outset, it was altogether a very bad country. The guide pointed out the elephants, hoping to make him feel more at home. But Kenge was not impressed. He asked what good they were if we were not allowed to go and hunt them. Henri pointed out the antelopes, which had moved closer and were staring at us as curiously as ever. Kenge clapped his hands together and said that they would provide food for a whole camp for months and months. Then he saw the buffalo, still grazing lazily several miles away, far down below. He turned to me and said, "What insects are those?"

[822] At first I hardly understood; then I realized that in the forest the range of vision is so limited that there is no great need to make an automatic allowance for distance when judging size. Out here in the plains, however, Kenge was looking for the first time over apparently unending miles of unfamiliar grasslands, with not a tree worth the name to give him any basis for comparison. The same thing happened later on when I pointed out a boat in the middle of the lake. It was a large fishing boat with a number of people in it but Kenge at first refused to believe this. He thought it was a floating piece of wood.

222 camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ring-
527 ing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex
517 [533] cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night
535 I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have
517 drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the
[821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred
578 in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including
602 Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had
224

262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 703 The animals of the forest, which symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting: flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

716 [711] Both pygmies and Negroes believe in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

[P. 338-B]

776 water, the people, will say, "It was the water animal that did it." Sometimes the water animal comes up out of his native element and assumes the form of a rainbow.

821 172 From time to time the Negroes and the pygmies find neolithic axes, which they say are "turds of lightning," excreta dropped in the process of the storm; when lightning splits a tree, one of these turds is always left.

776 The pygmies also believe in totemic spirits, which live in spirit places—in rock piles, hollow trees, and holes in the ground; classic *genii loci*. On their account, the pygmies refuse to go near certain rocky hills, on which there may be dense thickets. If a pygmy is out hunting with a white man, the white man may say, "Let us beat in there; there is game in that thicket." The pygmy will reply, "No Bwana, don't go in there; that hill is full of *sitana*." [192] The word *sitana* is the local Swahili or Kingwana equivalent for the Arabic word *shaitan*, plural *shayatin*.

Ritual Activities

789 821 **Weather magic.**—One class of weather ritual involves the use of physical symbols taken from the context of situation—leaves, which wave violently and are blown down in a storm. Schebesta [8] describes a simple ceremony of this kind in an Efe camp. During the height of a storm the oldest man in the camp came out of his house and stood in front of it. He brought with him leaves and ashes. First he threw most of the ashes upward into the wind, then he smeared ashes on a leaf, rubbed some onto his own body, and threw the rest into the wind.

Other methods mentioned by Schebesta are the burning of certain leaves,

[113] [8] Schebesta, P., *Among Congo Pygmies*. London: Hutchinson & Co., 1933, p. 243.

[P.339-A]

789 821 especially those taken from a wild pepper plant, to stop storms; and the lighting of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[3] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude [811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 789 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is usually a simple business. During the division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[4] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women 862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they 000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 137.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 137.
[p.339-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 [285] [847] 824 [312] [524]

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of ***kangay***, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

302 [304] [386] [822] 291 301 [177]

621 great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more
423 important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member
131 of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-
131 known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one
62 day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The
423 shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connect-
484 ing two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is
487 the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this
• [822] means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

131 The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series
133 of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

[A] [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P.246]

CHAPTER 14

Religion

SUPERNATURAL BELIEFS

114 771 In dealing with religion, Schebesta on occasion clearly states whether he is referring to the Sua, who are primarily net-hunters, or to the Efe, who are archers, so we are able to make some use of his data. However, religious belief among the Epulu net-hunting Mbuti does not coincide in detail with his account of Sua religion. Even among the very archer Mbuti where Schebesta worked I found the widest possible divergence of opinion, to the point of complete contradiction by one band of the stated beliefs of the other. The only systematic unity into which these allegedly Mbuti concepts fitted was that of the Lesé magico-religious system. However, Schebesta plainly saw throughout that though there were significant differences of opinion, there was also a subtle and powerful unity in trying to discover this unity. He was unfortunately hampered by his overwhelming desire to present a picture of a system applicable to all Mbuti.

*177 124 771 Among the net-hunters, as among the archers, the dual use of magico-religious terms by the Mbuti, to refer both to village and to Mbuti practice and belief sometimes leads to an appearance of an Mbuti system somewhat akin to that of the villagers. However, ignoring the actual terminology—which is further confused by the proliferation of tribal languages in the Epulu region, in discussing concepts concerning life and death, the nature of the afterworld and so forth—there is not only difference of opinion from one net-hunting band to the next but even within any one band or any one family.

771 18 822 813 This should be no particular cause for surprise for, being a practical people whose physical existence is determined, in detail, by day-to-day context, they are far more concerned with the present than they are with the past or the future. With regard to the future, be it in this life or the next, they eschew speculation on the grounds that not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [175]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunt- 181
ing in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo*, [192]
keti, *boru*, *roho*, *satani*. These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinand'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound. 778 822 533

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti. 533 [822]

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.) 533 881 [844] [585]

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or 000

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*. [192]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *husumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765]
I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *bevai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

"strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*ngovu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki*, *sogbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkuas* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunting dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 ff.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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561 88 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 561 [594] 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided horizontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by 621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by 131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the [648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*, [192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one 628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs 602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep- 778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

• 822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

the camp or on the hunt, and they also sometimes shout at a storm or at rain to drive away bad weather.

But more important than Mbuti recognition of the practical power of noise is their recognition of its social value. When they say it is the duty of the hunter age level to make noise, they mean just that, even though it is precisely noise that will negate the hunter's other duty, to hunt. The Mbuti do not connect the two duties—the one refers to the hunt, the other to camp life. It is in the camp that the hunter is expected to make noise; that is, to be disputatious. For the countervalue, *ekimi*, is only "quiet" and does not refer to silence (*kobinengo*), which is considered as an indication of great and imminent danger. A silent camp is considered a bad camp and the badness is destroyed by destroying the silence, which can be done in two ways. One is by singing, which is recognized as sound but only described as noise when it takes place in the village. Singing, as we have seen, is essentially a form of communication, even of communion, with the benevolent forest divinity. It destroys silence and "rejoices the forest" at the same time. But this is recognized as having only temporary efficacy. To strike at the roots of silence, one employs "noise" in the sense of argument, which is certainly its most common connotation.

Silence in a camp betokens unusual ill humor, which is common among the Mbuti when in their village camp, but not in the forest (except when the hunt is spoiled by rain). Disputes seldom remain hidden for long because of the intimate nature of camp life, but any length of time is too long, and when a camp is silent it is invariably the hunters who find some cause for "making noise." It matters little what they pick on, but it is preferably not the underlying dispute causing the silence. It may be directed at the cause if personal feelings run high, but then the hunters are criticized for making too much noise, *akami ndasi*. Youths and elders will alike shout at the hunters and tell them this, but the noise will not die down until the disputants have either come into the open with their dispute, putting it before the band, or have been forced to join together in some common but unrelated cause.

Thus there was an occasion on which Amabosu, for no evident reason, took to beating his wife, Amaloku, with unwonted vigor and regularity. A certain amount of wife-beating is considered good, and the wife is expected to fight back. But Amaloku was aware of the real reason for her husband's behavior, which was her own brother's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Maku- 593
basi, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" 578
(*ue ke bulé*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its con- 626
notations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubasi pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabosu's sister, but Amabosu 593
no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even 626
before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off get- 822
ting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is some- 577
thing else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. 183
As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the 822
hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[8] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*" —"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The 577
concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, 183
or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is 828
brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good [822]
weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[8] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

765
know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *ídu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765 534
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting 322

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 609 177 P [822] it had a railway, which aroused his deepest curiosity. He could not think why the trains were limited in their movement by the iron rails, and could not turn wherever they wanted to. There was something about this restriction of freedom that bothered him. I took him to see a football match between the workers of a local brewery and those of a large combine store. Just before the match we had been drinking palm wine in a small African bar, and found it much stronger than the wine made in the forest. So Kenge rooted happily for what he called "Men of the Beer," but why people should spend the afternoon kicking a ball back and forth was as puzzling to him as were the captive trains.

C 609 648 574 [754] P 177 648 We spent only a few days in Paulis, branching out from there along the northern limits of the forest. Then we turned eastward and made our way across and down into Lese country. The BaLese are considered to be arch-sorcerers and witches, and it was with great reluctance that Kenge agreed to stay in the village of Chief Lupao, near Nduye. It was several miles off the road, and by accident or design it was empty when we got there. Fires were still smoldering and smoking, but there was no other sign of life. The chief's baraza, a huge edifice with a thatched roof, stood open in front of his house; the fire had been recently made up, but nobody came out to greet us.

Kenge was getting more and more nervous, and I was on the point of giving in to his repeated requests to leave and find a more hospitable place to stay, when a young man appeared and wandered idly toward us. He stopped some way off and stood there looking at us. C [184] This was a completely new situation to me, as in every other village, even where we had been total strangers, we had been almost embarrassed by the hospitality of the people. I waited to see if the man's curiosity would get the better of him, but after a while I gave up and went over to talk to him. Kenge refused to move from the safety of the car, and stood there with his hand on the door, ready to lock himself inside at a moment's notice. For him this was a

OOO Kenge could not believe they were the same mountains that we had seen from the forest; there they had seemed just like large hills to him. I tried to explain what the snow was—he thought it was some kind of white rock. Henri said that it was water that turned [821] color when it was high up, but Kenge wanted to know why it didn't [822] run down the mountainside like any other water. When Henri told him it also turned solid at that height, Kenge gave him a long steady look and said, *"Bongo yako!"* ("You liar!")

With typical Pygmy philosophy, he accepted what he could not understand and turned his back on the mountains to look more closely at what lay all around him. He picked up a handful of grass, tasted it and smelled it. He said that it was bad grass and that the mud was bad mud. He sniffed at the air and said it was bad air. In fact, as he had stated at the outset, it was altogether a very bad country. The guide pointed out the elephants, hoping to make him feel more at home. But Kenge was not impressed. He asked what good they were if we were not allowed to go and hunt them. Henri pointed out the antelopes, which had moved closer and were staring at us as curiously as ever. Kenge clapped his hands together and said that they would provide food for a whole camp for months and months. Then he saw the buffalo, still grazing lazily several miles away, far down below. He turned to me and said, "What insects are those?"

[822] At first I hardly understood; then I realized that in the forest the range of vision is so limited that there is no great need to make an automatic allowance for distance when judging size. Out here in the plains, however, Kenge was looking for the first time over apparently unending miles of unfamiliar grasslands, with not a tree worth the name to give him any basis for comparison. The same thing happened later on when I pointed out a boat in the middle of the lake. It was a large fishing boat with a number of people in it but Kenge at first refused to believe this. He thought it was a floating piece of wood.

[P. 164-C]

that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." 000

The forest throughout is interlaced with 133
rivers and streams, and the terrain is gently un- 182
dulating. These rivers, and the larger of the [166]
streams, seem to form effective natural bound- [323]
aries and may well influence migratory ten- [484]
dencies, as the Pygmy both dislikes large ex-
panses of water and lacks the knowledge of how
to bridge them. Reports of journalists and [491]
others of Pygmy bridge-building activities [177]
(Cotlow, 1956) probably result from recent
attempts, by both villagers and European
movie makers, to teach the Pygmies how to
build swing bridges. Putnam (1948, 325) asserts
that the Pygmy probably never has to go more
than 100 yards to find water. Temperatures 132
throughout the year vary only between a low of
70° F. at night and a possible high of 80° F.
during the day. The forest varies with respect 137
to underbrush but on the whole is unimpeded
virgin growth, with a carpet of leaf mold be-
tween the trees. Where villagers have made a
clearing, however, there is thickly tangled
undergrowth.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the primary concern of daily life among the net hunters. The net hunt is considerably more rewarding than the other form of hunt, although it probably occupies as much time. Care and maintenance of the nets are also laborious and time-consuming. Women gather not only as they accompany the hunt, but also on those days when the hunt stays behind in the camp. The children make a not inconsiderable contribution to the family food quest. A common occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and women to assist each other in the making of twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used primarily in the repair of hunting nets. 512 22 [286] [857] 512 283

As with the archers, elimination takes place not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. These practices not merely create an unpleasant smell after some weeks, but also attract armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, however, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and the favorite recreation of the children is playing about in the shallow streams. The men assert that they can all swim but are never seen doing so; they are certainly much afraid of deep water. 364 514 [184] 515 [481] [823]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 and refused to come to the camp. Some of the
533 men tried to find it, but, as they went after it,
534 it stayed silent for a while, then suddenly was
782 heard on the other side of the camp.

796 Anne Putnam gives one other instance of this kind of meeting. While the evening meal was being eaten, the trumpet was heard and all the women had to shut themselves up. The trumpet approached the camp, and the men ran out to greet it, shouting and beating the drums. The trumpet came right into the clearing. Mrs. Putnam heard much shouting, drumming, hunting cries, and swishing of branches. The trumpet made a quick tour of the circle of huts and was then heard to disappear into the distance. The women were called out. The men were busy
[823] dancing. The women cooked a large meal, and the men all drank salt water so that they would sing well. They sang until about midnight. The trumpet was heard again for a short time early in the morning, in the distance.

575 The occasion for this *molimo* meeting, which
533 lasted about a month, was poor hunting. How-
765 ever, an old woman died during the month.
796 Anne Putnam was told that if the *molimo* had not already been meeting, they would have had to call it out for this occasion. They also explained that the woman's death was the reason

[P. 227-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

338). The Mbuti associate the storms with water, rain, thunder, lightning, rainbows, and snakes, and possibly fire. The net hunters have a particular fear of water and, as do the local villagers, seem to believe in water spirits, or, as they call them, "water animals." These are most frequently associated with death. A water animal is connected with the rainbow, perhaps the most dreaded of all natural phenomena. 731 821 [823]

As might be expected therefore, such ritual as exists is most often connected with the storm and its symbols. Putnam, who knew of Schebesta's account of ritual among the archers, did not disagree with it in so far as cult practices were described among the net hunters. However, cult practices are far less common, and he mentions no spirit huts or shrines such as were described by Schebesta (1950, 77). Food offerings may be thrown into the undergrowth, though specific information is lacking. I have met net hunters who stoutly deny that they would waste food in this way; certainly I never saw any offerings being made. But Putnam disagrees strongly that prayer or invocation is involved. The net hunters, he says (in unpublished works), do not invoke the storm god or 788 [821] [778] 788 782

[P. 237-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 562 [262] The second kind of taboo mentioned by Putnam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this [825] [823] difference is probably connected with the association between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patriclan or gens.

[P. 239-8]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

clearly defined, opening northward into a large central area unclaimed by anyone.

The topography of the Epulu territory is similar to that of most other bands, though without the steep, mountainous ridges that occur slightly further east. The ground is gently undulating, as thickly forested on the hilltops as in the valleys, though the vegetation is much denser along the banks of streams and rivers. It is almost impossible to walk more than a few hundred yards without having to cross a small stream, and after a particularly violent and prolonged rainfall there are areas that become temporarily flooded and the larger streams may become uncrossable torrents. But normally there is little difficulty in traveling from one extreme of the area to another. There are no swamps, the ground is clear of the tangled undergrowth that characterizes old plantation sites, and all but the largest streams are either shallow enough, in places, to be forded or are bridged at intervals by fallen trees. Nowhere do the Mbuti need to build bridges, and nowhere do they do so except in the village context.[8] It is a simple fact that rivers that are too wide to be bridged by a fallen tree are relatively far and few between, and therefore form convenient natural boundaries. There is neither the desire nor the need to cross such rivers. A certain mistrust of large bodies of water strengthens the efficacy of rivers as boundaries, just as the few superstitions to be found among the Mbuti mostly relate to ravines, caves, streams or hills that form other boundaries.

The abundance of game and vegetable food may be taken for

[8] The famous "pygmy" bridge and the spectacular technique of crossing a river by swinging on a vine from one side to the other were taught to the Mbuti, not without difficulty, by an enterprising movie-maker. Patrick Putnam was asked to assist as interpreter, but refused. His first wife, however, went to watch the proceedings. The same group of pygmies retained some knowledge of the technique, and obligingly repeated the act for subsequent "documentary" film units. They are the only group with the knowledge, though they are now less proficient. A more recent movie-maker had to sling a wire hawser across the river and suspend the vine swing from its midpoint. A simple mathematical calculation will reveal the impossibility of the swinging technique, even disregarding the area behind the swing that would have to be cleared, a task in itself beyond Mbuti technology. Assuming the fulcrum is over one bank, and the branches into which the pygmy is to swing are directly over the far bank (a generous assumption), and assuming that the pygmy can be drawn back far enough to swing up to a 45-degree angle at the far end of his swing, the maximum width that can be crossed is three-quarters of the height of the swing. In practical experiment among the Mbuti, I found that effectively half the height of the swing was the maximum horizontal distance that could be so traversed. This would mean that to cross a river a mere hundred yards in width, the fulcrum would have to be some 600 feet up, demanding a tree approaching the height of the Eiffel Tower. Conversely, a swing of the maximum normally practicable length of 60 feet would enable a pygmy to span a stream a mere 30 feet across. Pygmies generally have rather more sense, in such matters, than movie-makers.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
[535] tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *anghe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

had one of our most fruitful treks of all, learning many new and important things about the forest people.

The terrain was very different from that of Epulu, being mountainous and rocky, with jagged boulders sticking out of the ground at crazy angles as though some great city had once been swallowed by an earthquake. But even on the steepest escarpments, where the huge trees seemed to grow out of the very rocks, the Pygmies moved as quickly and surely and silently as elsewhere For the first time I saw Kenge in difficulty, he being as unused to this kind of mountaineering as I was. But we were anxious to press inward as far as we could, and once again we found ourselves almost back at the Epulu; it lay about two days to the southwest at most.

While we were in this part of the forest we heard many stories of the old wars between the various tribes of villagers, as they invaded the forest, and how the Pygmies got caught between them so that they were forced to side with one group or another.

On leaving Nduye we continued southward, past the administrative center of Mambasa, and when we had crossed the Ituri, which at this higher point was, in Kenge's words, "a mere child," we once more left the car and began walking. At the end of a day, having passed through three deserted Pygmy villages, we were beginning to feel dubious at the wisdom of having come so far without a guide when we came to the banks of a large tributary of the Ituri. There, to our mutual surprise, was one of the legendary vine bridges, slung high up over the swirling waters, suspended by lianas fastened to the topmost branches of the trees on either bank. I was glad that Kenge was amazed, because there is every reason to believe that these bridges, contrary to the information supplied by romantically minded movie-makers, are not of Pygmy origin. To cross the bridge we climbed up a series of logs leading to a fork in the tree to which our end of the bridge was anchored, and from there we made our swaying way across. Kenge refused to look down, and when I stopped in the

FOREST HORIZONS

The missionary and I were sitting outside at the time, going through his morning ritual of drinking tea. I went over to see what had happened, and to ask if they wanted any medicine. They said no, but they would like something to make the pain go away until they could prepare their own medicine. All I had was aspirin, but in any case I had more faith in their powers of healing than in mine. Kenge asked in a whisper why the missionary had not come over, but was continuing to sip his tea, keeping his back to us. I did not know, and I said nothing until after the next prayer meeting. As usual, prayers were offered for all those converts who had minor ailments, and for the new road, but not a word was said about the injured Pygmy, lying in a hut not more than ten yards away. Then I did ask, and I was told, "Why should I pray for him? He is not a Christian." The Pygmies were all standing around, and heard, as they were meant to hear. They had little idea of what Christianity was, but from that moment I doubt if any of them thought that it had much to offer them.

At the end of our stay there, the missionary asked Kenge what he thought of the Christian God now that he had been privileged to live in a Christian community. Kenge said with his usual frankness, "It is the biggest falsehood I know." And so I was glad for Kenge to meet other Christians who had a better idea of what their religion stood for, and the Bells were certainly such.

It was while we were with them that Kenge first began to realize that there really was another world, beyond the forest. He had often heard people talk about it, and up at Paulis the forest was thinned almost to mere savannah; but nowhere had he really seen beyond the forest. The mission was built on a high hill, cleared of vegetation so that crops could be planted to supply the mission school and hospital with food. Usually the distant horizons were hazy, and everywhere we looked down only on a sea of trees. Several times I tried to tell Kenge that beyond this lay another world, a world of lakes and mountains and open plains, but he just nodded disbelievingly. He

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 823 had never seen even a hill, as such. He had climbed up them, inside the forest, and had seen small hills such as the one on the far side of the Epulu, and the one on which the Nduye mission stood, but that was all. One evening, however, we were both sitting on a boulder at the highest point of the Biasiku mission, looking over the forest. To the east the sky was becoming less and less hazy, and gradually out of the haze a great black mass began to form. Kenge saw it before I did, and asked if it was a bad storm cloud. It was the vast bulk of the Ruwenzori, the Mountains of the Moon.

We never saw the peaks, but even the lower ranges towered so far above the forest that Kenge was almost frightened. He asked me about them, and I did my best, but it was next to impossible to describe things of which he had no experience, and for which there were not even any appropriate words in his language. His curiosity was thoroughly aroused, and feeling a slight hankering myself to see that lovely part of Africa again, I asked him if he would like to have a holiday and go over there, to see the outside world for himself. He hesitated a long time, and then asked how far the mountains were beyond the forest. I said that they were not more than a day's drive from the last of the trees, to which he responded with disbelief, "*No* trees? *No* trees at all?" He was very dubious about this, and asked me if it was a good country, and what the villagers were like there. I told him that it was very much like my own country in some ways, that it was very good, and that there were few villages.

This decided him and he agreed to go, providing that we brought enough food to last us all the time we were to be out of the forest. [186] He was going to have nothing to do with savages who lived in a land without trees.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

000 the movement of his mouth and his eyes and gestures of his hands [823] conveyed what he was saying. As if singing to himself, he said, "I [825] was wrong. This *is* a good place, though I don't like it; it must be good, because there are so many animals. There is no noise of fighting. It is good because the sky is clear and the ground is clean. It is good because I feel good; I feel as though I and the whole world were sleeping and dreaming. Why do people always make so much noise?" And then he added, with infinite wistfulness, "If only there were more trees . . ."

As the sun sank lower we watched the hippopotami playing in the Semliki, directly beneath us. They heaved their great bodies out of the water and opened their gaping mouths wide, snorting and grunting before they sank back beneath the surface with a tremendous splash that sent waves rolling to the shore. Farther down the river two bulls were fighting, but only half in earnest. Soon they all subsided and only the tips of their noses were left poking just above the surface of the water.

Then came a procession of almost every type of animal in the park, one after the other, each picking its way with unhurried grace to the water's edge. On our side of the river they came right past where Kenge and I were sitting, down a narrow path that disappeared from sight beneath us. We next saw them as they emerged at the bottom and carefully waded into the water, looking all around to make sure that there were no rivals near by. As one group of animals moved away, another came and took their place. The elephants that we had passed on the road were the last we saw, and as it was getting dark, we retreated to the safety of the guest houses. We cooked and ate our evening meal in the kitchen, leaving the dining room unused, for there were no other guests in the park.

When we had finished, Henri tried once more to persuade Kenge to go with him to the village, but Kenge refused. Warning us to go straight back to the guest house Henri disappeared, spear in hand,

[P. 165-A] There is a
137 profusion of wild flowers and or-
• 824 chids and many different kinds of vine. The
Mbuti make great use of various species of
Ficus for the manufacture of barkcloth, and
certain vines are used to make string and hunt-
[314] ing nets. There are also trees that give a sap
which, if taken from one part of the tree, can be
used as a cooking oil and, if taken from another,
can be used either as an adhesive or as fuel for a
[278] torchlight. The Mbuti have a knowledge of
effective medicines prepared from plants and
roots, and also of poisons.

182 Schebesta (1952, 95–147), in response to
181 persons who hold that the Mbuti have no cul-
ture of their own (e.g., Kerken, 1944), points to
their remarkable adaptation to the forest en-
vironment. The level of their culture may not
be high, but, even though primitive and "con-
servative," it is distinctly a forest culture and
distinctly Pygmy. Their needs are few, and raw
material is abundant. The striking thing is the
minimal extent to which they utilize this ma-
terial. Both Schebesta (1952, 98) and Putnam
attribute this to the super-sufficiency of the
environment itself which, making minimal de-
mands, is accorded a minimal response. Mate-

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Also, according to Putnam (MS), the Pygmy never cuts a piece of wood larger than an inch in diameter. He cuts wood to make his bows, arrows, spear shafts, and ax hafts. The women use saplings of no greater size to construct the frames of the huts. 313

The material used by the Mbuti throughout the forest is vegetable fiber. From this they make the barkcloth that is their only clothing; the twisted vine that makes their hunting nets; the strings for their bows; carrying baskets and tumplines; and the basketry caps mentioned by Schebesta (1952, 173) who writes (1952, 125) that he has also seen basketry quivers. 28

The Mbuti everywhere use the large phrynium leaves that abound in the forest for roofing their huts, though when near a village plantation they may use plantain leaves. Phrynium leaves are also used in default of villager-manufactured or trade utensils, for carrying water, as cups, and pipe bowls. They use the juices of certain plants and barks for dyes for decoration of body and of barkcloth. 824 • [342] [45] [386]

Mbuti exploitation of the forest has no adverse repercussions, as they move camp frequently. Among the net hunters every month or two is Putnam's estimate (1948, 335, 336). 221 361 184

[P. 165-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

TECHNOLOGY

• 824 237 Archer technology uses only wood, fiber, and vegetable plants for raw material, with exceptional use of skin for quivers and baby slings, and fur for decoration of body and of the hunting bow.

372 Fire making is unknown, though the usage of fire itself is universal. Schebesta (1941) stresses its importance to the Mbuti, and says that embers are always carried about, even on the march. A new fire is lit by taking embers from an old one. Fire is further the only means of lighting, the wood *akata* giving the best light. [373] [416] When walking at night, the Mbuti always carry firebrands and light the path by scattering sparks in all directions. Fire is used, apart from purposes of cooking, giving warmth, and lighting, as the only adequate weapon against the black ants that not infrequently invade Mbuti camps in the middle of the night and force immediate withdrawal. Trilles (1932) and Le Roy (1897) both mention fire making by different techniques among the Pygmies in the then French Congo, but no reliable source has mentioned the practice of fire making among Ituri Pygmies. Many travelers and observers mention its absence.

411 [114] As confirmed by all explorers except Burrows (1898) who spoke of the Aka, the Mbuti use poison on their arrows (Schebesta, 1941). They never, however, put poison on arrows tipped

[P.169-B]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 169-D]

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *beghe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magba*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

224 [824] stems in a special way they form cylinders which, when struck on the ground, make an effective clap. The women then go ahead and by the loud beating of their petards put up game for the men to shoot with their metal-tipped arrows. This form of hunt is usually successful in killing a number of animals, which are shared among the various hunting bands that took part in the beat.

Elephant hunting takes place only among those Mbuti who use spears (Fig. 10; Schebesta, 1941, 106); bows and arrows are quite incapable of doing more than blind an elephant, despite the reports of imaginative travelers to the contrary. Those archers who use only bow and arrow do not hunt elephant. Wild boar, similarly, are killed only with spear, especially when they appear near the camp. Monkeys and [262] chimpanzees, considered as delicacies, are pur-

[P. 173-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 187-A]

802 speaking archer bands in the northeastern part of the Ituri, near Gombari. He finds the only common characteristic to be the habit of counting in pairs and the use of the term "many" for anything over five. Finger signs for numbers up to five and a separate sign for 10 are used also by the Mamvu villagers. Thus 15 arrows would be "many times two arrows and one." Some of the examples that he gives show either the disinterest or lack of skill of these archers in exact numeration—such as the woman who for totals of four and seven arrows (the article used by Maes for his tests) gave, respectively, the numbers 40 and 10.

278 824 The use of effective poisons is well attested. Geil (1905), who reported reliably on other aspects of the life of Efe archers, mentions their knowledge of antidotes. Schebesta (1941, 65) denies having come across these. He (1941, 228 ff.) does, however, give details of various effective medicines prepared from forest plants. In some instances these medicines, or the methods of application, have magical significance. They seem unable to cure such afflictions as certain types of fever, leprosy, advanced dysentery, and gout.

[155] [157]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

412
284
824

FIG. 18. Broom, *edia*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Such brooms are made daily by net [512] hunters. The area in front of each hut is swept with [356] leafy branches bound loosely together in this manner.

[P. 194-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbut

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.197-C]

287
412
[284]

FIG. 23. Types of grooving found on ivory bark-beater heads, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

mond grooving being the commonest. There are only about two bark beaters to a camp.

There are two main ways of preparing the cloth. Strips of the bark of *Ficus* are peeled off the trunk between two horizontal and one vertical slit. Before the beating, the outer bark is scraped off, then the inner bark is softened either by being soaked in water from half an hour to 12 hours, according to the type of bark, or by being heated and smoked over a fire.

287 [824]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200-A]

287 red dye. For painting designs on barkcloth,
386 either a finger or a twig may be used. The de-
531 signs vary considerably, and one piece of bark-
cloth may have three of four distinct patterns.
[177] This is possibly in imitation of the local villager
practice of sewing strips of barkcloth together
to obtain larger pieces, resulting in the juxtapo-
sition of different designs.

291 The making of belts (Fig. 28) from plaited
283 fiber and the twisting of lengths of shredded
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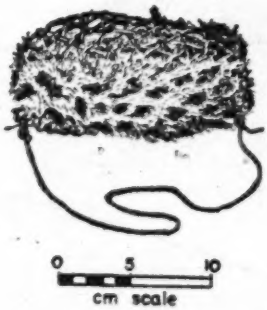

FIG. 29. Basketry hat, *ngala*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made at whim by young or old, men or women, and worn without regard to status.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 200 - B]

nkusa vine into cord, mainly used for net repairing, are also everyday occupations. The net hunters use vine much more widely than the archers who use it for basketry rather than cordage. Putnam also mentions the use of certain types of vine that give water. *Njelani* is a long vine used for making children's swings and the high swings used by young men mainly during the honey season.

291 283 824 285 84 824 312 524

Body Decoration

Body decoration and mutilation as described in the Putnam material is similar to that recounted by Schebesta, except that in the painting of designs on the body Anne Putnam mentions the use of *kangay*, a black dye obtained from the juice of the gardenia fruit (Fig. 30a). This is applied with a small twig. Use of red and white is confined to ceremonial occasions. A variety of hats and headdresses is used by the net hunters, also bracelets, necklaces, combs, and lip plugs. All of these may be made by the Mbuti, though often in imitation of village artifacts (Fig. 30).

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.201-C]

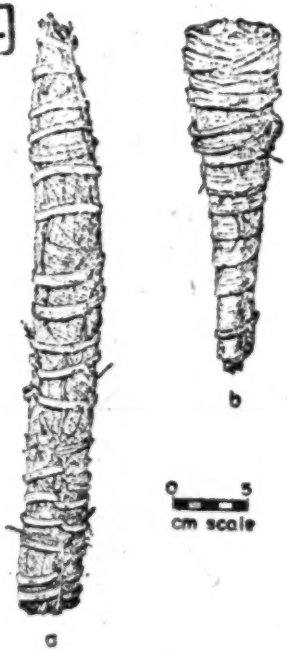

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FIG. 31. Miscellaneous items, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Resin flare, *kasuku*, made of *kasuku* resin and wrapped in leaves; used when necessary to move from the hut at night. b. Bark pipe, *mbende*, used when village pipestems and bowls are not available.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.210-A]

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[534]

FIG. 43. Gathering equipment, net hunters. a. Bark honey container, *ebimba*, Epulu District, Central Ituri. b. Vine-and-leaf honey container, *apayabisi*, West Nduye District, Central Ituri. Normally the bark container is used, but if the Mbuti come across honey unexpectedly, they improvise a container of leaves supported by vine strands. This may be found among both archers and net hunters. c–d. Clappers, *ngbengbe*, used exclusively by the Mbuti during the honey season to accompany honey songs, Epulu District, Central Ituri.

[824]
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1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]
[P. 224-A]

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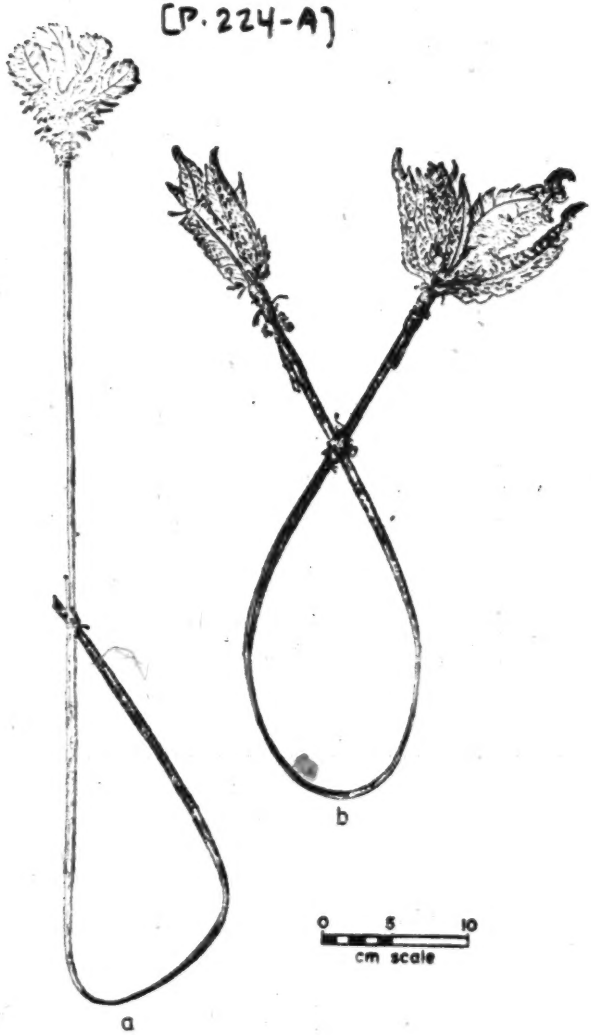

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FIG. 50. a–b. Headdresses, *salakuku*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. Made of vine and feathers, at will, and worn during *molimo* dances. Similar headdresses may occasionally be worn by village women during their *nkumbi* dances.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P:232-C]

inch thick, packed tight. The top layer of dry leaves and kindling are soaked with oil and set on fire. The fire is kept going for about four hours, then the patient is taken out and hot leaves are applied. This treatment may be followed by hot baths, scarification and insertion of herbal medicine into the wounds, and resting on a bed, but none of this is said to be absolutely necessary. 757

A young man, given to being seized with trembling fits, is calmed by having incisions on his stomach rubbed with a black powder. A liquid is poured down his nose from a leaf funnel.

A certain type of bark, *ikanya*, extremely poisonous, is used to procure an abortion by making a decoction from it and giving it to the pregnant woman to inhale. It appears that even inhaling the dry bark might be effective, but is not certainly so. 847 278 824

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

In so far as the net hunters are much more likely to tell a legend than they are to discuss a question or expound a theory, legends are a valuable source that should be tapped, with the necessary cautions, to give us some insight into Mbuti rationalization as opposed to rationalization among the Mbuti. 538

Art

As among the archers, graphic art is limited to the decoration of the human body (notably the buttocks, legs, and face) and also of bark-cloth. As mentioned above, the juice of the gardenia fruit is used for painting body designs, which Putnam says are for pure esthetic effect and of no magical significance. He believes, however, that some of the facial scarifications may indicate clan membership. No details are given. He adds that sometimes women name their designs; for example, a spotted design may be called "leopard." The design rests in the hands of the artist rather than of the subject. 302 531 [386] [824] [304]

Sometimes even head shaving is performed in such a way as to leave simple designs.

Some carving is now being done (Fig. 49) in imitation of village carvings. 532 199

As with the archers, music and dance are vitally important means of expression to the 533 535

[P. 233-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

Above all, the outstanding singer, however young (so long as he is a hunter, therefore qualified to participate, of course), plays one of the most important roles in the meeting of the *molimo* society. In the *molimo*, respect for skill in song and dance seem, from the material to hand, to surpass respect even for skill in hunting and for old age. 555 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The religion of the net hunters is far less well documented than that of the archers, since little is known beyond what Schebesta (1950) writes of the "Sua" regarding their religious terminology, notions of God, and afterlife. On the other hand, the functioning of their men's religious association (*molimo*) is far better documented than that of the *toré* association of the archers, both in Mrs. Putnam's notes and my own (1960b). 114 [575]

As far as magical practices are concerned, little information is available beyond a few isolated descriptions of various ceremonies mainly concerned with the hunt or the weather. Many practices are certainly of village origin, and some practices that are shared by both groups have different functions. Thus the naturally distorted stick (Fig. 53), known as *amati a oni ganza* (the tortoise saw the circumcision), is for the villagers a magical protection against 789 789 177 824

[P. 235-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 236-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pvgmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]
[P-236-A]

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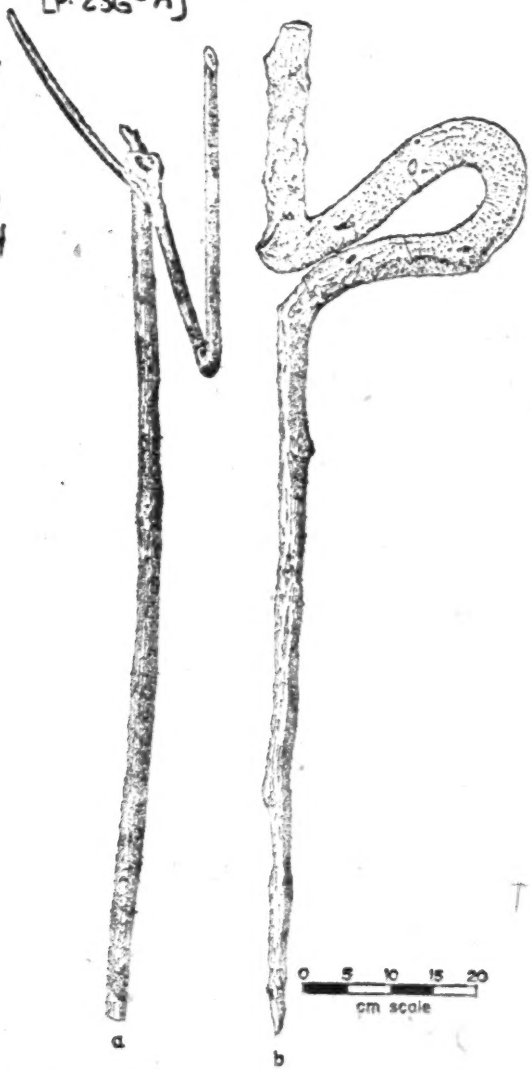

FIG. 53. a–b. Fetish sticks, *amati a oni ganza*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. "The tortoise saw the circumcision" is the name of the stick, but neither villagers nor Mbuti can give a coherent explanation of either the stick or its name. The villagers use it for protection against theft; the Mbuti net hunters on rare occasions may idly place it in the ground near a *molimo* hearth as an indication of spiritual presence.

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

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theft, but among the Mbuti is used as indication of spiritual presence during the *molimo* festival.

For this section we follow the same outline as that for the archers, but a fuller account of the net-hunters' magico-religious complex is given in the final section (pp. 248–259). It is excluded from the present survey because the lack of

[P. 236-B]

PLATE 30

Hut Building, Epulu District, Central Ituri

462 a. Hut building is one of the few activities reserved exclusively for women, who also have
593 the right to tear the hut down as a sign of conjugal distress. Here a woman is slitting the
342 stalks of the phrynium leaves that will form the roof, being hung like tiles.

824 b. Hut building. The frame is made of young saplings, collected by men and women, but erected by the women in a matter of minutes. The leaf "tiles" are usually hung by
462 starting at the top and working downward. The entrance to the hut is changed, often
342 several times, as the camp grows, reflecting relationships between neighbors. At lower right
824 is an Mbuti stick seat.

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352 1,/Plate 30 appears on page 293--Analyst/

[P.292]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 30-A/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P.293-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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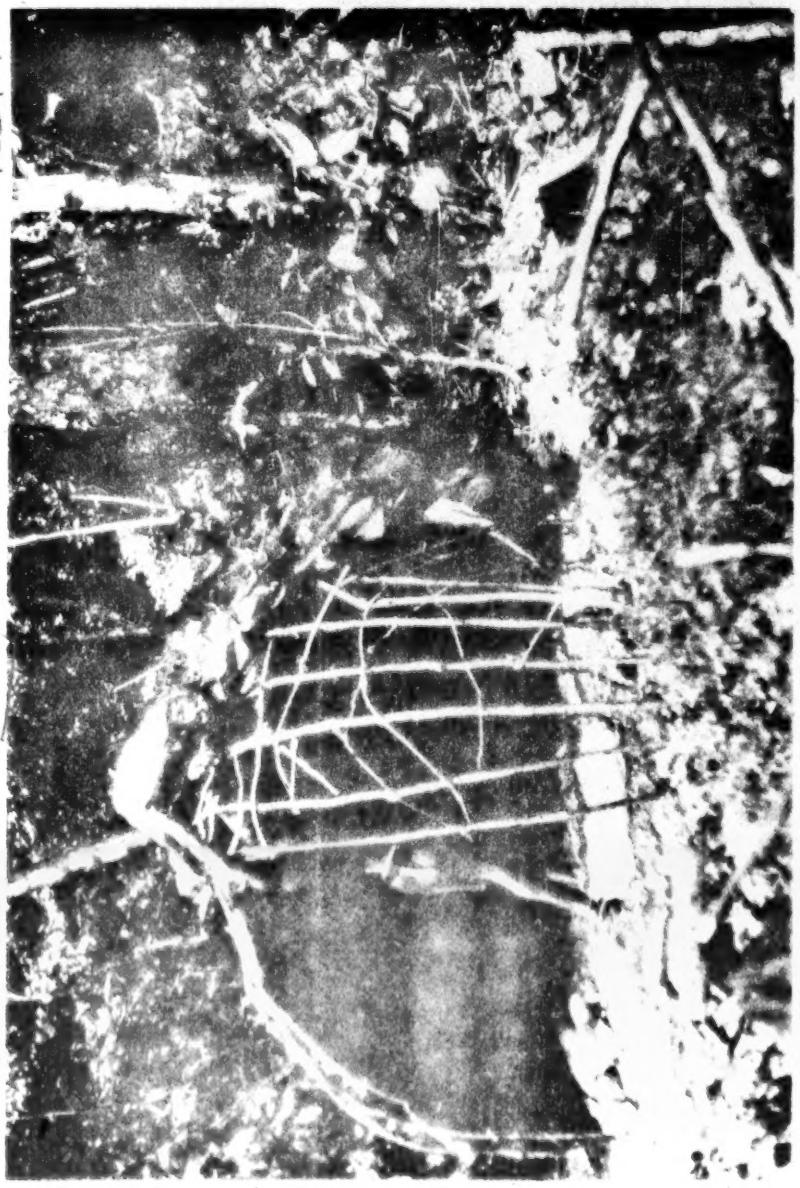

/Plate 30-B/

/Caption appears on p. 292/

[P 293-B]

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Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[For information on personification of "forest" as Provider, on reification of "forest" as a single mighty being or force to be placated, and on projection onto forest of both man-like emotions and impersonal supernatural power and sanctity: see 778.]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

The villagers, like the Mbuti, find themselves in a very personal relationship with the forest, but a very different one. The forest surrounds them on all sides, but they do not live in it or by it, only despite it. Their initial act is one of destruction, the cutting down of the forest to make way for village and plantation which in turn are destroyed in the final act. The hostility is mutual, as the villagers see it. They have to fight not only the forest itself, but also the creatures that live in it. Elephants, leopards, baboons and Mbuti, all are a menace to life and livelihood. A whole plantation can be destroyed in a few hours by even a modest sprinkling of elephants. The excessive and sometimes erratic rainfall can cause hunger for a whole season. Baboons and Mbuti come in the night and steal the ripening fruit. Leopards prey on the few scrawny goats and chickens the villagers manage to raise.

As for the Mbuti, so for the villagers is the forest an entity to be reckoned with, upon which life and death depend; it is also an entity that is natural and supernatural. But instead of acceding to the natural, the villagers with their superior technology combat it; and instead of respecting the supernatural in the sense that the Mbuti respect it, the villagers oppose it with fear, mistrust and occasional hate. They people the forest with evil spirits, and they fill their lives with magic, witchcraft and a belief in sorcery.

The forest achieves the establishment of two virtually irreconcilable systems of values. It further determines, for both Mbuti and villagers, a certain degree of nomadism, and it tends to fragment large populations into small, relatively isolated bands or villages. For the Mbuti the forest merely indicates natural boundaries, such as valleys, ridges, rivers, caves and so forth, within which a band can conveniently roam at will throughout the years, economically self-sufficient. Within that nomadic framework there is an enormous sense of permanence and of territory. But for the villagers the forest announces, at the end of every three years or so, that the village must pack up and move, it does not much matter where. The move will inevitably bring the village into renewed conflict with the forest, and may well bring it into conflict with a neighboring village which has also been forced to move. In spite of the vast size of the forest and its small population, the villagers are unwilling to go off entirely on their own. At the present time they move up and down the long road that connects Stanleyville with Irumu, or Wamba with Nia-Nia and Mambasa. Formerly it seems that villages were similarly stretched out along recognized trails, and seldom moved away from them. On any given trail, or road, the number of suitable sites for a semi-permanent village is limited, but fric-

224 out of that vicinity, however, they keep track of it, and they send out
433 scouts to help them decide the best location for their next hunting camp.

439 Insofar as the Mbuti are dependent upon the villagers for village
262 foods, thus far are they dependent also for certain items of material
252 culture, in metal, pottery and wood. Even so, of the village foods
415 only rice and beans (neither of which can be considered as staples even
* 177 among the villagers) demand pottery or metal cooking vessels. Trade vessels of aluminum are rapidly replacing all pottery vessels. Manioc, plantains, corn and peanuts can be roasted, the sweet banana and peanut can be eaten raw, and manioc can also be eaten without cooking if it is first soaked in cold water for several days.

439 However, in every Mbuti village camp each household will boast at
415 least one metal vessel, and there will be one or two wooden mortars
* 177 and pestles for common usage. In addition, there is only the metal knife blade which might be said to be necessary to the Mbuti in their
439 village life, for peeling, scraping and cutting the manioc root, and the
412 metal ax blade needed for cutting the saplings used in the construc-
* 177 tion of either village-type houses or forest-style huts. The technological dependence of the Mbuti upon the villagers, in the village, is then not great, and is directly contingent upon Mbuti dependence upon village foods in the same context.

325 We shall see that in the forest context, as with food, there is no essential dependence either on materials such as metal, or on skill in
224 working them. It has been argued that the Mbuti hunt is dependent
411 upon metal arrow-points, spear blades, and knife blades. It is not. We shall see that the Mbuti frequently prefer to use the poisoned arrows that have only a fire-hardened tip, for sound practical reasons; that they use the spear primarily for defense rather than offense, and in any case still retain knowledge of the fire-hardened point and the belief that it is as effective as metal except, possibly, against buffalo and elephant. Old Mbuti assert that fire-hardened spears are effective even
412 against the largest game. Slit bamboo and slit reeds offer adequate cutting surfaces, though they dull quickly and are seldom used today; they could, however, successfully replace the metal knife as far as the forest life of the Mbuti is concerned. There are certain types of
[322] vine that have a highly abrasive surface and can be used for scraping
[324] *itaba* roots. Of all the village utensils, the two that the Mbuti would miss the most would be the machete and the ax blade. The machete is used for cutting the light *fito* saplings that form the framework for

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

But here we may note a significant difference in attitude to magic, or curative activity. Childbirth is a time which is thought of by both Mbuti and villagers as being attended by the possibility of danger, at least. The Mbuti think in terms of physical danger, and they have precautions that they take in the diet and behavior of the expectant mother before birth, and apparently effective knowledge of midwifery, including recognized ways of dealing with difficult births. After birth there are known cures for any weakness the infant or mother might show. What is lacking, among the Mbuti, is precisely what is dominant among the villagers: a felt need for protection against the supernatural.

A village mother and child will both have, according to how wealthy the family is, a number of potions to drink (which may or may not have medical significance, but are thought of as being protective) and divers charms to wear. The protection is thought to be necessary against *unknown* dangers. The difference between the two peoples is in the extent of this unknown. An Mbuti infant will have a vine bracelet or belt tied to it almost immediately after birth, and a small piece of wood or two will be fixed to the vine. It is stated that the vine and the wood convey to the child the health and strength of the forest. There is no apparent concern for any supernatural dangers, and no precautionary steps taken.

From the village point of view the lack of such measures involves the child and possibly the mother in great danger, and out of self-concern as much as out of concern for the Mbuti, the villagers proffer charms in abundance to expectant mothers and newborn children. However, the need is only felt by the villagers, not by the Mbuti.

This is precisely the difference we find when we seek other situations for which only the villagers have a cure—they are situations in

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

Two youths then take out the vines and shake them in all directions, liberally sprinkling anyone who happens to be standing by. Other youths are by now standing about, whistling on their honey whistles, a form of *madi* called *singbe*. The kindling is then stuck upright in the trenches, beside the *teka* vines, which have been replaced. Children help with this. 222 789 561 824 372 412

A hunter then places a single ember, apparently drawn from any fire, in a *mongongo* leaf and, having filled the center square with *mongongo* leaf stems, he places the coal on top. More kindling is added, crisscrossed much like a house of cards, each piece carefully placed by youths and hunters together. Without fanning, the kindling catches and a dense cloud of smoke is given off. An elder then brings over a bundle of old leaves that have been used for collecting honey, and places them near the fire. He waits until the smoke begins to dwindle, then directs the operation of placing the honey axes in the hearth, waiting for the blades to get warm and then using them to split some *toangbe* wood. The *toangbe* tree and the *tembu* tree are both good honey trees, but the *tembu* tree has to grow "old and fat" before it is favored by the bees.

Elders then carefully arrange the old leaves, adding more as necessary, in a large circle around the fire. Four *singbe* whistles are stuck in the ashes of the fire, pointing to the cardinals. While elders stand and shout, women gather and loudly clap their hands, and both hunters and youths kneel on the circle of leaves, facing in to the hearth, and begin pounding their fists rhythmically on the ground. The tempo increases to a maximum and is broken off with a sudden shout. This is repeated twice more, after which the hearth is abandoned and camp life resumes as though nothing had happened. [534] [533]

The Mbuti themselves are unable to give any satisfactory explanation of the performance, and it seems to combine elements of genuine magic (for they talk of the smoke attracting the bees and bringing honey to them) and of invocation of supernatural intervention (the *keti* are said to hear the pounding on the ground and will know that the Mbuti want honey). Whatever it may be thought to achieve, however, *angbe* (also *angbelu*) undoubtedly reiterates the division of the band into age groups, a division that is evident throughout the net-hunting season but is not so necessarily a part of activity during the honey season. [782] [776]

However regarded, Mbuti magic implies belief and is to that extent religious, no matter how much it may also be thought to have direct causal attributes, and the belief always supposes the benevolence of 789 771 121

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

This power derives from a single source whose physical manifestation is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*ndura*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essentially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

822 [198] [192] "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. 822 198 [708] [761] [533] The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and [533] [765] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely [821] [789] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 824 [198] [192] All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki, segbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt- [222] [825] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[773] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

[P.313]

MEDICAL TREATMENT

The following list represents only a third of the total number of treatments noted; for the rest it was not possible to obtain exact identification of the plants used. Only the general identification is given below of the treatments cited here, the full details being lodged with Smith, Kline, & French, who generously supported the project. [757] 824 [122]

HEADACHE: *amongolo pepé* (menispermaceae)
Leaves are pounded and rubbed into forehead.

doré (violaceae)
Seeds are pressed, and the juice is lightly rubbed on the forehead.

sungusungu (orchidaceae)
Leaves are roasted, then rubbed into light incisions in the skin of the forehead.

KNEE ACHE: *amakokosu* (uragoga pedunculari)
Stem, leaf and bloom are roasted, then rubbed into incisions on knee.

tapha (strychnos icaja)
Leaves are roasted and applied to incisions.

SORE THROAT: *kasa* (mapana bieleri)
Leaves are wrapped tightly around the throat.

EYE INFLAMMATION: *manoka* (manotes pruinosa)
Leaves are rubbed well between the hands, then put into a leaf cone. A little water is poured into the cone and allowed to drip into the eye.

STOMACHACHE: *amasobo* (violaceae)
The bark is stripped from young shoots, the core being pounded and roasted. The ashes are rubbed into incisions made over the afflicted area.

apisikalukba (araceae)
Leaves are pounded, water added, warmed, and drunk.

karama (dracaena maculata)
The leaves are pounded with salt, mixed with water, the concoction drunk. (The juice of the pounded leaf, without salt, is also put in the eyes of children "to make them see well.")

ebambu (annonaceae)
Bark is cut into small pieces, water is poured over it; when the water is red, a small quantity is drunk.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

757 IMPOTENCE IN MALE: *tededasi* (rubiaceae)
824 Leaves are roasted, and the ashes rubbed into light incisions made
833 above the penis.

teba (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and if the penis pains, the ashes are rubbed into incisions in the skin of the penis itself.

757 TOE ROT: *apatekaka* (hippocrateaceae)
752 Leaves are roasted and rubbed into incisions.
824 FOOT SORES: *ikengbe* (ochnaceae)
Stem of plant is warmed over a fire, then blown through, so that the juice enters the sores.

ikengbe (convolvulaceae)
Same as above.

HEART PAINS: *banga bamemé* (compositae)
Leaves are pounded, soaked with water, which is drunk when it becomes red.

HEMORRHOIDS: *amekulu* (beilschmieda spp.)
Stem is roasted, the ashes rubbed well into the buttocks around the affected area, and left on. Repeated after three days.

TOOTHACHE: *amabulubulubu* (tiliaceae)
Leaves are pulped to a juice, diluted with water for a child, funneled through a leaf into the nostrils. Said to afford instantaneous relief.

manganza (leeaceae)
Berries are roasted, crushed, and the ashes rubbed into incisions on the jaw.

OPEN WOUNDS: *ndindimia* (connaraceae)
The bark of a twig is carefully shaved, and the juice blown through the twig into the sore or wound. The bark is then packed into the wound to stop bleeding and to prevent dirt from entering. After three days the bark is removed and a fresh application is made, using less bark shavings to allow the wound to close gradually.

182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
• 824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for
[141] belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies* three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

* Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4483, Music of the Ituri Forest

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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302
301
516
585
824

Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with kangay juice for a wedding.

[P 72-H]

know what was going on. Eventually the trumpet was found some 765 534
distance downstream, full of sand and gravel and mud.

But that night, in spite of its prosaic experience, it was a myste- 765
rious thing again, alive and awe-inspiring and wonderfully beautiful; 781
something that made the eyes of young and old alike light up with pleasure as they heard it sing. And, as always, there was that look in Amabosu's eyes as he worked his magic with the drainpipe. He was no longer Amabosu; he had some other personality totally different, and distant.

One day, when I was beginning to wonder if I would ever find 123
out what it was all about, I was out with Kenge and his half-brother, 484
Maipe. We had left at dawn, as we wanted to go to a distant part of the forest, about five hours' walk if one carried no load, and return by nightfall. About halfway there, far to the north of the Lelo and near the great falls of the Kare River, we stopped for a rest. We were in an *idu*, a small natural clearing used by the forest animals as a salt lick. For some reason we started talking about water and I 123
asked again why the molimo trumpets always drank when they 822
crossed a stream. Maipe, who seldom said much, said, as Ausu had, 765 534
that they always gave wooden trumpets water to drink because it [322]
made them sound better. So, he said, it had become a custom and they still followed it even if the trumpet was metal. I then asked why the trumpets were kept in water and was again given a practical answer—it was the easiest place to hide them. I finally arrived at the question I had been leading up to—what happened to the molimo trumpets at the end of a festival? Did they go back to live in the water?

This struck both Maipe and Kenge as terribly funny. They said 765
certainly not; if the trumpets were kept in the water always they 534
would rot right away and everyone would be spending all their time 824 322
making new ones instead of hunting. Without any further prompting

765 534 322 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [487] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evidently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

either a pith helmet decorated with gennet skin, or else a long-haired wig of monkey fur. In his hand he carried a metal walking stick that had once been the handle and stem of an umbrella. Sometimes he wore the gennet skin around his waist, or tucked into his belt, or hung from his neck. It was the symbol of his ritual authority, and it contained the charms from which he derived his power. Generally Sabani was a kindly and gentle man, wise and good. But his loyalties were narrow, confined to his own kin and a few friends. Beyond that circle he was a man to be feared rather than trusted.

Eboyo also had its Pygmy village, not far from the main village, but Sabani preferred to keep his Pygmies in the forest where the administration could not see what they were doing. Generally they were tending illicit plantations, of hemp among other things. Sabani also had his own still, where he used to have a powerful spirit made from manioc. He was frequently drunk but never incapable. At all times he was an imposing and commanding figure. In his village there were some thirty families, including Kapamba's. Camp Putnam and Dar es Salaam were about half that size.

The attitude of all these villagers to the forest was the same. They made their villages as open as possible, and they built their houses without any windows. They tried to ignore the world around them, because for them the forest was hostile, something to be feared and fought. Even after cutting it down there was the constant labor required to keep it from growing back. It was filled with evil spirits that cursed the soil so that although it would bear gigantic mahogany trees it would produce only the most meager fruits for the villagers.

The tribes of this area had once been plains dwellers, with herds of cattle, living in the friendly open spaces of East Africa. When they were driven into the forest by more powerful tribes, they brought as much of their plains culture with them as they could. But their cattle died off, and they had to live by cultivation alone. They

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest." 123

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cooking him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave. 484 133 [837] 484 485 133

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time. 137 824 • [522]

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

all we could carry to bring back for dinner. The hill was ringed with streams, each one fresh and clear until it reached the swamp.

On the way back, having made a complete circuit, we were just nearing the camp when I noticed a huge old tree, one of those with great buttress roots joining the trunk some fifteen feet above the ground. It was completely dead, standing up white and naked among all the greenery, its lifelessness seeming all the more pitiable in the midst of such luxuriance. Most of its branches had already come crashing down, and only one or two jagged stumps were still jutting out from the main body. Kenge gave it a critical look; then peered in the direction of the camp a few yards below. "It should just miss our house!" he said quite seriously.

As a matter of fact it did. One night we were awakened by a sharp cracking sound, followed by a loud groan. This was repeated, and after a while a number of Pygmies, each with a flaming brand in his hands, stood out in the clearing, listening. "It's not going to fall yet," they said, and went back to sleep. Kenge had not even bothered to get up, but I could not sleep. I must have laid there for a couple of hours, listening to cracks as sharp as a rifle going off, and the intermittent groaning. Then the groaning got louder and more continuous, and in a flash Kenge was up and outside, yelling at me to follow. Just as I cleared the doorway the old tree came down, slowly and reluctantly, clutching at all the lesser trees that stood in its way. They were living, and it was dead, but it smashed its way on downward to the ground. The tremendous din of its collapse was followed by a light pattering of broken branches and twigs, and then silence. Kenge said, "You see, it did miss our house." So it had, by no more than six feet.

824 For the first day or two I noticed the children playing in a vine
524 swing that they had rigged up for themselves, and I watched the
734 crippled Lizabeti as she eyed them longingly. Several times, when the other children had gone scampering off into the forest I saw her

pull herself over to the swing, slowly and painfully, and hoist herself 824 524 almost upright by catching onto the vine with her hands, using what 734 strength she had left in her good leg, which was fast withering through lack of use. It suddenly occurred to me to ask Kenge why 734 Pygmies never made crutches. He said that they either got better 481 with the use of a stick, or else they just crawled until they died. 123 "What good is anyone who can't walk?" he asked.

I went to Asofalinda and asked her if she would let me try to teach Lizabeti to walk on crutches. The old woman was in one of her most [152] truculent moods and severely said no. The white doctor had tried once, and Lizabeti had only got worse. Besides, the one leg was completely disjointed now, she said, and the other would be equally useless soon. I tried to explain that I was not going to try to cure the girl but just to help her get around more easily. Asofalinda asked me what crutches were like, but then she immediately became severe again and said that everyone knew it was impossible to walk on one leg.

I went off into the forest with Kenge and we cut two pairs of crutches, carefully choosing sticks with a wide fork that would not pinch under the arm. Then we cut a third pair, the right size for Lizabeti. We padded the forks with leaves. I showed Kenge how to use them, holding one leg doubled up behind me. He was delighted and was soon swinging himself unsteadily over the ground. When I thought that we both had had enough practice we returned to the camp and showed the sticks to Asofalinda, explaining them to her. We then performed, circling the camp twice without mishap. By this time the children were shrieking encouragement, and parents came running to see what the noise was all about. We performed once again for Masisi. When Asofalinda still hesitated Masisi simply went into her hut, grabbed the terrified Lizabeti and carried her outside. He told Asofalinda that this was not medicine, it was just common

415 177 439 Also obtained from the Negroes are the cooking pots that all pygmy women own, essential for water storage and cooking. These pots are made by Negro women, and by relatively few Negro women at that; pottery making is a specialist occupation.

372 **Fire.**—The pygmies do not know how to make fire, nor do many of the Negroes with whom they are associated. Throughout all this countryside people keep fires going, and when one fire dies out the people will borrow it from each other. While on the march the pygmies carry glowing embers with them; they can keep a brand lighted for ten miles during a rainstorm. They do this by wrapping the burning ends in green leaves, and swinging it up and down; every two or three minutes they uncover it a bit and blow on it. At night these brands serve as torches. The Negroes have special wood which they use for torches but the pygmies do not. Their firewood is always fallen wood, and therefore always somewhat rotten and punky.

342 462 **Houses.**—When the pygmies have chosen a new camp, the women go out into the forest a little way to collect building materials. Each woman [824] brings in a bundle of sticks about half an inch thick, and from three to six feet in length; she also brings a bundle of sarcophrynium leaves. She thrusts the ends of the sticks in the ground around in a circle about five feet in diameter. Then she gets inside the circle, and bends opposite pairs of sticks inward, and ties them together. She does this in the following manner: first she takes a stick in each hand, then she brings them together, then she holds the two with one hand, and wraps with the other.

342 462 476 This technique is not easy; it is much easier if two women work together, and in practice this is usually the case. The first woman, who is to

[R327-A]

224 rows in rapid sequence in the antelope's direction, and probably but one will hit him. The pygmy can do just as well by leaping on the animal barehanded, and either strangle it or kill it with a knife, and he often does this.

224 411 In his quiver the pygmy usually carries two kinds of arrows, the first with iron tips, which he generally uses on the larger, antelope-size, animals, and wooden-tipped ones which are poisoned, and which he uses for monkeys. He rarely shoots a monkey with an iron-tipped arrow, through fear of losing it. Each man makes his own poison as well as his own darts. The plants from which the poison is made [824] are well known, and there is neither ritual nor mystery attached to the proc- [137] ess. The vital plant is a strophanthus; they will mix other plants with it, but they know which one does the trick.

The strophanthus poison is a heart stimulant. Its action is not immediate. The monkey runs along a bit, grows weaker, and urinates. The pygmies watch for this, for the moment of 224 urinating is the fatal one. If the monkey is out on a limb where there are no other branches, he will fall off; if he is within reach of a lateral branch or one rising upward, he will clutch it, and the hunter will be obliged to climb the tree if he wants the monkey. To do this he uses the technique described under pygmy locomotion. Since the monkeys are usually high in the trees and the pygmies are such poor marksmen, they undoubtedly miss more of them than they hit.

Elephant hunting.—Pygmy elephant hunting involves a technique that is wholly different from either of the above two. The pygmy elephant hunter is a specialist; not every pygmy has the courage to face an elephant and kill it, and not every man the skill. Wheth- [177] er or not pygmies ever killed elephants in the early days, the present form of

[P. 330-A]

182 *trice.*" Schebesta (1952, 42–43) also believes
114 that the forest environment induces fear, suspi-
[15] cion, and guile, and limits the intellectual
[181] horizon of the Mbuti. Putnam is not entirely in
[184] agreement with this view. He regards Schebesta's archers as a particularly stagnant group, witnessed by the fact that they speak only one language, whereas nearly all other Mbuti speak several (Schebesta, as mentioned above, regards this factor as an indication of their purity), and also by their inadequate individual hunting technique, which, as Schebesta himself states (1933, 28; 1952, 100–101) contributes a bare third of their food and, he writes, renders them dependent on the villagers for plantation products. These remarks are not quite consistent with his statement that the exuberance of the vegetation assures these bands of gatherers a far more stable and sufficient diet than does the environment outside the forest (Schebesta, 1936b, 79; 1952, 42).

182 Putnam associates the lack of seasonal change
• 825 with a general ignorance among the Pygmies of cyclical activities. For instance, the Mbuti, who observe every detail in their forest home, "are unaware that the aquatic larvae which they eat turn into mosquitoes, nor do they know that the caterpillar turns into a butterfly." [P.164-B]

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

[ARCHERS]

776 on the contrary, tall, and wanders through the
192 forest, striking the trees as he moves about.
184 According to some of these central archers, the mother of Toré is Mato (Matu), who lives in the mountains, and his father is Pucho-pucho; according to others, his mother is Ou-ororo, and his father Ogbi-oro, names which, according to Schebesta's linguistic studies, contain the words
776 for fire and menstrual blood. The Chthonic
372 God is, under many of his names, referred to as
825 the original possessor of fire (as is the chimpanzee). Among the southern archers the pos-
776 sessor of fire is Mbali, and Bali is fire itself.
184 These southern archers also regard Toré as lord of the world and creator of all things. For this
[782] reason they make offerings to him of all their products from hunting and gathering. (In this region the term Lodi is replacing Toré.)

776 All Efe agree that Toré sends death. The
761 southern archers believe this because they dis-
184 obeyed his command to refrain from following and spying on him. Others say that Muri-muri
[825] had confined death in a pot, which he gave to a toad with instructions to take the greatest care of it. But the toad gave it to a frog who leapt away with it and broke it, thus letting death escape.

[P 189-B]

[ARCHERS]

ation with fatality. Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of religion and magic, a confusion of Mbuti notions of God the Father with villager notions of the demon of the forest (for the villager, the forest is essentially evil). Costermans (1938) claims that Schebesta fails to take account of the essential difference between Toré and Muri-muri which he himself noticed among the central archers (above) but chose to ignore. 776 177 [114]

Schebesta believes that, though different groups of archers give precedence to one name or another, there is only one God of the Undergrowth, and he is universally associated with fire, lightning, storms, death, the rainbow (which frequently brings death), dreams, as well as with the good life of the hunter. The chameleon is the sacred animal of the archers, in rapport with the sky and the moon, the storm and lightning. 776 82 [184] [825]

There is also a belief in *befe*, forest sprites, whose lord and master is Mbali or Kalisia. (The Lese and Mvuba use the term *lodi* for similar sprites, says Schebesta.) They are also called *toré mo-ichu*. They make their presence known by two sorts of sound: one lugubrious, portending death, the other auguring good. 776 [171]

Cult Practices

776

A number of practices are associated with the 782

[P. 189-D]

[ARCHERS]

The paramount symbol of death is the rainbow, whose representative is the python. The archers sometimes associate the rainbow with Matu, aged mother of Toré, the magic dancer who lured children to the forest never to return, or only to return demented. She is also the dreaded animal that hides among the rocks and kills passers-by with a glance. 761 776 821 [825]

The rainbow is associated not only with death but with sorcery, as is Matu and, according to Costermans, Toré. Like Matu it kills either by being seen by man or by looking at him. The archers, as do the net hunters, differentiate between the rainbow in the east and the rainbow in the west. (The Bira even name them differently.) [754]

Lightning is of lesser importance, being a mere work tool of God which can be used by him to bring death. It sometimes appears in the form of a bird. [825]

Totem and Taboo

According to Schebesta, the archers consider the clan and the lineage as indistinguishable. A clan may be entirely contained within a single 613 614

[a 191-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 192-A]

613 hunting band, or, if the latter becomes too
614 large, both clan and band may split into two or more bands. The relationship of several bands or lineages as members of the same clan is generally designated by the use of a common name, [621] ancestor, and totem. One band is distinguished from another, regardless of relationship, by individual territorial names, but apart from identity of ancestor and totem there is no effective structure binding together the clan, if dispersed. There is no clan chief, and no clan territory (except for a very small clan that happens also to be a hunting band). Even clan exogamy cannot be said to be rigidly enforced; the invariable rule, rather, is exogamy of the local lineage or hunting bands.

Totems are generally animals, rarely plants, never natural phenomena. Schebesta cites the [825] leopard and the chimpanzee as being the commonest totems. A man and wife observe each other's totemic restrictions in each other's presence or when with each other's group; simi-

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 207-A]

224 method was known to Putnam, who says that a special spear, with a long wide blade of soft metal, is used (Fig. 40). The shaft is about 4 feet long and stout; the blade is carefully sharpened on a stone (as the Pygmy sharpens all his blades). The hunter, who may make use of elephant droppings to cover his scent, tracks the elephant, approaches it silently up wind, and thrusts the spear as far as he can into the belly, just behind the ribs. Putnam says that the Pygmy then stands absolutely still (but presumably having jumped into the cover of the bush), and that the Pygmies themselves said that if you "as much as wink at this moment you are a dead Pygmy" (Putnam, 1948, 331). He may, if the opportunity offers, repeat this process. When he returns to camp the others examine his spear and decide, according to the distance the blood has reached down the blade, whether the wound is fatal and justifies tracking or not. If they decide the wound is fatal, the entire camp sets off, leaving only an old couple to look after the camp. They track the elephant for two or three days until it dies of peritonitis.

[825]

[NET HUNTERS]

race between Pygmies and chimpanzees to get 222
to it first. Pygmies say that chimpanzees, if they [325]
are already well fed, will take a fallen *ibambi*
and hide it in the fork of a tree, but an obser-
vant Pygmy will find it. The *eseli* nut is the [137]
most important of the nuts and is too tough for
chimpanzees to open, and the *itaba* is the most
important of the edible roots. Following the dry [221]
season comes the season of termites, and then
that of caterpillars. The honey season, however,
is the only season of real significance.

[P. 209-C]

[NET HUNTERS]

262 Lesser taboos are observed by children until they reach the age of puberty. These, according to the Pygmies themselves, result from the fact that a certain kind of food makes a certain child sick and thenceforth is taboo to it.

262 There are also certain food restrictions during periods of puberty, pregnancy, and mourning, and others emphasizing the opposition of the sexes. Putnam gives as an example the refusal [825] of men to eat frogs and toads, which women gladly eat, and suggests as a reason the association of the amphibians with water and land, and that they might bring about rainfall adverse to hunting.

Trade

439 As with the archers, great stress is laid by 177 Putnam on the present dependency of the net [184] hunters on the villager plantations for vegetable food, particularly the plantain. In principle the system is the same as that outlined by Schebesta. Putnam says that the relationship is interfamilial and inherited according to the principle of patrilineal descent. There is no strict account kept of trade, or any system of equivalent val- [571] ues other than mutual satisfaction. But the villager, if displeased, may withhold bananas, and the Pygmy, if not satisfied, may leave and go to hunt with another band attached to another patron. (Putnam uses the term "host.") When

[177] [1] Very possibly of village origin.

[P. 211-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [765]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 825
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

534 Normally, however, and when drums are not available, short resonant sticks are used. These are either smooth, giving a sharp hollow sound, or else they are split and shaved at one end to provide a totally different accompaniment. These sticks, handclaps, and leg stampings provide the rhythmic background to the dance.[1]

535 224 825 Mrs. Putnam has seen a dance in which a mask made from a leopard skin was used by the Mbuti. She also describes fully (1954, 296 ff.) a dance performed by them following the killing of a leopard. The body of the leopard is strung up to a branch or a tall stake. All the men, armed with liana whips and whips made from plaited antelope hide, gather around it. The men who are responsible for killing the leopard dance by themselves, approaching the stake. As they do so, they are attacked by the others, and have to fight their way to the leopard's body and cut it down, at which everyone gives a shout of triumph. In the

[1] It is most notable that for religious song and dance such is the only form of accompaniment, even if drums are available.

[P. 234-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 234-C]

dance observed by Mrs. Putnam the man who first speared the leopard was wounded but nonetheless took part in the dance. The other two men involved in the killing protected him as much as they could from their attackers and guarded him as he cut the leopard down. Onlookers said that he would not have been thought a coward if he had not taken part, because of his wounds, but he had chosen to do so. 535 224 825

Song, used in conjunction with dance, as described by Schebesta, also has a separate function and operates as an art form in its own right. This, at first, Schebesta (1933, 301) denied, but later (1936b, 27; 1948, 259) he conceded the greater importance of song over dance. Among the net hunters there is a very clear division of song into four main categories, each of which can be distinguished by style and technique alone, and a fifth subsidiary category of play songs. The main categories are, as briefly mentioned above (p. 213), religious songs and secular songs, each subdivided according to sex, i.e., songs of the men's 533

[NET HUNTERS]

781 789 The dividing line between magic and religion, according to Putnam, is even more difficult to draw with the Mbuti than with other people. His notes, however, do not attempt any analysis. The only other available information on cult practices is a few isolated descriptions in Mrs. Putnam's notes. These, except for the description of burial, are given in the section on Magic (p. 239).

Death and Afterlife

775 There is hardly any information on the notions of the net hunters on life after death, except that they firmly believe that life continues in some form or another, in much the same way that it is lived by the living. There is some indication, both from Mbuti informants [761] and from the legends collected by Mrs. Putnam in the Epulu District, that the net hunters believe that when a body dies, a vital part of it, the personality or soul, leaves. It may become either a forest sprite (*satani*), or it may go to some other place where it will have nothing further to do with the living. In either case it will live much as it lived before—hunting and gathering, dancing and singing. *Satani*, however, can die, whereas there is no death in the more remote spirit world.

761 The net hunters believe that death is caused 776 by the water animal that is the rainbow that is, [821] sometimes, the python. It is not clear whether [825] [P. 238-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-A]

821 flames will not be seen, then the lightning will
372 pass. Mrs. Putnam reports that on one occasion a particularly large and bright fire was built during the night because, according to the Mbuti, a Lese woman who had died recently was "tapping in the trees." Fire is reported to be extinguished in one of the *molimo* dances, among the net hunters as well as among the archers.

Totem and Taboo

614 Putnam distinguishes four kinds of taboo for
825 the net hunters. The first is related to what he calls the clan totem.[1] Each clan, he says, has its own private totemic animal. This is believed to be not the clan ancestor but, rather, connected with that ancestor in mythology, as having rescued him from danger or helped him in some enterprise. Putnam mentions seven species of antelope and 12 species of monkey that appear as totemic animals among the Mbuti bands in his area. Other animals, not important as food to the Pygmy, are also totemic animals but, according to Putnam, less frequently. Slow game and vegetables, that is, food collected by women, are never used as totems.

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614 Rules concerning the clan totem vary, in theory and practice. Its flesh may never be eaten by members of the clan and, as far as possible, the animal is avoided—alive or dead. If the clan is dispersed, its seceding factions tend to forget their own totem and adopt the totems of the dominant clans in whose areas they settle, evidently, in fact, effectively changing clan affiliation.

784 562 [262] The second kind of taboo mentioned by Putnam is the sex taboo symbolizing the differences in male and female activities. Women and children eat frogs and toads; men refuse to touch them. As mentioned above (p. 211), this [825] [823] difference is probably connected with the association between these amphibians and both water (portending disaster) and land (the hunt).

784 The third type of taboo is the taboo applicable to times of crisis in the life cycle—puberty, pregnancy, and mourning. At such times certain taboos are observed, but they vary from band to band, and there is no detailed information.

262 Lastly, Putnam mentions the existence of

[1] By "clan" Putnam means a patriclan or gens.

[P. 239-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.239-C]

personal taboos, which simply involve the decision of individuals to abstain from eating certain foods. These may be the result of some near disaster involving the taboo animal, or the result of some physical allergy. Many personal taboos are acquired during puberty, but they can be acquired any time. During puberty a taboo may be "given" to the individual on the decision of his relatives who observe that he has an allergy to a certain food; or they may be, and at other times always are, acquired by personal volition. Porcupines, snakes, and slow game not used as clan totems are subject to personal taboo. 262

These forest animals that symbolize clans, sexes, and individual idiosyncracies, says Putnam, are personified by the Mbuti, who believe that they used to be able to talk and were on an equal footing with human beings. 784 614 825

Thus the totemism of the net hunters seems to be very different from that described by Schebesta for the archers, among whom there was neither sex nor individual totemism (p. 191). Further, Putnam denies that there is any belief, at least among the net hunters, in totemic ancestral spirits such as the *lodi* described by Schebesta. There are *genii loci*, *satani* who inhabit well-known caves, ravines, or hills, but Putnam says that these are not associated with clans. 184 784 184 776 825 [614]

554 The fact that men go through the not inconsid-
881 erable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

555 Male status depends primarily on skill in the
224 hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by individual exploits such as elephant hunting.
[439] Among certain bands elephant hunting is a specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do so. This compulsion may have arisen in part by
[825] virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

224 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the
825 ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954,
[p. 247-B]

[P. 247-C]

296 ff.), following the killing of a leopard. The dead leopard is tied to a stake, which is surrounded by the men, armed with liana whips and plaited hide thongs. The hunters involved in the killing of the leopard perform a dance, in the course of which they have to fight their way through to the stake and cut down the carcass of the leopard they have already killed once. In the instance cited the most prominent of the three chief actors had been wounded by the leopard but insisted on taking part though his fellows said that none would call him a coward if he did not. The other two men protected him from the attackers and guarded him as he swung his spear and cut the leopard down. The cutting down is acclaimed by all with a shout of satisfaction. Unfortunately the information does not carry essential details such as which of the men or how many of the band held the leopard as their totem, or as to what relationship, kinship or otherwise, existed between participants in the dance. Possibly the ceremony is propitiatory, but from the information on totemism among these particular Mbuti it seems unlikely. It rather appears as a formal opposition between the human and the animal worlds.

224 825 • [535]

[P. 264-A]

539 best-intentioned of Pygmies. It is worth noting
577 here that we find an almost exact parallel in the
way these legends deal with the animal world,
539 in which cleverness is the supreme virtue. Leg-
577 ends extolling cleverness among Pygmies must
• 825 not, then, necessarily be taken as supplying a model for behavior in Pygmy society, but rather as showing how satisfactory relationships can best be established with the animal world. This has much wider implications, as we shall see below.

One of the tales of cleverness tells how a young Pygmy becomes a great hunter, not by killing game by himself, simply, but by killing it with trickery. In such legends the great ideal of the Mbuti seems to be to match the animal world in its own terms. But in other Mbuti legends they rely on aid from the animals to help them in their trickery.

539 Two men went to their camp. While they were
577 walking through the forest they came across a tree
called *pusia*, which bears delicious nuts. One of the
• 825 men gathered nuts from this tree, but the second man gathered from another tree, bearing very bitter nuts. When they reached their camp they roasted their nuts over the fire. The man with the bitter nuts offered them to his friend, who tasted them and said, "Oh! These are terrible, I can't eat them." The two of them shared the sweet nuts.

Later on, the man with the bitter nuts went back to the tree and stole the rest of the sweet nuts and roasted them over the fire. When they were ready he offered them to his friend. His friend tasted them and said, "These are sweet; they must be my nuts. You have stolen my nuts." "I wouldn't steal your nuts!" "Well, tomorrow I'll go and see."

At first light, the man who had found the sweet nuts went to his tree and saw that all the nuts were gone. He returned to the camp and told his friend what he had found. "You see, you did steal all my nuts. You can stay here no longer."

So the man who stole the nuts left the camp and went through the forest until he came to a *konga* bird. When he saw the *konga* bird, he explained what had happened and said, "Please don't kill me." The *konga* bird said, "All right, you can stay here and look after us." In the meantime, the other Pygmy, his nuts all eaten, decided to follow his friend. When he finally arrived his friend said to the *konga* bird, "There is my brother whose sweet nuts I stole. You can kill him if you like." So together, they killed the Pygmy who had allowed himself to be tricked.

Basi

000 As might be expected, cleverness is frequently
[P 264-B]

[P·264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539
associated with smallness. In several legends 828
the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825.
respect) of small animals over large. It is not [186]
difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539
connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828
are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577
of this quality, which automatically associates 888
them more closely with the animal and spiritual

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and
577 she was very, very angry to find that her family had
888 deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she
732 walked and walked and walked, until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She told her son how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son went off into the forest and gathered some honey. And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

Basi

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825

3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

[P. 265-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 265-C]

seem to deal with relationships between animals as animals. But, even with these, we can suspect that there is some hidden meaning that is not clear to us, until we know more about these Mbuti or, indeed, that may not even be clear to the Mbuti themselves. Here is such a tale: 539 825

There was once a chimpanzee and an elephant. The chimpanzee took bugs out of the elephant's hair. When he had finished he said to the elephant, "Now, you take the bugs out of my hair." So the elephant took out bug after bug after bug. He pulled harder and harder, and finally he pulled so hard that he pulled the chimpanzee's head right off. When the elephant saw what had happened he ran away. He went to his cousins in their hole. He said: "I have done something awful; I have killed a chimpanzee." His cousins said: "Really? Tomorrow we shall go and see."

The next morning they all left the hole. They saw the dead chimpanzee and said, "What shall we do with the body?" They decided the best thing was to let it rot there. So they let it rot, and they went back to their hole.

Basi

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Most of the tales, however, deal with relationships between the animal and the human worlds. Some of these relate how Pygmies and animals become friends—almost. This corresponds to a mutual sympathy that the Pygmies seem to believe exists between them and the animals that share the forest with them, but, however much they may both try to meet, it can never quite be done.

539
825.

An elephant and a Pygmy were friends. The Pygmy was called Mbali. He went to visit his friend, the elephant. When he arrived at the elephant's village, the elephant was delighted and said to his wife, "My friend, Mbali, has come; make us a nice dish of mashed plantains." So his wife pounded the plantains, added salt, and put the dish over the fire. When it was ready the elephant took some red-hot embers and held them to his feet, and the elephant fat ran into the food. When there was enough he turned to his friend, Mbali, and said, "Eat well." The two of them sat down and ate up all the food. The Pygmy said, "This is delicious." He went back to his camp.

The next day the elephant said to his wife, "Now I will go and visit my friend, Mbali." So he cleaned himself up and set off. When he arrived at Mbali's camp, Mbali saw him and called, "Welcome, friend! Come and sit down." He told his wife that his friend had come, and that she should prepare some mashed plantains for him. When it was cooked the Pygmy took some red-hot embers and started putting them

[P. 265-D].

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 266-A]

539 to his foot. The elephant said, "Don't do that, it will
• 825 kill you. My feet are big and heavy, let me do it."
"Don't be silly," replied the Pygmy, and put the embers to his feet. He screamed with pain and almost died. The elephant took hold of him and brought him back to life, then said, "See, I told you it would kill you." The elephant then took the hot embers and put them to his feet so that the oil ran out into the plantains, and they all sat down and ate.

When the meal was finished the elephant returned to his home. His wife greeted him and asked if he had had a good time. He said: "It was terrible. My friend, Mbali, took red-hot embers and put them to his feet and almost killed himself. I shall never go back there again, never."

Basi

Relationships with chimpanzees are less happy. The Pygmy and the chimpanzee seem to be just about equally matched in cleverness, and they are continually killing each other. Typical is the tale of the Pygmy who sat down to watch a group of chimpanzees playing.

One of the chimpanzees noticed the Pygmy and came over to him. He said, "What are you doing here?" He called to his brother chimpanzees, "Come and see this Pygmy." They came over and said,

539 "We'll fight him." One of the chimpanzees grabbed
825 at the Pygmy, but meanwhile the Pygmy had taken up his spear. The Pygmy killed the chimpanzee. The others said, "What did the Pygmy kill our brother with?" And one answered, "It seemed to be with the root of a tree." So another of the chimpanzees gathered up the roots of the trees and threw them at the Pygmy. The Pygmy killed him with his spear. The remaining chimpanzees sat down and tried to puzzle this out. One of them searched all round and found the spear. He took it and killed the Pygmy. The chimpanzees then gathered some leaves and put them over the Pygmy. They all left.

The Pygmy's brother went to look for him. He found him dead, covered with leaves. He said, "What could have happened? Who killed my brother?"

Basi

539 Leopards and turtles are tricky animals that
825 teach the Pygmy much of his cleverness in leg-
828 end. They appear frequently, and it is always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed. But here we consider another aspect of these
539 animal tales. Not only is it always their clever-
825 ness and trickery that are stressed, thus auto-
828 matically associating them with the supernatu-
186 ral, if only indirectly, but they are often identified with villagers. In talking of villagers, in legend, more often than not the Pygmy gives them animal form. The villager is very defi-

[P. 266-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 266-c]

nitely not included on the human side of the opposition between the animal and human worlds (the villager is often associated with an excess of cleverness). A frequently heard motif is for a Pygmy to wound an animal with a spear or an arrow. The animal escapes, carrying away the weapon. Later, the Pygmy discovers that weapon, covered with blood, hidden in the house of some Bira villager. The Pygmy then knows that he had, in fact, wounded a villager who had changed into an animal. 539 825 186 [828]

The collection includes one very similar legend in which exactly the same motif is used, accounting for enmity between two Pygmy hunting groups. A Pygmy wounds an elephant with a spear, and the elephant escapes, carrying away the spear. The Pygmy's father sends his son off to look for the lost spear. On his way through a village, he meets a Bira who says he has seen the spear in the hut of the Pygmy's best friend, another Pygmy. The Bira helps to conceal the unfortunate hunter in his friend's hut; at night, when his friend is sleeping, he

searches and finds his spear. But, as he is escaping, he is seen by other Pygmies who say, "Oh! So it was you who tried to kill our brother; we will kill you." 539 825 186

In the ensuing fight the elephant hunter kills all the other Pygmies and returns to his father who is well satisfied.

The Bira villagers frequently turn into elephants and take advantage of their great size to make war on the Pygmies, destroying the forest as they do so. They are bad enough at the best of times, in Pygmy estimation, but apparently they become elephants when they are particularly bad.

A Bira and his wife had a terrible fight. The wife decided to leave and go to her mother's village, but her husband followed her. And as he followed, he turned into an elephant. He crashed through the forest and destroyed everything in sight. His wife heard the great noise and climbed a tree. The elephant tracked her down and started to knock the tree down. He charged at it and tore at it, but try as he might he could not pull it down. His wife held on tightly. Then she called to the Pygmies. The Pygmies heard her and came to her rescue. When she saw them she told them to kill the elephant. They attacked it with spears. They speared it again and again, but it would not die. It charged at the Pygmies and drove them back, right back to the Bira village. There the elephant spoke and said, "You have tried to kill me, your friend, a Bira." The Pygmies replied:

[P 266-D]

[P.267-A]

539 825 186 "But you have turned into an elephant and tried to kill your wife. Because of that you must cross over to the other side of the river and die." The elephant said, "You want to kill me?" "Yes," said the Pygmies. "You have become a very bad elephant." So the elephant went across to the other side of the river. The Pygmies went back and took his wife to her mother.

Basi

539 825 We next examine some of the legends that very definitely attach supernatural attributes to certain animals and birds. There is a legend that warns against annoying porcupines. A Pygmy that tries to smoke some porcupines out of their hole is attacked, driven into another hole, and turned into an animal. Similarly a pangolin, if annoyed, has the power to drag its tormentor down into the world of the ancestors, through a great hole in the ground.

But some of the strangest tales concern birds. Above is an account of the *konga* bird that helped the Pygmy who stole the sweet nuts to kill his brother. Another, unidentified bird is popular in legend—the Bird with the Beautiful Song. It sings the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest has ever heard.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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One day, a Pygmy child heard this Beautiful Song and searched for the Bird that could sing so wonderfully. He found it and praised its Song. The Bird flew down and perched on the boy's head, and the boy brought it back to the Pygmy camp. His father saw the Bird and praised it. When it sang he told the boy to give it some food. The Bird then flew off. The next day the boy heard the Song and searched until he found the Bird again. Once again he brought it back to the camp. This happens three times, and the last time the father takes the Bird from the boy and says, "Now you go off and leave me. Leave this camp and go away to another; go! go!" The young Pygmy left his father and went to another camp. When he was alone, the father took the Bird, the Bird that sang the most Beautiful Song that the Great Forest had ever heard, and he killed the Bird. And he killed the Song.

And no sooner had he killed the Bird than he himself dropped down dead, completely dead, dead forever.

Basi

Another curious bird is *fifi*. Like the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, the legend

[P. 267-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 267-C]

of the *fifi* is told with great awe by the Mbuti; it is reproduced here in full. 539 825.

There was once a poor Pygmy girl. She was crippled, and her skin was full of disease. She was only about eight years old. The Pygmies were breaking camp. Nobody was willing to carry the little cripple for fear of catching the disease. So when all the Pygmies had left the camp, the little girl was all alone, by herself. She cried and she cried and she cried. And when night fell she crawled into her empty hut and she cried herself to sleep.

At daybreak she heard a sound like: "Pip! Pip! Pip!" It was the bird called the *fifi* bird. It had fastened a long rattan vine between two trees, and it was sitting on the vine swinging back and forth, back and forth. The little girl went to look more closely, and the bird flew away.

In the distance there was a Bira villager with his hunting trap. Seeing the diseased cripple he came up and said: "My poor child, you have been left here all by yourself . . . I must kill you." And he took his knife and lifted it to kill the girl. But the knife caught his nose and cut it. It killed him and he fell down dead. The girl caught hold of the rattan vine, and she swung herself back and forth, back and forth. 539 825 186

As she was swinging on the vine, another Bira villager, seeing the movement, came slowly into the clearing. "What is this?" he said to himself. "Why, it is a crippled little Pygmy girl. Get off your vine swing, my child, and come over here to me." 539 825 186

The girl got down from her swing and made her way over to where the Bira was standing. Then she sat down on the ground and held her withered little legs. "Come nearer, my child," said the Bira, reaching forward. "No! No! I can't come any nearer," cried the girl. "My legs hurt so much, and I am all diseased." "Very well, I shall kill you," replied the Bira. "Oh, please don't do that, I'm only a poor deserted child." "But why did your father leave you all alone?" asked the Bira. "No, I must certainly kill you."

And he took a piece of wood and tried to strike the little crippled Pygmy girl. But the wood flew back in his face and hit him on the nose, and the blood streamed down. With the blood still streaming down he ran back to his village and told everyone: "There is a poor deserted Pygmy girl in the Pygmy camp. She is crippled and diseased, and she has the evil eye. She will surely kill us all." And with some friends and relations he hurried to the deserted camp.

There was the little girl, sitting on the swing, swinging herself back and forth, back and forth. The Bira called to her: "Come here, my poor child. You have killed one of our relatives, and you have wounded me. You are crippled and diseased, and you have been deserted. I am going to kill you."

The little girl got down from her swing and slowly

[P. 267-D]

[P. 268-A]

539 came over to where the Bira was standing. "Come
825 nearer, little one!" said the Bira. "Oh, please don't
186 kill me," said the Pygmy girl, "I am only a deserted cripple, and I haven't run away." But she came closer still. The Bira raised his knife. "Now!" he said," "Now, I am going to kill you!" But the knife caught in his stomach, and he fell down, he fell down dead.

The girl went back to her swing, dragging her withered little legs along the ground. And she climbed on the swing and swung herself back and forth, back and forth. The remaining Bira all hurried back to their village.

"Come! Come! Come, all of you!" they cried. "There is a crippled little Pygmy girl in the deserted camp, and she will surely kill us all unless we kill her. Get your spears, and come!" And all the Bira villagers seized their spears and came running to the deserted camp. They all came to take their revenge and kill the deserted little Pygmy girl.

But the girl had gone.

The only sign of life was the *fifi* bird, and the *fifi* bird was sitting on the rattan vine, swinging itself back and forth, back and forth, back and forth.

Basi

[P.270-A]

538 promptly deserted as being unsafe company. So
181 we might gather that in daily life normality is
183 the ideal, and, when the supernatural (including animals, regarded as possessed of supernatural powers), is dealt with, cleverness is dominant.

538 From the second section of legends we can
888 finally glean some information from the treatment of old age. Two things emerge: first, old age is associated with extra cleverness, approaching trickery; second, we find Pygmy realism emerging again when old age is accompanied by disability. Either way, old age is a dangerous condition. In this particular band it is perhaps significant that the leaders of the group are not old, but are the active—the "great hunters."

538 Animals, like food, enter into the majority of
825 legends, and in some cases they seem to be regarded merely as animals. But more often the trickery of the animal is emphasized and, consequently, its association with the supernatural. In the third kind of legends, those dealing with the supernatural, we find animals in almost every one.

538 almost every one. We also find villagers.
186 Throughout, the legends are interesting in their
• 825 revelation of the Pygmy attitude to his villager neighbors, but nowhere more so than when the villagers appear as elephants, profane elephants desecrating the sacred forest. At times the Pygmy regards the villager as stupid (in matters concerning everyday forest life), but at others the villager is associated with the excess of cleverness that we call "trickery," and then he belongs in either the animal or the supernatural worlds—certainly not in the Pygmy (human) world. This notion is one that we might usefully transpose from the legendary world to the world of reality. Just what is the Pygmy's relationship with the villager?

538 Here I wish to draw attention, at the risk of
181 appearing repetitious, to the constant opposi-
771 tion we find in the legends between the natural
772 (Pygmy) world and the supernatural, the normal (reasonable) world and the world of trickery. In his everyday life the Pygmy is also faced with an opposition between two real (in our sense) worlds—his forest world and the world of the villager. No two worlds could be more dissimilar. The villager is afraid of the forest; he believes it to be full of darkness and evil. One of the most striking points brought out by a study of these legends is the absence of any concept of evil (in the sense of conscious

[P. 270-B]

1: Turnbull E 4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 271-C]

rainbows, of streams where strange things happen, of birds and beautiful songs. (It is also, oddly enough, a world of vine swings.) 533 771 772

However one might quibble about the meaning of the term "evil" and its applicability to animals and villagers, it most assuredly seems to have no place at all in this last world, any more than cleverness or trickery. We return again to the value of normality. We have a fusion of the normal and the supernatural that is difficult to grasp, but in which, I believe, lies the key to the magico-religious system of these Mbuti. It is difficult to determine the exact significance of the part birds play in the legends in the last section, but there is no doubt that the Mbuti associate them in some way with what I am now forced to call the "supernormal" world, that unknown world that lies beyond death. To conclude, I would like to refer to the legend of the Bird with the Beautiful Song, which I mention above. [825] • 533 538

The curious thing about this legend, and the many variant forms in which the theme is repeated, is the emphasis on the song. Sometimes the narrator sings; these are rare moments that are not easily forgotten and far less easily ex- 789

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Mbuti

[For information on personification of "forest" as Provider, on reification of "forest" as a single mighty being or force to be placated, and on projection onto forest of both man-like emotions and impersonal supernatural power and sanctity: see 778.]

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers
P 685 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing
648 what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara*
571 and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti
121 are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But what-
C 648 ever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be
571 seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, unless they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp
P [361] of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a
[621] society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

P 829 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the ex-
648 pressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They
571 refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and
P [224] fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse,
P • [825] but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

C Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdepen-
439 dence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of eco-
648 nomic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest,
121 powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

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Mbuti

though he expected as much. Rather more serious is a medicine called, 224
in the Epulu district, *anjo*. It is a paste made from the heart, brain 789
and eyes, sometimes from other parts as well, of some highly prized 825
game. The paste is charred and placed inside the horn of that animal, which is then inverted and stuck in the ground, usually near the family hearth. The paste is put on the body, most often the forehead, of the hunter and of members of his family. Sometimes it is even offered to privileged friends. It is believed to convey to the hunter the senses of the animal so that he will be able to deceive the animal as well as foresee his movements. However, the use of this individual [577]
magic is considered antisocial in many bands, particularly if it appears to be attended by success at the cost of others in the band. It [578]
may cause disputes, and then generally all such medicine is collected and burned.

By far the most significant magico-religious acts connected with 224
the hunt are more of the order of religion than of magic. One is the 533
hunting song (with or without dance), and the other is the hunting 535
fire. The song or the dance may precede or follow a hunt. It is distinct from any other form of song or dance. The song form is rather complex and demands co-operation in a manner comparable to that demanded in the hunt itself. The dance is suggestively imitative of a successful hunt, but is by no means mere mime. Like the song form, the choreography is quite distinct, and is not used in any other context.

The hunting fire in the southern part of the net-hunting area takes 224
the form of a fire lit near the trail just before the hunt sets out in the 372
morning. It is generally lit by youths, always at the base of a young 789
tree. When blazing it is covered with leaves, so the heavy smoke is given off. Men and women, as they pass by the fire on their way to the hunt, may stop to gossip, or they may pay no attention. I have [778]
not seen or heard of any accompanying ritual or invocation, the only explanation ever stated being that the fire is to rejoice the forest, and it would seem to have the same primary purpose as song and dance, that of attracting the attention of the forest. It is certainly believed that the fire will insure the protection of the Mbuti and help toward success in the hunt.

Further north, another form of hunting fire is used, associated with [184]
rather more ritual. There the net-hunters build the fire within the camp, whereas in the south it is always just outside. The fire is sur-

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Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [765]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

contains from three to six families. In the same way that among the net-hunters the smaller camps built during the honey season show rather more evidence of patrilineal bonds, so do the smaller archer camps. They are still by no means exclusively patrilineal-patrilocal units however, and although respect is paid to the lineage head, it is no more than would be paid to any elder. Indeed, even the small camps are frequently composite to an extent that lineal authority would be unworkable. As we shall see for the net-hunters, authority is widely dispersed through the different age groups, for different activities.

The archers make use of the dog to a far greater extent than do the net-hunters, who only use it incidentally (particularly elders who go off on their own with bow and arrows). The common practice is for three or so hunters to lie in wait, possibly concealed up in trees, near an animal trail. They will entice game with antelope calls, and shoot at it when it has come between them. Dogs are used more by single men or men hunting in pairs, who prefer to track rather than to ambush. Women do not participate in the hunt, and go off on their own, but never singly, to gather.

If one such minimal section of the band is not having successful hunting or gathering, its first step will be, as with any hunting camp, to abandon the site and move elsewhere. However, with the territory split up among a number of similar sections, the freedom of choice is not as great as among the net-hunters, where the band is encamped as a single unit and may move anywhere else within the territory without hindrance. Consequently one section may join temporarily with another. Alternatively, it may send to another and ask for a share of their spoils. Generally, however, contact between one section and another is more for purposes of socialization, as the forest is no less abundant here than in the region of the net-hunters, and the same axiom holds good—a hungry camp is a lazy camp.

Each section is free to move where it will and cannot claim any right to any particular subterritory, and although it happens, it is considered bad form to camp too close to another section without asking permission simply because they have found good hunting. It frequently happens that hunters from different sections find themselves hunting in the same area between their two camps, and in that case they either separate or else they join up, depending on the nature of the game present.

The presence of elephants may be made an occasion for two or more

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Mbuti
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sections to join together temporarily, and the archers share the same two techniques of elephant hunting that are used by the net-hunters. Some hunters like to make a kill on their own, not so much to gain status, for such status is virtually meaningless, but for personal satisfaction. They will trail an elephant, then run up underneath it and jab their spear several times into its belly, aiming at the bladder. If they see urine spurt out they know the elephant will die in a day or so, and they will return to their camp, which will pack up and trail the dying elephant and build a new camp around it.

Alternatively, four or five Mbuti will lie in wait, and when an elephant appears one will stand out on the trail in front of it so that it stops. At that moment one who is concealed behind will run out and slice the tendon of one of the rear heels. The elephant will spin around, partially immobilized, whereupon another concealed strategically will run out and slice the other tendon. The elephant can then be killed at leisure, though still not with ease.

The killing of an elephant will inevitably bring other sections of the band to the scene, and the meat will be shared among all. The moment it is finished, however, the band will again split up and remain this way for the rest of the year. Thus the *begbe*, during the honey season, remains the only time when the band assembles as such for the purposes of acting together as an economic unit. It is unlikely that more than one elephant will be killed during the year; the maximum I know of in one territory is three, and this was considered highly exceptional. Further, although elephant hunting may result in the assembly of a number of sections, or even of the total band, it does not involve communal activity.

Neither the archers nor the net-hunters, despite the abundance of wildlife around them, acknowledge many totemic restrictions, though they could well do so without suffering. But the very abundance also renders it unnecessary to have institutionalized methods of insuring even distribution. Among the villagers, whose supply of meat depends almost entirely on the Mbuti and is consequently unpredictable and erratic, totemic observances are common and rigidly enforced, and can be seen to affect distribution to some extent, as the totemic animals include those most frequently caught.

Such totemic observances among the Mbuti that do not derive from individual allergies are associated with membership in the patrilineal lineage. The animals so respected are without exception those least frequently killed, hunted or eaten. By far the most wide-

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spread totem is the leopard, and even those who do not have the leopard as their clan totem, and can therefore lawfully kill the animal, say they would never eat the meat. Some give the reason that the leopard eats human beings, and in this way anyone eating a leopard is also eating human flesh. Whereas insofar as clans themselves are suspect as being possibly of village origin, so are the totems, and indeed totemic observance itself. But there is no doubt that the leopard is throughout the forest considered by the Mbuti as having supernatural connotations. More of this will be seen when we discuss the *molimo*, the men's religious association, which is active primarily at the time of death of a member of the hunting band. The derivation of the term is unknown, and it has no translation, but *moli* is the word used by the same Mbuti for the leopard. The animal is considered beautiful because of the grace of its movements, and in this context it is likened to a dancer. It is respected for its power and skill as a hunter. It is feared for the way it brings death, to animals or human beings, swiftly and silently and inevitably. There are many who do not claim the leopard as their totem, but who nonetheless would not even touch a dead leopard, let alone kill one or eat it.

The chimpanzee and the buffalo are probably the next two most commonly given totems, and they are also animals that have the least possible interest among Mbuti as a source of food. The chimpanzee because, they say, it is nearly human, and the buffalo simply because it is such bad eating. Other Mbuti who may eat these animals seldom do. Buffalo is tough and unpleasant-tasting, they say, and is eaten only if there is nothing else. Also, any sensible Mbuti will seek to get out of a buffalo's way rather than to challenge and kill it. There is no merit in killing a buffalo, as there is in killing an elephant. To seek one out is considered a foolishness, the mark of a stupid and conceited hunter. To be attacked by one and to escape are considered a sign of good luck; if the buffalo is killed in defense, however, that only brings incidental fame. If, as sometimes happens, a buffalo is constantly making a nuisance of itself in a particular part of the territory that cannot always be avoided, and presents a real danger to hunters and gatherers, then five or six of the great hunters will set out to kill it, with considerable trepidation. It is above all an animal to be avoided for every possible practical reason.

The chimpanzee, on the other hand, is avoided for more personal reasons, largely associated with its semihuman appearance. Someone who does not like to eat chimpanzee will also be likely to refuse to

224 eat any monkey. Sometimes older men will eat chimpanzee, and this
262 seems to be more so among the archers than the net-hunters. Cer-
825 tainly, chimpanzees are more likely prey for the archer than the net-hunter.

[614] Other animals stated as clan totems are similarly either undesirable for good practical reasons, or so rare that their exclusion is of little practical significance.

262 Restrictions sometimes cited as "totemic" by the Mbuti, and which include the more common and desirable game, have proven in my experience to be not totemic at all, but due to personal allergies. Any food that makes a child sick will be forbidden to it until it grows older. At puberty (i.e., when he or she is old enough to participate in the *elima*) he may try that food again, and either continue the restriction or abandon it, according to the results. Again at marriage he may try it. From then on he is unlikely to make any further attempts, though nothing is to stop him. There are plenty of alternatives, and exchange on grounds of taste is about as frequent as economic sharing. There is certainly nothing hereditary about such restrictions.

224 Apart from this, the Mbuti make ample use of the game offered by
262 the forest. Their technology, limited by the same environment to nets, bows and arrows, spears and vine snares, is more than adequate for their subsistence. Perhaps some measure of the sufficiency of supply is the fact that little effort is made to tap the more difficult sources of food, such as the fowl and monkeys that throng the upper branches of the trees. An even more surprising rejection of a much easier source is the rejection of fish. Fish of many kinds fill the forest streams and rivers, and are caught with the utmost ease, yet they are considered as food fit only for children.

222 On the other hand certain ants, termites, snails and grubs are con-
262 sidered as delicacies and eagerly sought, though these are probably more properly considered under gathering.

222 GATHERING

[184] Gathering among both net-hunters and archers is similar, and al-
[462] though primarily the concern of the women, there is no shame in a man gathering any vegetable foods he may come across. The gathering of termites, grubs and so forth is equally practiced by men and women.

The foods most commonly gathered for daily consumption are

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Mbuti

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

village itself was being pressed by the administration to increase its productivity at the same time that it was being pressed to supply the administration with more labor. In turn the villagers tried to press the Mbuti into supplying them with more food. Accustomed to a bare subsistence economy, the Mbuti could never quite see the necessity, nor did they altogether feel it was right or that it would be pleasing to the forest. Their belief, as far as I could determine, was not so much that they would be punished by the forest, but rather that the hunt would "be closed," that they would not get the unlawful surplus, that they might not even get enough for themselves.

To counter this the villagers offered divers kinds of medicine[9] for use in the forest, and agreed to make even more powerful medicine in the village. Sometimes the villagers offer to come into the forest, with a ritual specialist, to make medicine. The Mbuti tend to allow this, as it is profitable to them. Occasionally, however, the habit lingers, and whether or not *anjo* was originally a village or an Mbuti custom, it is now considered as a village trick, and disliked as such. *Anjo* is made by taking an antelope horn and filling it with a paste made from special parts of the antelope, charred black. This paste is then applied with a stick to the body of the hunter, to convey to him the senses of the animal.

This custom could sit perfectly well among the archers, where hunting is on a more individual basis. But among the net-hunters its use was taken as a sign of desire for personal gain above communal gain. On one occasion, when the hunting was not particularly good, *anjo* horns were rounded up from all over the camp, eight in all, and destroyed in the central fire. There was some protest from the owners, but not much. It was generally agreed that this made everyone the same, and that was how things should be.

From all the above, and from the rest of the disputes recorded in my notes, totalling 124, not counting the petty daily squabbles of no apparent import other than as an indication of bad temper, one of the most significant features is the small number of cases in which any

[9] Among these medicines is that encouraged by the Arab slave traders in search of ivory, specifically to give success in the elephant hunt. Known as *esumba*, *ishumba*, and divers other spellings, it is sometimes confused with a love medicine of the same name, and even more frequently with the *molimo* of the Mbuti, the word *essumba* or *lusumba* being used to describe the Mbuti *molimo* when speaking in KiNgwana, language of the Arabized Bantu tribe. It is perfectly possible that the two practices became intermingled, both, from the Mbuti point of view, being concerned with the pleasure of the forest.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 of honeycomb pressed down above it. Two sticks are prepared in this
789 way by a hunter, and when the cloth is set on fire the hunter waves them both in the air. He then hands each of them to a youth, and the two youths run through the camp and out into the forest around the camp. The womenfolk clap loudly until the youths return and rather unceremoniously put the sticks down near the central fire.

222 The honey dance also separates the sexes, the women pretending
789 to be bees, men the honey gatherers. Yet another separation, sym-
462 bolizing the power of the women, is the medicine that is said to at-
• 825 tune one's hearing so that one can hear the larvae wriggling in the
[535] honeycombs, high up in the trees. A woman prepares a stick which, when blown through, produces a misty spray. She blows into the ears of all the men. The men say that the bubbling noise they hear is the sound of larvae and grubs eating honey, and that it will guide them to the hives.

222 There is seldom any doubt as to where honey lies, and it is plainly
789 the social rather than the economic importance of the honey season
561 that is being celebrated. This is most clear in the great *angbe* medicine, in which the age groups are further differentiated and which includes attention to orientation that is quite unique in my experience (this, together with several other features, is so singular that it cannot be adequately explained at the moment, but is nonetheless described for its intrinsic interest).

222 At the *kuma'ngbe* (hearth of honey), a number of youths chop
789 a special *tembu* wood into kindling (the only time I have ever seen
561 kindling prepared). Four hunters supervise. The four hunters then
824 put their honey axes down in the hearth, blades to the center. One
823 of the hunters lines the axes up so they align with the cardinal points
372 of the compass. This done, each hunter takes his ax and draws it
412 toward him, cutting a trench along that line. In this way four trenches, two feet long and three inches wide and deep, are cut. In the center a square is cut so that the four corners indicate the intermediate compass points. The position of the sun is consulted to insure
[821] correct alignment.

A senior hunter has meanwhile cut four lengths of *teka* vine, carefully bound so that its juices do not escape. He removes the binding and allows the juice to fill the center square, after which water is added to fill the trenches. The combination of juice and water is said to be *mota*, or powerful. Each vine is laid in a trench, projecting at the extremities. Two youths then take out the vines and shake them

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Mbuti creations. But however much they enlarge upon the power and horror of the evil spirits, they always show that the Mbuti are not without power themselves, and the spirits are every now and again defeated and killed by Mbuti trickery. This confirms the village belief that the Mbuti are in fact in league with the spirits; just the fact that they coexist in the same forest is cited by many villagers as evidence of their affinity.

I cite two legends here (the KiBira versions of the same legends told by the same Mbuti are given in Appendix I[1], both of which show Mbuti ambivalence at its height. The first describes an Mbuti band in a village context (in a plantation) and pointedly refers to a myth that the Mbuti had bananas before the villagers. This is not generally believed to be true, but it is a way of expressing the undoubted prior occupation and ownership of the forest by the Mbuti. In this legend the Mbuti are threatened by a quasi-real enemy, the elephant. Elephants are indeed destructive to plantations and sometimes to Mbuti camps, but here, as seen at the end, the elephant is also a symbol for the villager (who is also destructive in his act of cutting down the forest). To rid themselves of the elephantine menace the Mbuti invent a story about evil spirits, making use of the knowledge that the elephant is basically stupid. When describing the elephant's fear of the spirits, the narrator comments, "Their fear was empty" ("*bochei ba bo*"), "for elephants are like villagers" ("*bambongu bua sopilabatu*"). The legend significantly ends with the promise that the narrator and his family will live happily forever after, but for "happily" the word *kobia* (more often, *ekimi*) is used. It means "quietly."

LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

In olden times we Mbuti had bananas before the people of the village. The people of the village stole bananas from us. We shared together, we Mbuti taking the leaves and the villagers taking the roots. They tricked us this way.

Our plantations of old were good, but the elephants used to bother us a lot. They killed many plantations. The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants are bothering us so much and are killing our plantations."

An old man, very old indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them." The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man replied, "You shall see, children."

[1] [see page 301 as Appendix]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 186 825 245 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They began to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 186 825 245 776 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He walked with two spears.[2] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 186 829 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [2] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ful analysis by competent musicologists.[6] As described, the above 533
divisions represent divisions recognized by the Mbuti, and visible in
differences of musical form. There is sometimes an additional cate- 533
gory stated, that of the elephant-hunting song, which seems to overlap 224
both the ordinary hunting song (specifically referred to by the Epulu
Mbuti as a net-hunting song) and the *molimo* song. In view of the [825]
possible elephant symbolism in the *molimo* festival, this could be of [765]
importance, though not enough is known at the moment of the ele-
phant-hunting song to properly assess its position in the system. In
this respect it should also be remembered that the Ngwana term
esumba, or *lusumba*, frequently used by the Mbuti in the forest con-
text as synonymous with their *molimo*, was originally for the
Ngwana in the nature of elephant-hunting magic.

All songs share the same essential nature, sharing the same power 533
of sound. The sound "awakens" the forest, in Mbuti terminology, 822
and the nature of the song indicates the particular area of interest of 778
the Mbuti at that moment, thus attracting the forest's attention to
the immediate needs of its children. It is also of the essential nature
of all songs that they should be "pleasing to the forest."[7]

Rather more magical in nature, perhaps, is the way the Mbuti use 822
other forms of sound than song. A sudden noise of any kind is con- [201]
sidered "strong," and generally bad; an isolated hand or arm clap, or
a single loud shout, will bring complete silence to a camp or to a hunt. [198]
Whistling is considered very "strong" indeed, but here the word [192]

[6] It is interesting to note here the elephant-hunting significance of the Ngwana *esumba* ritual, and the linguistic confusion between *esumba* and *molimo*. Frequently, [765]
I have seen in the forest the remains of what seems like the model of a spear-fall, and have always been told that a *molimo* had been held there. Most often such sites were in old, deserted camps, once or twice (particularly in archer territory) on the trail.

[7] Pahlen (1949) gives an excellent general background to the primitive concept and use of music, though his acceptance of the sounds of nature as symbols of supernatural powers is not demonstrated. He points out (p. 18) how in ancient cultures music went hand in hand with religion, "the synthesis of wisdom, beauty, kindness and solace." He is referring primarily to countries with "highly developed cultures," but much of what he says is applicable to primitive society. It is certain that an acute analysis of Mbuti music would reveal much that parallels the structure of Mbuti society. The extraordinary level of polyphonic achievement is surely related to a highly developed individualism that would hardly tolerate the confines of unison. The Mbuti musical categories of *herai* and *imiai*, chorus and solo song, indicate a system of recognized relationships between the group and the individual, and the technique of *hoquet*, already mentioned, further mirrors social relationships. Such considerations, however, should not obscure Pahlen's major point that music also mirrors social values. It is an analytical tool, requiring little musical training, that has been much neglected by anthropologists, and it is hoped that a systematic analysis of Mbuti music now being undertaken at Columbia University will provide data from which not only may further light be shed on Mbuti society, but from which may emerge the beginnings of an ethno-musicological methodology.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

822 [198] [192] "strong" has the same double meaning that it has when used to describe song. In using either the Ngwana term (*nguvu*) or the Bira term (*mota*), the Mbuti may imply difficulty as well as sheer physical strength. A sudden noise that is *mota* has an inherent power of its own. A song or whistle has power only if it is properly performed. 822 198 [178] [761] [533] The proper performance is not so much the following of a prescribed pattern, though there may be and usually is such a pattern, if general, but rather the transference of *pepo* so that by contact with *pepo* the song or the whistle becomes *mota*. Singing or whistling not so touched with *pepo* is "empty noise," and doubly bad. Whistling is widely used to arrest action of any kind. In everyday life, whistling brings the movement of all hunters and beaters to an immediate stillness and stops all sound among them. The sign for them to continue is an imitated animal cry. In the camp, if someone thinks he hears a foreign sound—of approaching people or game, of a "crying" tree (a tree starts creaking some days before it falls, and this is referred to as "crying")—he whistles to call for silence so that all may listen and [533] [765] hear. During the *molimo* songs, particularly, but during any song, also, whistling softly brings the song to an end. A sudden storm is likely [821] [789] to bring shrill whistles, though nobody claims to even hope for them to stop the storm, though they all say it is worth trying. They explain that whistling is effective in other realms because it is the affair of the Mbuti, but it will not stop a storm because that is the affair of the forest.[8]

534 824 [198] [192] All such whistling is done with the lips. Whistles are also made of seeds and carved from wood, however, and though the seed-whistles are purely for children to play with, the wooden whistles (*piki*, *segbe*) have special usages. Rarely, a small whistle may be attached to a net, and although functional it is never blown. Similar whistles are used by those net-hunters who build a hunting fire in the camp, and are placed within the vine circle surrounding the fire, again not blown. Larger whistles made of two semicylindrical sections of wood and bound together by vine or *nkusa* twine, tapering to a point at one end (left open so it can be stopped with a finger) and notched for blowing at the other end, are sometimes attached to a fur cap worn by hunters, and may be blown before the hunt, possibly during a hunt- [222] ing dance. Similar whistles made of *angbe* wood, from the *angbe* [825] tree that provides most of the honey, are used during the honey season

[8] Cooper (1941, 24 seq.), in drawing comparisons between the Semang, Andamanese, and Eta, finds much similar interest in noise.

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo*, *mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

[P.308]

THE LEGEND OF THE MBUTI PLANTATION

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mosa besu bambuti subua'ini eboko. mosa ma batu banji.
In olden times we Mbuti had bananas, before the people of the village.

batu banji baku biai eboko ndasu. su kangia'i.
The people of the village stole the bananas from us. We shared them.

besu bambuti sukonia ekasa, bakpara bua'i poko. Seyuma mayeli bendo.
We Mbuti took the leaves, the *kpara* took the roots. That was their trickery.

samba ndaso nde mosa bindanza. akini bambongu pikiai dongasu.
539 Our plantations of old were good. But the elephants came and troubled us.
825
186 *basudongia'isu. ba bumia'i tiko su.*
They troubled us. They killed our plantations.

bambuti balufa'i, "su samabo? bambongu basu dongibé, babuniasu tiko ndasu."
The Mbuti said, "What shall we do? The elephants trouble us so and are killing our plantations."

mangesé, mangesé mangbo, alufa'i, "bambongu bapiké su lufua nabé."
An elder, a very old man indeed, said, "When the elephants come again, we shall talk with them."

bachahwa balufa'i, "ue semabo?" mangesé a lufa'i, "ue sipa, bamiki."
The youths said, "What will you say?" The old man said, "You wait, children."

bambongu bakidi. bawanji a lea'eboko bokbu. ba wanjia'i buna tiko.
The elephants came. They began to eat the bananas. They began to destroy the plantation.

bachahwa bache'i aka mangesé, bahufua'i, "ombo, epa, bambongu bkidi; ba bunia tiko ndasu."
The youths were afraid and ran to the old man, saying, "Oh! Father, the elephants have come; they are destroying our plantation."

"ndanza. me mua ka totiambino. beningbokbu mu likana; nekobi anenengo." mangesé a ke a'i na tiko.
"Good. I shall go to chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet." The old man went to the plantation.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

a kamia'e nengo. engbue na dodo nengo. bambongu ba li sipi.
He cried greatly. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him.

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balufu, "nde'i'i? bachahwa kabapiki dongasu, paka mangesé a piki ngamo nde ndanza sulea kobia nasu."
They said, "What is this? The youths have not come to trouble us. Only an old man has come. Good, we shall eat quietly."

balea ebokosu, bachahwa bakobia nengo apa.
They ate many bananas, the youths stayed very quiet in the camp.

mangesé a kami, "Ah! bamiki bamo bau. Ah! bamiki bamo buma?"
The old man cried, "Ah! my children, all are dead. Ah! my children, where are they?"

bambongu ba'oki, balufu'aka mangesé, "angbe ue ka mi? bachahwa buma? su lea tiko bokbu."
The elephants heard, they said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? The youths are where? We shall eat the whole plantation."

mangesé a lufu, "lea, lea ngbokbu. bamiki bamo baku." a kami.
The old man said, "Eat, eat everything. My children are all dead." He continued crying.

bambongu balufu, "akini ue mua bamiki si angbe e'ebaku?"
The elephants said, "But you have many children, how did they die?"

mangesé a lufu, "nde keti, keti ma phele'a. a tambi na kongé ebaré nde bia nengo, sawa na ue.
The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. It walked with two spears. It was very fat, like you.

"siku bokbu, me mengia na'u kapié eboko, keti a mua'e, a nia'e.
"Every day I sent someone to cut bananas, the evil spirit killed him, it ate him.

"makati i'o'elea', bamiki bamo bokbu. a siainbende nde tiko nda'e, batu bakidié, e muangbokbu.
"Now it has eaten all my children. It said it was its plantation and whoever came it would kill them all.

"ah! bamiki bamo baku bo'u. angbe'e keti kadongimbe tiko ndetina?
"Ah! My children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not trouble some other plantation?

"angbe a loki tiko ndamo?" mangesé a kami, a ke.
"Why did it curse mine?" The old man cried, he went away.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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bambongu balufu, "Ah! akini keti nde sinana, a loki tiko ndamané, su bua ka komanda; suke umana, kabe su mua."
The elephants said, "Ah! But if the spirit is that bad, and has cursed the plantation, we had better go elsewhere; let us go quickly, before it kills us."

gunde bambongu bua sopilabatu bananji, bache'i baketi bobo.
Because elephants are like people of the village, they are very afraid of spirits.

ba ke, ba ke, kurahwa. mangesé e oki bamiki bokbu.
They went, they went very far. The old man called all his children.

a lufu, "bambongu ka ba piké noma. ba bia sisia kuma keti masinana.
He said, "The elephants will not come back again. They think this is a place full of bad spirits.

"su likia kobia nasu tiko ndasu.
"We shall remain quietly in our plantation.

"batu betina bunda basudonga."
"Nobody else will bother us."

132 Anyone who has
137 stood in the silent emptiness of a tropical rain forest must know how Stanley and his followers felt, coming as they all did from an open country of rolling plains, of sunlight and warmth. Many people who have visited the Ituri since, and many who have lived there, feel just the same, overpowered by the heaviness of everything—the damp air, the gigantic water-laden trees that are constantly dripping, never quite drying out between the violent storms that come with monotonous regularity, the very earth itself heavy and cloying after the slightest shower. And, above all, such people feel overpowered by the seeming silence and the age-old remoteness and loneliness of it all.

132 But these are the feelings of outsiders, of those who do not belong
137 to the forest. If you *are* of the forest it is a very different place. What
182 seems to other people to be eternal and depressing gloom becomes a cool, restful, shady world with light filtering lazily through the tree tops that meet high overhead and shut out the direct sunlight—the sunlight that dries up the non-forest world of the outsiders and makes it hot and dusty and dirty.

136 Even the silence is a myth. If you have ears for them, the forest
137 is full of sounds—exciting, mysterious, mournful, joyful. The shrill
182 trumpeting of an elephant, the sickening cough of a leopard (or the
• 825 hundred and one sounds that can be mistaken for it), always makes your heart beat a little unevenly, telling you that you are just the slightest bit scared, or even more. At night, in the honey season, you hear a weird, long-drawn-out, soulful cry high up in the trees. It seems to go on and on, and you wonder what kind of creature can cry for so long without taking breath. The people of the forest say it is the chameleon, telling them that there is honey nearby. Scientists will tell you that chameleons are unable to make any such sound. But the forest people of faraway Ceylon also know the song of the chameleon. Then in the early morning comes the pathetic cry of the pigeon, a plaintive cooing that slides from one note down to the next until it dies away in a soft, sad, little moan.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

THE WORLD OF THE FOREST

There are a multitude of sounds, but most of them are as joyful as the brightly colored birds that chase one another through the trees, singing as they go, or the chatter of the handsome black-and-white Colobus monkeys as they leap from branch to branch, watching with curiosity everything that goes on down below. And the most joyful sound of all, to me, is the sound of the voices of the forest people as they sing a lusty chorus of praise to this wonderful world of theirs —a world that gives them everything they want. This cascade of sound echoes among the giant trees until it seems to come at you from all sides in sheer beauty and truth and goodness, full of the joy of living. But if you are an outsider from the non-forest world, I suppose this glorious song would just be another noise to grate on your nerves.

The world of the forest is a closed, possessive world, hostile to all those who do not understand it. At first sight you might think it hostile to all human beings, because in every village you find the same suspicion and fear of the forest, that blank, impenetrable wall. The villagers are friendly and hospitable to strangers, offering them the best of whatever food and drink they have, and always clearing out a house where the traveler can rest in comfort and safety. But these villages are set among plantations in great clearings cut from the heart of the forest around them. It is from the plantations that the food comes, not from the forest, and for the villagers life is a constant battle to prevent their plantations from being overgrown.

They speak of the world beyond the plantations as being a fearful place, full of malevolent spirits and not fit to be lived in except by animals and BaMbuti, which is what the village people call the Pygmies. The villagers, some Bantu and some Sudanic, keep to their plantations and seldom go into the forest unless it is absolutely necessary. For them it is a place of evil. They are outsiders.

But the BaMbuti are the real people of the forest. Whereas the other tribes are relatively recent arrivals, the Pygmies have been in

182 the forest for many thousands of years. It is their world, and in return for their affection and trust it supplies them with all their needs.
182 They do not have to cut the forest down to build plantations, for
824 they know how to hunt the game of the region and gather the wild
825 fruits that grow in abundance there, though hidden to outsiders. They know how to distinguish the innocent-looking *itaba* vine from the many others it resembles so closely, and they know how to follow it until it leads them to a cache of nutritious, sweet-tasting roots.
[821] They know the tiny sounds that tell where the bees have hidden their honey; they recognize the kind of weather that brings a multitude of different kinds of mushrooms springing to the surface; and they know what kinds of wood and leaves often disguise this food. The exact moment when termites swarm, at which they must be caught to provide an important delicacy, is a mystery to any but the people of the forest. They know the secret language that is denied all outsiders and without which life in the forest is an impossibility.

181 The BaMbuti roam the forest at will, in small isolated bands or hunting groups. They have no fear, because for them there is no danger. For them there is little hardship, so they have no need for belief in evil spirits. For them it is a good world. The fact that they
[141] average less than four and a half feet in height is of no concern to them; their taller neighbors, who jeer at them for being so puny, are as clumsy as elephants—another reason why they must always remain outsiders in a world where your life may depend on your ability to run swiftly and silently. And if the Pygmies are small, they are powerful and tough.

174 How long they have lived in the forest we do not know, though it is a considered opinion that they are among the oldest inhabitants of Africa. They may well be the original inhabitants of the great tropical rain forest which stretches nearly from coast to coast. They were certainly well established there at the very beginning of historic times.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride. He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Manyalibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

224 behind Manyalibo's chosen site. Almost immediately there was a shout from Njobo, and Kenge bounded across the camp, picking up [516] a hunting net as he went. Not more than fifty yards away we found Njobo standing, tense, at the end of a fallen tree, peering inside the hollow trunk. Masisi and Manyalibo came running up through the glade, and taking the net they quickly put it up around the tree trunk, while Njobo hurried off and returned with his spear.

Looking into the black, gaping hole I saw two eyes, glowing bright red and unblinking, staring at me from the darkness. Njobo [825] had seen a *sondu*, a highly coveted kind of antelope, and had cor- [136] nered it in a sharp bend of the river so that it had been forced to take [151] refuge in the tree trunk, trapping itself. All this had taken place so silently that only Kenge's sharp ears had picked up the noises. When the net was firmly fixed Manyalibo stood on the tree trunk and thrust a long stick inside, keeping himself well clear of the opening. The forest antelopes have small but sharp horns, and when trapped they are vicious and dangerous. The sondu, snuffling with anger and pain, came bolting out so fast that it tore the mesh of the net. It lay there struggling and bleating, but only for an instant. All three hunters were on top of it, and two of them held it down while Njobo cut its throat with the blade of his spear. He looked up at me happily and said, "This is going to be a good camp, for the forest has given us meat before we have even built our houses."

484 Within another fifteen minutes the first of the women arrived.
482 They had heard the thunder and had hurried, traveling (as they can when they want to) as fast as any man, in spite of the loads on their
361 backs and the children on their hips. They were singing as they
342 strode into the camp with long, graceful steps, and, just as the men
481 had done, each cast a quick look around and chose a spot where she
533 would build a house for her family. Njobo's wife, pretty young
361 Masamba, was among them. She went to where Njobo had put
342 his net, threw down the load from her back, and without stopping
412

and very shallow. For the first time we slowed to a walk and stepped through the bubbling water, lifting our feet high so as not to splash. The forest was silent now, except for the evening chorus of crickets and frogs, and on the far side of the stream we halted while Ausu and Makubasi looked around and listened, to reassure themselves that we were alone.

I had no idea of how far we had come or in what direction, but I knew we had left the camp far behind. It was the first time I had known a group of Pygmies to be so silent. Normally, unless hunting, they are deliberately noisy, but now, just at the time that leopards would be prowling about in search of food, they seemed unwilling to disturb the forest or the animals it concealed. Just the opposite, in fact. It was as if they were a part of the silence and the darkness of the forest itself and were only fearful lest any sound might betray their presence to some person or thing *not* of the forest.

They stood there, quiet and still, and it struck me with a sudden shock that not one of them carried a spear or bow and arrow. As they peered into the dusk and cocked their heads first on this side then on that, satisfying themselves that we were really alone, it seemed that they felt themselves so much a part of the forest and of all the living things in it that they had no need to fear anything except that which was not of the forest. One of them said to me, later, "When we are the Children of the Forest, what need have we to be afraid of it? We are only afraid of that which is outside the forest."

We stood there, water from the stream still running down our legs, until they were satisfied that all was well. Then Makubasi nodded to Madyadya and to another boy. They ran on ahead, and after a whispered discussion two others followed. The rest of us walked slowly on until we came to a small clearing nearby, the far side of which was only just visible as the last glimmer of daylight dwindled away into blackness. We stood there waiting, saying nothing. Ausu and

765 534 123 177 I asked, keeping my voice low, how it was that for the molimo, which was so sacred to them, they should use water piping stolen from roadside construction gangs, instead of using the traditional materials.

Evidently now that they had the trumpets in their possession there was no longer any need for silence, for they answered calmly and loudly with a counter-question. "What does it matter what the molimo is made of? This one makes a great sound, and, besides, it [322] does not rot like wood. It is much trouble to make a wooden one, and then it rots away and you have to make another."

[825] [533] Ausu, to prove how well it sounded, took the end of the longer pipe, which evidently belonged to Manyalibo, and all of a sudden the forest was filled with the sound of trumpeting elephants. The others clapped their hands with pleasure and said, "You see? Doesn't it sound well?"

My conservative feelings were still wounded, however, and it gave me some pleasure to see the difficulty the Pygmies had on the way back, carrying a fifteen-foot length of drainpipe through the forest. It was pitch dark now, though the moon was full, yet we still followed only the smallest animal trails, this being the quickest route. Frequently Madyadya, carrying the front end of his foster-father's trumpet, turned too sharply, following the trail, so that whoever was carrying the rear end was forced off the path and the trumpet became jammed between two trees. But in spite of these mishaps we returned almost as quickly as we had come.

When we came to the first stream we all stopped. The moonlight was just strong enough for me to see both trumpets laid carefully in the water, then lifted up so that the water ran through from end to end. "The molimo likes to drink," I was told. We washed our feet and continued, but at every stream we came to the performance was repeated, both trumpets being immersed and allowed to "drink." Every now and again, whoever was at the rear end of a trumpet

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
[858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

765 was neither. Everyone ate his fill as and when he pleased, a couple of
264 the older men saying they would wait until the youngsters had finished before they ate. But they did not wait for long. I was told, however, that everyone *had* to eat, just as no adult male was allowed to sleep but *had* to sing while molimo singing was in progress. Ap-
765 parently one of the greatest crimes that a Pygmy male can commit,
680 if not the greatest, is to be found asleep when the molimo is singing.
[536] One of the men stood up, and miming as all Pygmies love to do, he showed how they used to search for sleeping men, a spear under each arm, and how if they found one they would spear him in the stomach and kill him completely and for ever. I was told that then his body would be buried under the kumamolimo and nobody would be allowed to mention his death, even to remark on his absence. The
[825] women would be told that the molimo itself, the great animal of the forest, had carried off one of their number, but like the men they would ask no questions and would never again mention the missing man.

765 The molimo was often referred to as "the animal of the forest,"
825 and the women were supposed to believe that it really was an animal,
534 and that to see it would bring death. That of course is why they
562 were all bundled off to bed with the children before the trumpet was ever brought into camp. And even when it *was* brought in it was often shielded by a number of youths so that if any woman should happen to look, she would see nothing. The animal sounds it produced were certainly realistic, but I wondered what the women thought when it sang. What kind of animal was it that one moment could make such threatening sounds, and the next instant sing more beautifully than anything else in the whole forest?

765 I remembered again Ausu's saying that the only important thing
533 about the trumpet was the fact that it had a good voice and could
534 sing well. I was reminded of the Pygmy legend of the Bird with the
825 Most Beautiful Song. This bird was found by a young boy who

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was sing- 765
ing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed 533
it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but 539
the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang 825
again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important 765
it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me 533
around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that [854]
Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general 765
pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but [183]
with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all [854]
women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the [533]

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each time, at the time, he never brought it up later as an issue for discussion or dispute. One morning, after two brothers, Masalito and Aberi, had been fighting, the "animal of the forest," making more noise than ever, circled all around Masalito's hut and finally pounced on it, beating on the roof and tearing off leaves and sticks. Some of the youths climbed up a tree that overhung the hut and broke off a heavy branch, which fell on the hut, blocking the entrance, but doing no real damage. The couple inside screamed their protests; then there was a sudden silence. Masalito had done the most dreadful thing of all. He had told the youths to take "that animal" away and throw it back in the water and stop all their noise. This spoiled the whole illusion, which is only a pretense in itself, that the women think that the molimo is an animal and do not know that it is a trumpet surrounded by a lot of noisy youths. The silence was followed by cries from all over the camp—cries of shame shouted by both men and women. The "animal" was galvanized into even greater action, and Masalito's hut was in danger of being completely destroyed. Then Njobo came sleepily out into the clearing and told the youths to go away. They had probably had their fill by then anyway, and they left, making a few last defiant noises, some in the direction of Njobo. As soon as they were gone the women came out of their huts, looked around to see how much damage had been done, then went to wash themselves and get breakfast. Children scampered around the irate Masalito as he cleared up the wreckage outside his hut, and as they danced up and down I heard one of them, bolder than the others, give a tiny hoot in imitation of the trumpet. Masalito tried to grab the child but they all ran away, laughing, to torment someone else.

For a month I sat every evening at the kumamolimo; listening, watching, and feeling—above all, feeling. If I still had little idea of what was going on, at least I felt that air of importance and

123 expectancy. Every evening, when the women shut themselves up,
765 pretending that they were afraid to see "the animal of the forest";
[562] every evening, when the men gathered around the fire, pretending
[825] they thought that the women thought the drainpipes were animals;
every evening, when the trumpet drainpipes imitated leopards and elephants and buffalos—every evening, when all this make-believe was going on, I felt that something very real and very great was going on beneath it, something that everyone else took for granted, and about which only I was ignorant.

765 It was as though the songs which lured the "animal" to the
533 fireside also invoked some other kind of presence. As the evenings
535 wore on toward morning, the songs got more and more serious, and
781 the atmosphere not exactly tense but charged with an emotion powerful enough to send the dancers swirling through the molimo fire as though its flames and red-hot coals held no heat, as though the glowing embers were cold ashes. Yet there was nothing fanatic or frenzied
[825] about their action in dancing through the fire. Then there was always that point when the "animal" left the camp and returned to the forest, taking the presence with it. I could feel it departing as the mellow, wistful voice of the molimo got farther and farther away.

765 The morning rampages carried no such presence with them; they
534 seemed more tangible both in actuality and in purpose. I learned that after these rampages the trumpets were brought back to the Lelo River, just above where the men bathed, and immersed there during the daytime so that the women would not see them. One day there was a terrible storm and the Lelo rose four or five feet, transformed into a torrent. When the rain abated in the late afternoon Madyadya went to look for the trumpets and found that one of them had been
[522] washed away. This caused tremendous hilarity, though of course everyone tried to disguise what they were talking about in front of the women. The women, playing the same game, pretended not to

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224 476 some convenient branch or tree stump. Sometimes, when hunting, 280 nets have to be set up rapidly, and anyone whose net has become tangled through poor preparation and coiling can spoil the chances of all the others.

224 462 The women have little to do by way of preparation for the hunt, other than making sure of the strength of the bark tump line by [482] which they carry their baskets. They put some food in these in case [251] the day's hunt is a long one, and they wrap a glowing ember from [372] the family fire in large, damp leaves, and sit down and wait for the men to set off.

In normal times there is often a dance before everyone departs for the hunt. Men and women circle the camp, singing a hunting song, looking from right to left, clapping their hands and leaping extravagantly in imitation of the animals they hope to catch. But this was rare during the days of the molimo as all felt the lack of rest.

224 Another form of hunting magic, if you can call it that, was a • 825 paste made from various parts of an antelope, particularly the heart [237] and the eye. The charred flesh is mixed with spittle and ground to a paste, then put in an inverted antelope horn and stuck in the ground near the family fire. Just before going on the hunt, members of the family smear one another with some of the paste, using a twig to dig it out of the horn. It is difficult to say whether this form of [177] magic is of Pygmy or Negro origin. I rather think the latter, because only a few families practiced it, and they were highly criticized by the others as being antisocial. They were trying to get success for 224 themselves at the expense of the others. On one such occasion a fam- 777 ily had a long run of good luck, the animals always falling into their net, while others had no luck at all. It was decided that this must have been due to *anjo*, as the medicine was called, so everyone, including the offenders, agreed that the only thing to do was to destroy the horns that held the medicine. Everyone who had such a magic horn gave it to old Moke and promised not to make any more

net, just as Maipe had said, but while all the attention was in that direction a water chevrotain, the *sindula*, had tried to fight its way through Moke's net.

The sindula is one of the most prized animals; it is not much larger than a small dog but is dangerous and vicious. Moke's nephew had been left all by himself to deal with it, as the others in that area were helping Ekianga with the sondu. The youngster, probably not much more than thirteen years old, had speared it with his first thrust, pinning the animal to the ground through the fleshy part of the stomach. But the animal was still very much alive, fighting for freedom. It had already bitten its way through the net, and now it was doubled up, gashing the spear shaft with its sharp teeth. Maipe put another spear into its neck, but it still writhed and fought. Not until a third spear pierced its heart did it give up the struggle.

It was at times like this that I found myself furthest removed from the Pygmies. They stood around in an excited group, pointing at the dying animal and laughing. One boy, about nine years old, threw himself on the ground and curled up in a grotesque heap and imitated the sindula's last convulsions. The men pulled their spears out and joked with one another about being afraid of a little animal like that, and to emphasize his point one of them kicked the torn and bleeding body. Then Maipe's mother came and swept the blood-streaked animal up by its hind legs and threw it over her shoulder into the basket on her back.

At other times I have seen Pygmies singeing feathers off birds that were still alive, explaining that the meat is more tender if death comes slowly. And the hunting dogs, valuable as they are, get kicked around mercilessly from the day they are born to the day they die. I have never seen any attempt at the domestication of any animal or bird apart from the hunting dog. When I talked to the Pygmies about their treatment of animals, they laughed at me and said, "The forest has given us animals for food—should we refuse this gift and

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• 825 starve?" I thought of turkey farms and Thanksgiving, and of the millions of animals reared by our own society with the sole intention of slaughtering them for food.

224 Ekianga was busy cutting up the sondu by the time I reached his net, for it was too large an animal to fit in his wife's basket. Usually game is brought back to camp before it is divided, and in some groups the dead antelope would have been sent back to camp immediately, around the neck and shoulders of one of the youngsters. But here the womenfolk crowded around as Ekianga hacked away, each claiming her share for her family. "My husband lent you his spear. . . ." "We gave your third wife some liver when she was hungry and you were away. . . ." "My father and yours always hunted side by side. . . ." These were all typical arguments, but for the most part they were not needed. Everyone knew who was entitled to a share, and by and large they stuck to the rules.

224 Above all the clamor, and in the process of re-coiling the nets and
578 assembling for the next cast, a disgruntled Cephu appeared and
18 complained that he had had no luck. He looked enviously at the sondu and the sindula, but nobody offered him a share. Maipe's mother hurriedly covered the chevrotain with leaves to avoid argument. She worked efficiently, not bothering to take the basket off but using her hands behind her back, and bouncing the basket on her buttocks until the dead animal was completely hidden by the leaves.

We went on for a mile or two and made another cast. Once more Cephu was unlucky, and this time he complained even more loudly, accusing the women of deliberately driving the animals away from his nets. They retorted that he had enough of his own womenfolk there, to which he replied rather ungallantly, "That makes no difference, they are a bunch of lazy empty-heads."

224 They were still arguing when they set off for the third cast. I
123 had caught sight of old Moke and stayed behind to talk to him. He

had not left with the hunt but had gone off on his own, as he usually did, with his bow and arrows. I was surprised to see him. He said, "Don't follow them any longer; they will deafen you with their noise. Cephu will spoil the hunt completely—you'll see." He added that he had happened to be nearby, waiting for the animals either to break through the nets or to escape around the edges. He picked up a large civet cat, the skin slightly stained where it had been pierced by an arrow. "Not very good for eating," Moke commented, "but it will make a beautiful hat. Cephu won't get even that—he is too busy watching other people's nets to watch his own. His is a good net to stand behind with bow and arrow!" He chuckled to himself and swung the cat high in the air.

We ambled back slowly, Moke talking away, sometimes to himself and sometimes to me. On the way he stopped to examine some tracks that were fresh, appearing over the tracks made by the hunters earlier on. He announced that they were made by a large male leopard, and that it was probably watching us from "over there"—waving casually to our right with his bow. Then he moved on in his leisurely way, humming to himself.

Back in the camp I was surprised to find that some of the hunters were back already, including Maipe. They had taken a short cut, and traveled twice as fast as Moke and myself. Some of them said it was because rain had threatened, but others, more bluntly, said it was because they did not like the noise Cephu was making. There were a number of women in the camp, and they seemed anxious to change the subject, so Moke told them about the leopard tracks. They laughed and said what a shock the hunters might get if they came back along that trail. One of them started miming the leopard lying in wait, its eyes staring from that side to this. The others formed a line and pretended to be the hunters. Every few steps the "leopard" turned around and jumped up in the air, growling fiercely, sending its pursuers flying to the protection of the trees.

FOREST HORIZONS

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on 114
from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the 484
neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's
march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would
have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made
our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted 609
wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been ex- 484
tremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to
eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He ex-
ploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a
novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area
and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives.
There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly
concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and
how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most
time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of
them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met
a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of
us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me 609
so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which 123
they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from 186
behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard 826
joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it [825]
lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and 609
taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience 177
beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups [114]
of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he
saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, movie-
makers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis;
it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

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000 the movement of his mouth and his eyes and gestures of his hands
[823] conveyed what he was saying. As if singing to himself, he said, "I
[825] was wrong. This *is* a good place, though I don't like it; it must be good, because there are so many animals. There is no noise of fighting. It is good because the sky is clear and the ground is clean. It is good because I feel good; I feel as though I and the whole world were sleeping and dreaming. Why do people always make so much noise?" And then he added, with infinite wistfulness, "If only there were more trees . . ."

As the sun sank lower we watched the hippopotami playing in the Semliki, directly beneath us. They heaved their great bodies out of the water and opened their gaping mouths wide, snorting and grunting before they sank back beneath the surface with a tremendous splash that sent waves rolling to the shore. Farther down the river two bulls were fighting, but only half in earnest. Soon they all subsided and only the tips of their noses were left poking just above the surface of the water.

Then came a procession of almost every type of animal in the park, one after the other, each picking its way with unhurried grace to the water's edge. On our side of the river they came right past where Kenge and I were sitting, down a narrow path that disappeared from sight beneath us. We next saw them as they emerged at the bottom and carefully waded into the water, looking all around to make sure that there were no rivals near by. As one group of animals moved away, another came and took their place. The elephants that we had passed on the road were the last we saw, and as it was getting dark, we retreated to the safety of the guest houses. We cooked and ate our evening meal in the kitchen, leaving the dining room unused, for there were no other guests in the park.

When we had finished, Henri tried once more to persuade Kenge to go with him to the village, but Kenge refused. Warning us to go straight back to the guest house Henri disappeared, spear in hand,

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was 361
that they would be independent because they would no longer have 829
to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village 177
foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of 152
all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the 177
forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, 178
to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few 185
days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always hap- [533]
pened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we 533
heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the 825
Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was *honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in* the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies 222
the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, dif- 262
ferent kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the [821] forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 604 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

224 When they have arrived at the right location, the men set up the nets in a line and stand by to tend them; the women spread out in a circle to beat. Often the pygmies will have dogs which they have borrowed from the Negroes, barkless dogs with wooden bells tied to their collars. Each woman cuts a lot of twigs and makes a little broom with them. She beats the bushes with it, and cries out, "Whoo, whoo, whoo, whoo!" over and over again. The young children, except for the babies which are being carried, are made to keep out of this.

[198] [825] When the women sight an animal and it heads for the nets, they change the tone of their baying; either they identify the kind of animal by this means or indicate that an animal in general is coming. When the animal rushes up to the net and entangles itself, the man who is tending that part of the net grabs the animal and kills it with his knife or spear. He will then beat his hand on his arm pit, and the others will come up to see what he has killed. Sometimes, however, the animal sees the net, or a man moves, and the animal leaps back into the line of women. Such an animal can well escape, for the women are not prepared to stop it. However, when a woman engaged in beating sights a slow animal, such as a turtle, pangolin, porcupine, or even a rat, she will dive for it and pop it into her basket which she carries on her back, and go on beating. [462] This is merely incidental gathering; slow animals are women's game.

During the course of a single day a pygmy band may set up their nets, conduct a drive, take the nets down, and repeat the process as many as seven times, each time in a different place. If the clouds collect early, they will go home. If there are no clouds and they have a good bag of game, they will still go home, but if it is dry and they

224 mountain of meat and a free lunch for
171 all as long as it remains edible.

222 **Gathering.**—The gathering of fruits, nuts, and slow animals has a minor importance during most of the year, for the bulk of the pygmies' vegetable food derives from the crops of their Negroes. However, after the evening meal, while the men sit about the fires chatting, the women gather firewood and bring in, just before dusk, any mushrooms and slow game that they may encounter.

[221] The dry season, in January and February, is the time of the ripening of certain fruits and seeds. At this time of the year the pygmies easily could live on the fruit borne by the wild forest trees. It is a period of seasonal abundance and feasting. The [137] ibambi, a big luscious fruit that looks like a pineapple, is one of the most important of these fruits. It drops to the ground with a thud, and pygmies and chimpanzees alike will rush up when [825] they hear it strike. The pygmies often tell stories of chimpanzees that get so full of ibambi that they can eat no more, but hide one in a crotch of a tree for future use; a pygmy sees this and steals it, and the chimpanzee gets a grudge against the pygmy and decides to annoy him in the future.

[137] Next to the ibambi fruit in importance is the baselli nut. This is covered by a tough fibrous husk which can be opened only with a machete; hence, the chimpanzees do not rival the pygmies in this case.

Other gathered foods include termites, which come when the first heavy rains begin after the dry period; colonial caterpillars, which have a later season; and honey.

Pygmy Interaction

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157 **Evening talking time.**—The pyg-
571 mies seem to be a little less talkative
[P.333-B]

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584
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group and a stranger in the camp, if it is a different one.

Pygmy Symbolism

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Food tabus.—The pygmy recognizes certain animals as symbols of definite relationships or identifications, in connection with which recognition he observes special food tabus.

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This principle is particularly involved in connection with the animals which represent the clan totems. Each clan has its own private totem animal, which is not, in most cases, actually considered an ancestor. Rather, it has acquired its position because, in the local mythology, an animal of the same species performed some special act of kindness which got one of the clan ancestors out of a perilous situation.

The animals which symbolize clans are always animals which are hunted by men; they are never slow-game animals, which women collect. Vegetable species are never used as totems. The totems are animals which may or may not be caught, about whose capture there is some element of chance, some possibility of crisis, and they are usually food animals, although leopards and chimpanzees, which are off the main dietary line, are totemic animals.

The pygmy will avoid eating the flesh of his own clan totem, but he can eat the flesh of totemic animals of any other clan. However, the pygmy recognizes seven species of antelope, and a dozen of small monkeys; and the clan totem will be, for instance, one species of antelope, rather than all antelopes. Therefore, these tabus do not cause anyone much discomfort, for no one species of these animals accounts for more than a small fraction of the total food supply, and each clan can eat six out of seven kinds of antelope, or eleven out of twelve kinds of monkeys.

[P. 327-8]

• 825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation. 262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain

[P.338-A]

262 foods. This may be due to a recognized allergy, to some unpleasant association, or to any one of a number of causes. The animals involved in these tabus include porcupines, snakes, and other slow game not found among the clan totems.

825 The animals of the forest, which symbolize clans, sexes, and individual and conditional idiosyncrasies, are very real people to the pygmies. In the old days, the mythical time, they could all talk and were on an even footing with men. Each species was symbolized by one individual, who was given an honorific name, as Mr. Turtle, Mr. Gray Antelope, or Mr. Chimpanzee. Mr. Turtle was a very wise and tricky individual, and the smallest antelope of all was King of the Beasts. The pygmies and their Negro hosts have an elaborate folklore about these animals and all their doings which might shed considerable light on their human relations.

821 **Ritual symbols.**—To the pygmies, water, rain, storm, thunder, lightning, snakes, and rainbows are all parts of a single symbolic configuration. The elements of this configuration, of course, represent the sudden rainstorms which arise without warning in the afternoons and sometimes, rarely, in the mornings as well. These may prevent hunting; flood huts; cause dead limbs to fall, crushing huts and killing people; or occasionally kill them by bolts of lightning. No other element in their life causes so much disturbance or upsets them so profoundly.

Both pygmies and Negroes believe in a *Nyama ya mai* (Swahili) or water animal, who lurks in streams and plays dangerous tricks on people. Sometimes he tips canoes over; sometimes he will grab the ankle of a woman fording a stream, so that she slips, and may even drown. If any serious mishap occurs in or in connection with the

[P.338-B]

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Mbuti
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is usually applied by the African to causal relationships he does not understand but which he still believes to be pragmatic. The mechanism exists, just as surely for the African as for the motorist. Whereas the term "magic" implies, for the Westerner, supernatural intervention, its African counterpart, for villagers and Mbuti alike, has virtually no such connotation. Some "magical" activities are not given any special term other than that for the activity itself. Those that are classified apart as a special type of activity are thought of as *curative*, and the classificatory term indicates effective function, not supernatural intervention. It is in this sense that we use the word, and in this sense alone that it should here be understood.

Witchcraft, on the other hand, introduces other elements, although it is still basically thought of as a scientifically explicable phenomenon, involving certain supernatural powers conveyed by the possession of witchcraft substance, something that can be touched and seen but, being located in the entrails (details as to exactly where, and what it looks like, vary), cannot be removed except at death. But whereas the existence of the powers is explained by the substance, the nature of the powers themselves is inexplicable, therefore supernatural.

Sorcery is akin to witchcraft only in that it involves the possession of similar powers. But whereas with witchcraft the powers depend upon the existence of witchcraft substance in the body of the witch and are controlled by that substance, the powers of the sorcerer come to him, or her, through the exertion of willpower, and are therefore controllable by the individual. A witch acts only as such when forced to do so by the substance. A sorcerer acts as such when he wishes to, for whatever purpose he chooses. There is, naturally, a complete terminological distinction between the two in the various local languages: in the lingua franca of the area, KiNgwana, the term *chawi* is used for witch, *lozi* is used for sorcerer. These terms do not necessarily correspond in their usage to the same terms in other Bantu languages, and there is a significant difference between village and Mbuti usages of each term. Needless to say, in that an individual possessing witchcraft substance is not directly answerable for his actions, however grave, he is not considered antisocial. But as a sorcerer directs his power for individual ends, he *is* considered antisocial, and is therefore culpable.

Religion, as used here, refers to the realm of belief where there is no attempt to explain supernatural powers in terms of empirical experi-

771 nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage
778 of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

771 This power derives from a single source whose physical manifesta-
778 tion is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the
824 vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*ndura*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

778 Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain
776 disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

828 The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essentially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with
[826] conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

771 The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general
778 concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

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Mbuti

776 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try.
828 He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine
158 choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was
554 not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However,
776 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if
779 the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place
[224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778
761 A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as
• 826 for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh
[192] and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as re-
778 quiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed
761 out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape
826 through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti
831 recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the
[535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual
[765] apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 832 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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C him. He is then accused and has to make suitable offerings which
881 are necessary not only to help in the protection of the girl and her
584 family, but also for his own protection, since he has been linked with her verbally, however untruthfully. He may then deny the charge, and if the girl's parents think he would make a suitable husband, there may be some litigation. Or they may consider him unsuitable, and let the matter drop. If he likes the girl and accepts the responsibility, this constitutes the first step toward official betrothal. If he disclaims all responsibility, then the girl has to try again; until she has a husband the danger is thought to remain.

C The period of seclusion varies from tribe to tribe, and even from
881 village to village. Sometimes it is just for a week or two; sometimes it lasts a month or more. And sometimes it lasts until the girl is betrothed and can be led from her room of shame to be taken away
C by her husband. At the final wedding ritual she is ceremonially cut
583 off from her family, and told that she is now her husband's respon-
585 sibility and must fend for herself and not come running home every time she gets beaten. The point, of course, is that if she does this her husband can claim back the wealth he will have already paid over in the expectancy of her fidelity and success as a wife and bearer of children. And by the time the disaster occurs her family will almost certainly have spent the money to obtain a bride for one of her brothers.

C The whole affair is a rather shameful one in the eyes of the vil-
881 lagers, as well as a dangerous one. It is something best concealed and not talked about in public. The girl is an object of suspicion, scorn, repulsion, and anger. It is not a happy coming of age.

P For the Pygmies, the people of the forest, it is a very different
881 thing. To them blood, in the usual context in which they see it, is
841 equally dreadful. But they recognize it as being the symbol not only
[826] of death, but also of life. And menstrual blood to them means life. Even between a husband and wife it is not a frightening thing,

FOREST HORIZONS

For the next few days we stayed there, and then we moved on 114
from camp to camp, visiting the six or seven hunting groups in the 484
neighborhood. Toward the end we found that we were only a day's march away from Kaweki's fishing camp, and another day would have put us at the Epulu River. So we turned about and slowly made our way back.

Once we had become known to the first group we were accepted 609
wherever we went as a matter of course. Kenge, who had been ex- 484
tremely shy and rather nervous in the Mabudo villages, refusing to eat the food they offered him, was once more his old self. He exploited to the utmost what was for him as well as for our hosts a novel situation. Generally Pygmies travel only within their own area and among groups that they know and in which they have relatives. There was a great deal of curiosity on both sides, but it was mainly concerned with the villagers—what kind of people they were and how easily they were tricked. The Pygmies that we spent the most time with in this region visited the villages only rarely, some of them had never seen a European before, and none of them had met a Pygmy from the other side of the forest. They examined both of us with attention. They pitied me for my height, which made me 609
so clumsy, and they laughed at the hair on my arms and legs, which 123
they said was like that of a monkey. A pink face poking out from 186
behind a beard added to the similarity, and it became a standard 826 [825]
joke among them, much to Kenge's annoyance. He felt that it lowered his own status.

For me the trip was mainly work—visiting different groups and 609
taking copious notes about each. But for Kenge it was an experience 192 [174]
beyond all imagination. Not only was he able to meet other groups of his fellow BaMbuti, and many different tribes of villagers, but he saw different kinds of Europeans—missionaries, businessmen, moviemakers, "white hunters," and others. We visited the town of Paulis; it was only a small town, but the biggest that Kenge had seen, and

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 832
body and birth of twins are, among some 825
[P. 181-D] 827.

I: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

[P. 182-A]

832 Mbuti, considered as signs that adultery has
[845] taken place. An offended wife has the right to
[827] leave her husband; an offended husband may chastise his wife and attack his rival, possibly leading to a feud between two bands. If he finds his wife *in flagrante delicto*, he has the right to kill her lover. However, Schebesta cites no case histories.

Separation

586 A husband's justification for separation is based on the constant infidelity of the wife, her sterility, her selfishness leading to neglect of her husband, sickness, or suspicion of sorcery. On the woman's side, separation is justified by ill treatment by her husband, neglect of his hunting duties, and his infidelity. Separation is achieved simply by each band's reclaiming the daughter it gave in exchange, or effecting compensation. It does not necessarily involve hostility between the two bands, in which case the children may remain with their father, without their mother's becoming ostracized from the community. Also, a child may remain with its mother, even if she returns to her own band or remarries into another. Only when a child marries is there a necessity to settle the question of its economic allegiance.

[ARCHERS]

[P.189-C]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates 776
the presence of Toré: mental confusion or dis- [827]
order, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad [828]
luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is [777]
absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and
human beings, of life and death. Everything
belongs to him because he created everything,
but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is [782]
offended by failure to make him offerings from
the chase, by quarrels within the band, by dis-
respect for elders, by infraction of lineage exog-
amy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices.
He punishes such actions or omissions by caus- [784]
ing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards
on the community (or individual) concerned,
by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

[ARCHERS]

This method of hunting serves only for antelope; Schebesta never saw okapi, wild boar, or big game brought in from such a hunt. 224 [136]

The beat hunt seldom takes place, says Schebesta (1941, 98), because it requires the participation of large numbers of people, often from more than one band, including women and young girls, who can seldom be persuaded to take part. Also, it occupies an entire day. Ritual preparations include setting fire to certain herbs by the hunt leaders (an old man and an old widow in the hunt described by Schebesta). This produces a dense smoke, the sight and scent of which bring the hunters to the attention of their God. The old widow asks that rain should not surprise them. The ritual takes place a little way off from the camp; the other members of the hunt when they arrive rub their temples and eyes with the cinders, as did the old couple, in order to see better. The *bɛgbe* hunt then sets out, and, when a suitable spot is found, the women make their petards from a certain bush (Efe: *magbu*). By rolling the leafy 224 372 [776] [782] [828] 224 824

[P.172-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 173-B]

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[ARCHERS]

[P.189-C]

Any abnormal personal condition indicates the presence of Toré: mental confusion or disorder, shivering spells, goose flesh, dreams, bad luck, and misfortune. Toré is everywhere. He is absolute lord of the forest, of all animals and human beings, of life and death. Everything belongs to him because he created everything, but the forest is his particular kingdom. He is offended by failure to make him offerings from the chase, by quarrels within the band, by disrespect for elders, by infraction of lineage exogamy, by failure to make appropriate sacrifices. He punishes such actions or omissions by causing trees to fall, by visiting man-eating leopards on the community (or individual) concerned, by closing the forest to the hunter.

Essentially the giver of all good, he is also the source of death and misfortune. Schebesta finds it difficult to reconcile the undoubted affection with which the archers respect their God and their fear of him. They call him "father" and "grandfather," acknowledging him as the giver of the good life, on the one hand, while, on the other, they fear him in his disconcerting association with fatality.

[ARCHERS]

775 The soul, the word for which designates the
261 pulse, appears to return to God (Toré) in the
[174] sky, where it becomes a star. The other vital force mentioned, *meghe*, changes into the totem after death. Death is inevitable, the will of God calling back the *boru e'i*.

774 Dreams are events that actually befall the
• 828 soul during sleep, according to the archers. While the body sleeps, the *boru e'i* leave it and wander at will. In this way God and the dead can manifest themselves during sleep.

775 The northern archers think of a realm for the
[177] souls of the dead, situated in ravines and caves, and of a lord of this realm of the dead. Both the dead and their god are, like the God of the Undergrowth, termed "Toré"; but Schebesta attributes this to a confusion of properly Pygmy notions (the cult of *toré* as described by him) and adopted villager notions (i.e., the cult
[169] of the dead). Schebesta holds that the true Mbuti have no cult of the dead. On death one of the vital principles takes the form of a star, living with the celestial divinity, remote from the Mbuti world.

[P. 191-B]

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Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.225-A]

224
789
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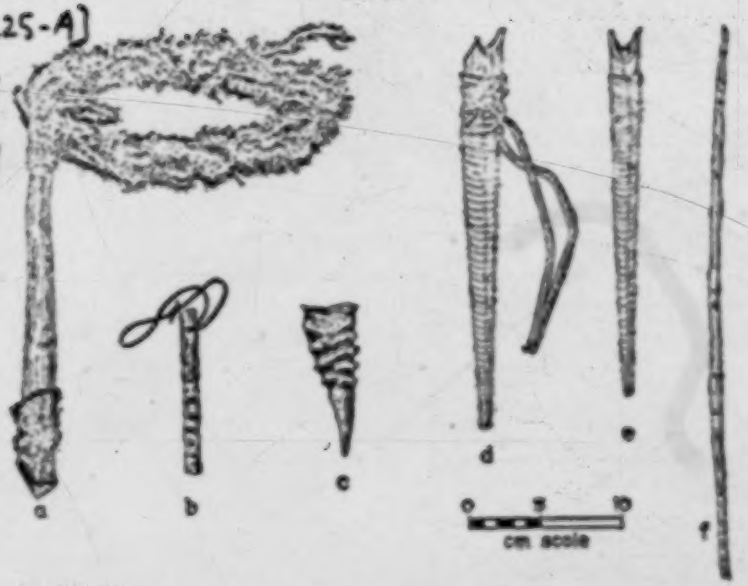

FIG. 51. Magical paraphernalia, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. a. Pipe, *akbelea*, attached to fur headband; worn by a few net hunters, the pipe sometimes being blown before they set out on a hunt. b. Wooden whistle, *angbela*. c. Antelope horn, *anjo*, used to carry paste sometimes smeared on the face to heighten the senses of smell, sound, and sight. d. Honey whistle, *madi*, used during the honey season for "calling" the honey. e. Honey whistle, *madi*. f. Hunting whistle, *manyongi*, found in northwest area; stuck in the ground near a special hunting fire in the camp and pointing in the direction in which the hunt has gone.

[237]
[228]
[222]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P-264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently associated with smallness. In several legends the whole purport is the superiority (in this respect) of small animals over large. It is not difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

539 828 825 [186]

Old age, with its greater store of experience, connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people are regarded as possessing a special abundance of this quality, which automatically associates them more closely with the animal and spiritual

539 828 577 888

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

539 528 577 888 539 528 577 888 732 [776] [682] 539 577 888 732

[P264-D]

539 "We'll fight him." One of the chimpanzees grabbed
825 at the Pygmy, but meanwhile the Pygmy had taken up his spear. The Pygmy killed the chimpanzee. The others said, "What did the Pygmy kill our brother with?" And one answered, "It seemed to be with the root of a tree." So another of the chimpanzees gathered up the roots of the trees and threw them at the Pygmy. The Pygmy killed him with his spear. The remaining chimpanzees sat down and tried to puzzle this out. One of them searched all round and found the spear. He took it and killed the Pygmy. The chimpanzees then gathered some leaves and put them over the Pygmy. They all left.

The Pygmy's brother went to look for him. He found him dead, covered with leaves. He said, "What could have happened? Who killed my brother?"

Bari

539 Leopards and turtles are tricky animals that
825 teach the Pygmy much of his cleverness in leg-
828 end. They appear frequently, and it is always their cleverness and trickery that are stressed. But here we consider another aspect of these
539 animal tales. Not only is it always their clever-
825 ness and trickery that are stressed, thus auto-
828 matically associating them with the supernatu-
186 ral, if only indirectly, but they are often identified with villagers. In talking of villagers, in legend, more often than not the Pygmy gives them animal form. The villager is very def-

[p. 266-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 266-c]

nitely not included on the human side of the opposition between the animal and human worlds (the villager is often associated with an excess of cleverness). A frequently heard motif is for a Pygmy to wound an animal with a spear or an arrow. The animal escapes, carrying away the weapon. Later, the Pygmy discovers that weapon, covered with blood, hidden in the house of some Bira villager. The Pygmy then knows that he had, in fact, wounded a villager who had changed into an animal. 539 825 186 (828).

The collection includes one very similar legend in which exactly the same motif is used, accounting for enmity between two Pygmy hunting groups. A Pygmy wounds an elephant with a spear, and the elephant escapes, carrying away the spear. The Pygmy's father sends his son off to look for the lost spear. On his way through a village, he meets a Bira who says he has seen the spear in the hut of the Pygmy's best friend, another Pygmy. The Bira helps to conceal the unfortunate hunter in his friend's hut; at night, when his friend is sleeping, he

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Mbuti

difficult to define. Perhaps the nearest approach is to say that, while trickery is not a human quality, it is one that the human (i.e., the Pygmy) can cultivate and use to deal with those to whom it properly belongs—animals, *satani*, and in certain circumstances the villagers.

538 771 [828]

Another significant feature in this collection of legends is the total absence of reference to witchcraft and sorcery. This is also reflected in daily life, where magical practices are almost non-existent. We are here considering the legends, so shall not digress with a discussion of Mbuti magic, but it seems appropriate to mention the coincidence of two deficiencies—a lack of any real body of traditional folklore, on the one hand, and a lack of traditional magical belief and practice, on the other.[1] Legends are invented *ad hoc* or altered and adapted to suit varying circumstances. Even when answering questions, the Mbuti often invents a myth and tells it as though it were fact. The recounting of an incident during a hunt or while honey gathering often appears in the form of a legend. There

538 789 182 [754]

[1] The possible correlation of these two was suggested during a discussion with Dr. Michael Smith at the University of the West Indies. Though he cannot be held responsible for the exact interpretation given here, I am grateful to him for the stimulus.

[P270-D]

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

having been there they do not know what it is like, and not knowing 771
what it is like they cannot predict what their behavior will be. They 181
say that to try and go into the future is to "walk blindly," and their 822
response to villagers, missionaries or any who claim a knowledge of 813
afterlife is to say, "How do you know. Have you died and been there?" [775]
They liken such discussion to the talk of a hunter who suggests hunting in a certain place without ever having been there, or a woman 181 828
who goes off in a set direction to gather a certain kind of mushroom without having seen them growing in any particular place there. These are people who act "emptily," or whose heads are loose and not properly attached to the body.

However, this disclaimer to absolute knowledge of the nature of 181
the future or of afterlife is in itself a characteristic that I found to be 771
universal among the Mbuti, at least within my own experience. This 813
did not prevent individuals from having ideas about the unknown, but as already indicated, such speculation was considered as fruitless, and took the form of legend and was listened to with interest, and often with amusement. Such speculations, whether spontaneous or in the form of established legends, do not reveal any consistency in detail, which appears to be a matter of individual imagination, but there are broad areas of belief that seem widespread among both archers and net-hunters.

There is a belief in a power greater than the Mbuti themselves and 771
not of the natural order of the world they see and know around them. 778
Insofar as this is stated to be a belief, and not knowledge, it may be considered a spiritual power, the spirit being a level of existence that the Mbuti do not claim to understand but which they see as necessarily existing in order to explain the nature of the world's unknowns. Again the terminology is hopelessly confused, the Epulu Mbuti using, in one instance, no less than five terms interchangeably—*pepo*, [192]
keti, *boru*, *roho*, *satani*. These terms are drawn from Lesé, Bira, Ndaka and Ngwana, among which tribes of villagers they are also to some extent interchanged, each change bringing a different shade of meaning. For the Mbuti they do not indicate clearly differentiated elements that make up the physical and spiritual being of man, but rather indicate this basic belief that man himself is in part spiritual and that his life derives not from the flesh but from some other source. All five terms are used equally to denote this personal force. But each one is also used to denote different aspects of that force, and the Mbuti usage again in no way coincides with that of the villagers,

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nor does the usage of one band necessarily coincide with the usage of another band.

The divers aspects of spiritual power that are generally recognized are as follows:

Each man and each animal (and according to most Mbuti, even the inanimate and vegetable worlds) is endowed to a greater or lesser extent with such power.

This power derives from a single source whose physical manifestation is the forest itself. Opinion differs as to whether this means the vegetable forest, or the forest totality, including the Mbuti themselves. Again there is a multiplicity of names to represent this single power source, and it is most easily translated simply as "the forest" (*nduru*), for this is ultimately how the Mbuti themselves describe it.

Also deriving from the prime source of spiritual power are certain disembodied spirits which, like the Mbuti, inhabit the forest. Their existence, for all practical purposes, does not impinge upon that of the Mbuti; they have no power to harm or help, though there is a vague belief that there might be a conflict of interests at times, and any unexplained mishap may be explained in this way. The disembodied spirits are generally thought of as living much the same kind of existence as the Mbuti, for as they themselves say, what other kind of existence can there be in the forest? Thus, someone who trips while chasing an animal may say he collided with a *keti* (the term used by the Epulu Mbuti for this disembodied spirit as well as for the more generalized spiritual power) who was chasing the same animal. The mysterious absence of game in an unhunted area is explained by saying that the *keti* must have hunted it out. But there is no sense of competition or rivalry, and the *keti* are thought about only when such explanations are needed.

The Mbuti also believe in individual personality, which is essentially of the body rather than of the spirit, but which is enhanced and activated by the spirit. This enables individuals to speak with conviction and to justify their actions or thoughts by saying that their "heart" is pleased, for the heart is generally considered the location of this personality, which when displeased jumps and leaps about inside the chest.

The same five terms, all of which may be used to denote the general concept of personal force, do, however, also have individual and particular meanings by which we can perceive something more of the system of belief of the Epulu Mbuti.

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PEPO

The life force that animates all moving, living things, without which they would be mere vegetable growths, unable to move or think. The word *pepo* also has connotations of air and wind, and breathing is thought of as a manifestation of *pepo*. A gale of wind, then, is interpreted by some Mbuti as the breath of the forest itself (*pepo nde ndura*), as the breath of the disembodied spirits, or *keti* (*pepo nde baketi*). 192 761 778 82

KETI

Disembodied spirits, human and animal, who are not necessarily the spirits of the dead but may be independent manifestations of the forest, and who are disembodied only in that they are invisible to the Mbuti. They have an existence otherwise comparable to that of the Mbuti, and are likewise animated by *pepo*. There is no conflict of interests between them and the Mbuti, though occasionally the two worlds inadvertently become confused. An Mbuti may be in hot pursuit of an animal that suddenly disappears; he is likely to say that it must have been *keti*. An animal mysteriously drops dead; it was killed by a *keti* hunter (*keti a mu'e*) who thought he was in pursuit of a *keti* animal. Hallucinations and dreams are primarily the result of accidentally slipping from the one world into the other. All such meetings of *keti* and Mbuti are regarded as abnormal, and are never deliberately sought. They do not exactly induce fear, but there is undeniably the belief that one might cross over so effectively that one would never come back. The Mbuti say that if this happened you might not even know you had crossed over, which indicates that they conceive of the *keti* world as a mirror of their own.[1] Dreams, then, do not convey authority as being divine portents but, being real experience of a mirror world, they are, like all experiences, to be learned from. Thus Ambosu dreamed constantly that he was singing into the *molimo* trumpet. This did not give him the right to take up this role, 192 776 761 776 828 [772] 776 828 158 534 [535] [765]

[1] On two occasions I heard *ekokowau* described laughingly as a dance of the *keti*. The dance, involving a reversal of the sexes, is primarily associated with the *molimo*, hence with the spirit and supernatural world. There is a hunting dance in which there is a rapid succession of changes in direction, the hunters becoming the hunted and vice versa. Yet another instance of Mbuti recognition of reversal is seen in the legend of the Mbuti plantation (see Chapter 12), in which the Mbuti are the cultivators threatened by the animals of the forest (elephants), who undoubtedly represent the villagers.

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but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as requiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomas* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomas* as a major feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomas* so graphically depicts.

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ROHO

The personality of the individual dies with the body and is the combination of a particular *boru* and *pepo*. It is associated with the heart and is spoken of as being hot or cold, sometimes as noisy or quiet. Hot and noisy are generally bad qualities, cool and quiet are good. But properly controlled heat and noise can be useful, though dangerous, for both are sometimes thought of as being "strong." The state of an individual's *roho* may be cited as justification for his actions, and nobody can gainsay him, for it is bad to go against one's *roho*. However, a man or woman who is constantly calling on his or her *roho* to justify antisocial acts such as laziness or quarrelsomeness may be said to have a bad *roho*, and will be shunned. 828 778 [192]

SATANI (also *Shaitani*)

This is a concept derived from the villagers, and is for the Mbuti more in the realm of folklore than belief, for *satani* are, to the villagers, malevolent and dangerous forest spirits. The Mbuti use the term in this sense only when recounting a village tale or a tale concerning villagers, for they essentially disbelieve in such evil spirits. However, they sometimes use the term, particularly if talking in Ngwana (to which language it belongs), as synonymous with *keti*. An additional complication: When talking in Bira, they may use *keti* (a Bira word) in the sense of the village Bira, which is the same as the Ngwana *satani*, or evil spirits. However, in the forest context there is no concept of *keti* or *satani* as conceived by the villager, the only spirits being the *keti* as described above, invisible mirror images of the Mbuti themselves, no better and no worse. (Conversely, in the village world all the spirits of the forest are malevolent and dangerous; there is no concept parallel to that of the Mbuti concept of forest spirit.) 177 776 [192]

THE GODHEAD

As the Mbuti themselves strenuously refuse to admit there is any sense in trying to describe what we here call "the godhead" unless you have seen it, there is not much sense in our trying to do so. Rather, by looking at various aspects of Mbuti life we can discern the exis- 776 778

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greater *molimo*. In the case of a hunting *molimo*, the initiative is 796
taken by the younger hunters, who sit together around a fire and sim- [833]
ply begin singing. In the case of sickness, the initiative is taken by the adult men of the family concerned if the sick person is a child, and if the sick person is an adult the *molimo* will be initiated by his or her male age mates.

The hunting inevitably gets better sooner or later, and the lesser [824]
molimo, once begun, will continue until it does. But sickness may [76]
develop into death, in which case there will be an immediate change of camp, following an uncomplicated and informal burial, and the commencement of the greater *molimo*.

THE GREATER *MOLIMO* (*molimo mangbo*) 765

In a previous account (Turnbull, 1960, pp. 307–340), the general procedure of the greater *molimo* was outlined, and it was indicated that there is no set rule as to when a greater *molimo* should be held. Certainly it is not held for every death within the band, not even for every adult death. It may, on the other hand, be held for a child. It is [828] largely a question of *roho*, and this is determined by a number of considerations such as the nature of the death, the importance of the deceased to the band, and the general tenor of life in the band at that moment, particularly the condition of hunting. A combination of [778] poor hunting and ill humor and general sickness, associated with the death of a child, even of a stranger child temporarily within the band, may well occasion a *molimo*, for the total combination indicates that the forest is "sleeping" (*é langé toro*). On the other hand, the death of a great hunter, through his own fault or through sickness but at a time of good hunting and general contentment, may pass unmarked except by the usual summary burial and change of camp, all expression of grief being confined to the immediate family concerned.

One other consideration not without importance is the fact that whoever initiates a *molimo* festival undertakes a responsibility that may become a burden. He has to see that everyone cooperates in pro- [261] viding food, and when, as sometimes happens, the response is meager, he has somehow to provide enough himself for the society's evening repast. As a greater *molimo* is not likely to last under a month, except possibly for a child under circumstances which otherwise become quickly improved, the economic burden is one to cause careful consideration.

765 An occasion such as that described (Turnbull, *ibid.*) for old Bale-
• 828 kimito would lead to a greater *molimo* without any hesitation, how-
157 ever, for the death of this much loved old lady affected everyone's *roho*. On the other hand, the *molimo* held for Cephu's daughter Teresa was initiated by Njobo, Cephu claiming he did not have a trumpet. It was held not so much out of respect for the girl but because conditions were bad at the time, there being much sickness and discontent. However, Cephu did not seem to be pulling his own weight, economically, and so the festival came to an abrupt end after only a week. If people found their *roho* upset at all, that was more because of Cephu's cupidity than because of the death of his daughter.

761 To recapitulate the essential elements of the greater *molimo*, as held for Balekimito:

Death is accepted as a natural event and does not lead to any accusations of witchcraft or sorcery, except in the village context. Such grief as is expressed is genuine, and not formal, again except in the village context. It is accepted with regret, and although regarded as natural and inevitable, there is nonetheless a feeling that this is the one really imperfect thing in Mbuti life. The expressed belief that
761 death comes when the forest is sleeping does not quite tally with the
778 factual acceptance of death by the Mbuti, but there is absolutely no feeling of resentment or blame attached to the forest because of death. The felt need to "awaken" the forest and to "rejoice" the forest is occasioned more by the fact that all the living have been brought closer to death and have, to some extent, been touched by it. They consequently need reassurance, not only for the continuation of their own lives but for the continuity of the Mbuti.

764 The factual attitude to death is seen in the practice of burial, which in the forest is performed as simply and quickly as possible. It is prolonged and attended by ritual only in the village context (see p. 74 *seq.*, 143). Burial is primarily the concern of the immediate nuclear
[674] family, who may be assisted by friends or relatives. Too much display
765 of grief is considered very bad, and one of the major concerns of the
[152] ensuing *molimo* is to reaffirm life. In a sense, then, the *molimo* is more properly associated with life, occasioned though it may be by death.

[768] The burial over, the camp is abandoned and the mourners are at once under an even stricter obligation to minimize their demonstrations of grief. The opening of the *molimo* festival is informal and casual, and depends on how long it takes for the new camp to get set-

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bow and arrows and started to walk out of the camp. His son Makubani, one of the hunters, called after him that he was going "emptily" (*ue ke buló*)—using the KiNgwana word for "emptily," with its connotations of war—(See footnote to p. 295) and without reason. Makubani pointed out that all the noise had ceased and that now there was *ekimi*, or quiet. Tungana stopped, listened, said that he did not want to kill the camp so he would come back, but from now on there must be nothing but *ekimi* and no more jumping in and out of his hearth, spoiling his food, destroying his fire.

Ekianga continued to sleep with Amabou's sister, but Amabou no longer beat Ekianga's sister in retaliation. On the contrary, even before Tungana's grumbling protests had died down, he was off getting some herbs to soothe his wife's wounds. And if the camp had been upset by noise rather than silence, the hunters would have killed it with more noise. The ultimate solution generally lies in the hands of the elders, but the process of restoring equilibrium is initiated by the hunters' fulfilling their duty of making noise. Thus though noise cannot be said to be good, its use (properly controlled) is recognized as having beneficial potentialities.

5. QUIET (*ekimi*) is not merely the opposite of noise; it is something else and it is the ultimate goal toward which life is directed. As with noise, its practical advantages are plain, particularly on the hunt. It is also recognized as an indication that all is well; a quiet camp is a camp untroubled by dissension, a quiet child is a well-fed child, and so forth. In the same way that noise is associated with heat, so is quiet associated with coolness, and this is generally a desirable quality, whereas heat is undesirable.[6] The plaintive cry of the elders when trying to stop an argument or settle a dispute is often "*Me oki akami, me toni akami; me kondi ekimi, ndura ekondi ekimi*"—"I hear noise, I refuse noise; I love quiet, the forest loves quiet."

The ideal is quiet, and quietness is associated with the forest. The concept is inseparable from the concept of joy, which is *ekimi mota*, or "powerful quietness." Joy is an intensification of quietness and is brought about by the occurrence of the norm: good hunting, good weather, good health, harmonious relations, plenty of children. These conditions do not always prevail, in which case active steps have to be taken to improve the hunt, to be less disputatious, to keep better health, to have more children, and to drive bad weather away. En-

[6] The village is in fact, as in thought, hot and noisy, whereas the forest is cool and quiet.

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deavor of this kind, however, is recognised as being fraught with difficulty, and there is another way that is both easier and more sure, for *ekimi mota* is produced by song. The process of "rejoicing the forest" is a process of creating *ekimi mota* where it does not exist, of intensifying mere *ekimi* through song.

The term for "rejoicing the forest" in the Epulu area is *bongisa ndura*. In KiNgwana the verb is either *furahisa* or *ponisa*, there being no precise equivalent to *bongisa*. *Furahisa* is closer to the English concept of joy, involving festivity; *ponisa*, however, means to cure. The KiNgwana words are both used by the Mbuti in this context, interchangeably, and the meaning of *bongisa* lies between them, derived as it is from *bonga*, meaning good, in an all-inclusive sense.

Perhaps the exact connotation of "rejoicing the forest" is best described by the process itself, which brings joy through joy. Singing gives the Mbuti intense satisfaction. They say it makes them feel good, in the sense of feeling joyful. The mood of song is joyful, even when it is a *molimo* song on the occasion of death. By creating a mood of joy within themselves the Mbuti convey that joy to the forest, which returns it, restoring *ekimi* or even *ekimi mota* to the camp. To describe song as mere "curing" would not quite cover the essential sharing process implied by the term *bongisa ndura*. Song is known, to the Mbuti, to have the infallible power of filling the forest with *ekimi mota*. It is sometimes described as being like the act of copulation in the moonlight, or wherever the individual talking feels that act to be the most intense and beautiful. The Mbuti say "*su bongisa ndura, ndura pisu ekimi*"—"we rejoice the forest, the forest gives us quiet." The distinction is simple, for joy is *ekimi mota*, an intensification of *ekimi*, and as such is not the norm and can only be temporary. Far more important to the Mbuti is that they should have, on a less temporary if less exalted level, the norm of *ekimi*.

While the forest cannot fail to be rejoiced by song, it may well, for one reason or another, be displeased, as a father may be displeased with his children (a perfectly common Mbuti metaphor), and withhold *ekimi* for a long time. The fact that singing brings joy to the Mbuti, filling them with *ekimi mota*, does not mean that it is not also hard work. For the forest is not content with one song. If singing is undertaken at all, and particularly if it is undertaken for purposes of restoring lost *ekimi* (i.e., if it is to be a *molimo* festival), it must be long and continuous. After a fest of singing every night, from shortly after dusk to an hour before sunrise, the Mbuti set off to hunt

763 761 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest." [765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 [556] Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up [829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said. [186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we [768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they [152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he [828] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

form that enables them in a moment to know the exact number thrown down. And for another the villagers are not so nimble as the Pygmies. When a Pygmy sees that he is going to lose by a couple of beans, he quickly drops them from the store he has concealed between his fingers, or even in his hair, thus by a triumphant jerk of his hands or his head throwing in the winning beans.

The villagers left that camp stripped of their fish, their tobacco, and whatever else they had to gamble away, and they soon came to prefer an alternative route that by-passed our camp.

There are a few villagers that are welcome in a Pygmy camp, but they are rare. Others can come with sackloads of food and still get a cold reception. I have seen this happen; as soon as the Pygmies have divided up the food they send the villagers on their way. But others can come empty-handed and be received gladly, because they understand the Pygmies and the forest. For the Pygmies this is the criterion of a "real person," as opposed to the animal-humans who live in permanent villages out in the open, away from the shelter and affection of the trees.

Any visitations by villagers are temporary, and they usually have some political significance. A Negro chief who wants to win more Pygmies to his village may send out a son with gifts to stay in a Pygmy camp. Every day more gifts and food are sent out so that he can distribute these. It is a risky business because, as the villagers say, "The BaMbuti eat us up until we have nothing left for ourselves!" But if a chief's son wins the affection of the Pygmies, his father will have won a steady supply of meat—for a time, anyway.

One afternoon I saw two village girls arrive, followed by two servants who threw down loads of plantains and sweet bananas, and a sack of manioc flour. The servants left and the girls came over and sat down unconcernedly at Masamba's fire. Masamba came out of her hut and greeted them with warmth, and soon a number of

62 571 561 [888] **Government.**—There are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp. In making any decisions concerning the whole camp, two factors are involved. The first of these is respect for older people.

561 571 576 888 A pygmy will always, in addressing a man of an older age group in any formal situation, call him "senior"; he will listen respectfully to an older man and will always obey any reasonable orders he may give. If a younger man [626] shows disrespect, the other members of the camp will gang up on him and berate him. This respect for age, and for the opinions of wise old men, is the basis of pygmy government.

623 571 561 [888] Secondly, while the opinions of most of the old men are respected, every man in the camp is entitled to state his own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 571 561 888 [828] In general it is the older and more experienced men who make the decision, but as some of the old men are considered eccentrics and freaks, little attention is paid to them. Rather, it is an oligarchy of the more respected among the old men, a body with no formal membership or specific composition. [562] In their decisions the pungent remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 **Pygmy Social Organization**

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological [P. 334-B]

[P.166-C]

According to Mbuti opinion the villager is deficient in the senses of sight, smell, hearing, and touch. There is little doubt that the Pygmy is extra-sensitive in these respects, but no scientific investigation has been conducted as yet to determine the exact extent. But if the environment favors a certain type of physical development, it also favors a certain type of emotional development. We must think of the forest not only as a place of abundance, offering a sufficiency of food and shelter, relatively free from danger, but also as a closed world, very unlike the open world of the plains dwellers. Not only has the Pygmy little incentive to develop beyond his diurnal economy, each day taking care of itself, but also he has little to make him think except in terms of the present. 182 [829] 51

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were made to move about continually by the villager instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present at all times, frequently comforted their sons, apparently to the annoyance of the villagers. There was, however, no question of the savagery implied by Schebesta. During the following two months the boys were strictly disciplined. There was a process of physical training that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only one of the major purposes of the *nkumbi*, namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti fathers, however, obviously had different ideas as to how far this discipline should be carried and criticized the villagers when they carried it too far. Further, when there were no villagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite openly and showed by their speech and their behavior that they had no respect for the taboos associated with the festival. It seemed quite evident that they consciously underwent the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious significance, but because it gave them status in villager society, in which any uncircumcised youth is a laughing stock. The important thing, then, was the circumcision, for this specific purpose.

P Z 881 177
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1: Turnbull E-4 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Z 585 628 563 P 177 585 gifts, such as a few arrows. But it is also subject to settlement between the two villagers involved. This is formally accomplished by having a ceremony in the village according to village custom. [Both Putnam (MS) and Schebesta (1952, 238) mention the possibility of a double ceremony when it is a question of exchanging two brides rather than of effecting a "purchase."] Such ceremonies, belonging to the villager rather than the Mbuti, need not concern us here. It is worth noting, however, that, as with the village ceremony of *nkumbi* initiation, the Mbuti undergo the village marriage ceremony merely as a matter of convenience. P [829] They pay no attention to its magical or religious significance, or to the taboos that would fall upon any villagers undergoing the same ceremony (though they may pay lip service to them in the presence of their patron). P [533] [535] Further, even during such a villager ceremony, the Mbuti have their own way of consecrating the union, both by introducing a dance with forest leaves, associated with the *elima* (the women's religious association), and by the singing of *elima* songs. In this way the young bride from the distant band is introduced to the association of her female companions-to-be.

P 609 571 585 It is unlikely that the bride will be a complete stranger to the band, but even if so, she will be immediately befriended and will have willing helpers to make her first few days of

[P 221-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 223 - C]

the official wailing, as well as before or after it. 152

Anne Putnam (1954, 77) mentions the opinion of a Pygmy hunter concerning the village custom of burying the dead in a cemetery. He is reported as saying, "There the ground locks everyone's arms together and it isn't comfortable." 764 829

She also refers (1954, 81) to village speech-making following a burial, during which the cause of the death is hinted at. On one occasion, the death of a young Pygmy girl in the village, the villagers attributed the calamity to the evil-eye and roused a relative of the girl to vow vengeance. The next morning, however, the Pygmies all went hunting, despite the assurance of the villagers that it was dangerous to go hunting for three days after any death and that no game would fall into their nets. Four antelope were caught. 763 761 [754] 765 177 224

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Magical Practice

P 177 789 It might be observed that the Pygmies have adopted a number of villager magical practices; certainly some individuals give the appearance of having done so. But we cannot accept this as significant, nor can we relate these practices to other practices in Pygmy society until we understand, for instance, the significance of the old Pygmy who blew his magic whistle vigorously at the sky to prevent rain and who, when it poured, simply shrugged his shoulders and retreated to the shelter of his hut. This incident may seem trivial, but there are many such incidents that indicate a lack of faith in the efficacy of such magical practices as the Pygmies attempt.

P [829]

P 224 177 789 Also to be considered, and more important because it brings villager and Pygmy together more directly, is the reported resort to villager witch doctors to improve the hunting. Sche-

Z 789 177 563 [791] [P 250-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To the villager the masked dancers described in the account of the 1954 *nkumbi* (Turnbull, 1957, 193) represent the *ngosa* bird, indicating the presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the bullroarer represents supernatural power. The various taboos applied to the *ganza* express village subordination to that power which is sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from staying in the camp over night even though it meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further scope for getting out of control. The *nkumbi* places the villager initiates in a definite relationship to the supernatural. It is closely connected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no ancestor cult. To them the masked dancers were the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bullroarer was a piece of wood whirled around on the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird" and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti, were neither "real" nor did they represent any reality. They were empty and rather ineffective theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by conversation among the ganza at night and in their constant burlesque.

[P. 254-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
796 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
782 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[534] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[D 257-B]

P 177 184 hunting bands. We seem to have, throughout, this clear opposition between the forest and the outer world, the Pygmies and the villagers, the human and the non-human worlds. As far as we can see, both the archer communities and the net hunters maintain their separateness, however close their symbiosis with the villagers may appear to be. They maintain not only a physical distance between themselves and their villager neighbors, but also a spiritual one, emphasizing their own indigenous system of values in opposition to that of the villagers. It remains for further field work to tell us whether the system of values held by each group is the same, common to all Mbuti, or not. Despite the P [575] difference between Schebesta's account of the [114] archer *toré* association and my own account of the *molimo*, a re-interpretation of the material published by Schebesta could easily suggest that there is a remarkable degree of unity here. But as presented, the facts could be interpreted in any number of ways.

P 829 648 186 Z 563 The Mbuti is always conscious of his relationship with the villager and of the subordinate position he is forced to accept. It is a major consideration, it seems, that must be taken into account in every aspect of his life when he is in the village (here I refer mainly to the net [P 274-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 274-C]

hunters). Even in situations that do not directly associate the two groups, the Mbuti thinks in terms of his ethnic status. Thus, when the villagers were taxed by the administration and exemption was granted to all Mbuti, the point at issue among the Pygmy hunters when they discussed the matter was whether or not such exemption was a slight on the Mbuti, placing them somehow on a lower level than the tax-paying villagers. At least one Mbuti felt so strongly that he secured the necessary money and insisted on paying. The majority, however, compromised by saying that they were different people, so why should the same law be expected to apply to all?

P 829 648 186 Z 563 [648] [651]

The villager himself opposes the two worlds just as does the Pygmy. While he always tries to include the Pygmy in social, economic, and political fields, there is a rejection at the magico-religious level. In the *nkumbi*, the villagers seemed to be both aware of and unconcerned with the formal rejection by the Mbuti of villager values associated with initiation; the villagers failed to introduce their *molimo* into the ceremony, presumably because there were no villager boys present.

Z 829 563 Z [881]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tween villagers arising out of the migratory tendencies of "their" Mbuti.

The effective system is that each band maintains an exchange relationship with the village or villages closest to its hunting territory, and effectively the relationship is an exchange not between band and village, except as territorial units only, but between nuclear families or mere individuals. If the exchange relationship follows descent lines, it is no more than incidental. From the Mbuti point of view, in any case, it makes not the slightest difference. All villagers are animals to be "eaten" without discrimination. It only makes a difference from the villager point of view, the question of compensation of the rightful "owner" continually arising.

Leaving the theoretical system for the moment, and looking at the effective system of exchange, we find that the tendency to think of the relationship as hereditary, on the part of the villagers, is irrepressible. As far as the Mbuti are concerned, they pick and choose. As a child an Mbuti may grow accustomed to a number of "owners," as his parents move from band to band, or village to village. When he is old enough to hunt he will choose whichever "owner" happens to be convenient at the time, but if he does not get the treatment he expects, he will without hesitation get himself "adopted" by another villager, even in the same village. The only consideration countenanced by the Mbuti is their own convenience.

A wise villager will treat his Mbuti well, and in return will be able to get the minimum service from them without too much difficulty, and there are instances where such relationship has apparently persisted over several generations (see Table 1). But the contemporary situation militates against persistence. For instance, among the Epulu net-hunters one of the larger "clan" units that made up the total composition of the band was the Puemi clan. In its entirety it was claimed by a prominent Bira named Ngoma. But Ngoma had to spend most of his time in Mambasa, the administrative post some fifty miles from his village, so in his absence his Mbuti were divided, according to the Bira system of inheritance, between his two brothers, Isa and Takalili. But the system did not specify where the dividing line should be drawn, and in any case the Puemi had moved a number of miles in the opposite direction and were on the other side of the Epulu River, in the territory of Chief Kachui of the Ndaka tribe. There they formed allegiances to local villagers, ignored the demands of Isa and Takalili to return to hunt for them, saying that they were

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

It is also possible to see Mbuti scrounging food from villagers

P 685 648 571 121 other than their own *kpara* and, when not successful, simply stealing what they want. If they are caught they are scolded by their *kpara* and that is generally all. If more fuss is made than that, all the Mbuti are likely to pack up and return to the forest within hours. But what-

C 648 571 ever Mbuti may be seen engaged in whatever activity, they can be seen only as individuals in relationship to a particular villager at that particular moment, unrelated to other villagers and other Mbuti, un-

P [361] [621] less they are included in the same activity. Only in the village camp of the Mbuti, usually at the edge of the plantation, do they form a society, but the interpersonal relationships observable even in a village camp bear little resemblance to relationships in the more strictly village context.

P 829 648 571 The situation becomes more understandable in light of the expressed Mbuti attitude to their own place in the village world. They refer to the village as being a place for good hunting and good eating. Hunting requires cunning, and particularly when dealing with a "tricky" animal such as the villager, say the Mbuti. The word for "trickery" means more than "clever," it has connotations of supernatural power. So the Mbuti, when hunting in the village, use appropriate tactics, just as they do in the forest. Carrying wood and

P [224] fetching water, building houses and pounding manioc, are all part of those tactics, and may perhaps be likened to the net with which the Mbuti trap the forest animals.

This Mbuti attitude to the relationship not only fits with the theory that there is, in effect, no necessary economic interdependence, but it also fits well with the suggestion of *apparent* structural incompatibility. Mbuti talk of "eating" the villagers, and indeed the villagers also talk, with some asperity, of being eaten. In Mbuti thought, however, it is rather more literal than it may seem, for the

P [825] villagers are not only referred to as animals, a common term of abuse, but they are considered as animals. And when one eats an animal one merely consumes its substance, one does not thereby assume its form or its pattern of behavior.

C 439 648 121 Even supposing that there was a necessary economic interdependence, the daily life of the village in no way reveals any sense of economic urgency. Even in times of crisis, such as the cotton harvest, powerful chiefs like Kachui may evidently find themselves deserted by the Mbuti and forced to make out on their own. But if there were a true economic dependence, then there would have to be a workable economic system, with an associated system of social control; and

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

same age group, and on maturity and marriage the old nuclear family 59
sometimes reaffirms itself as an extended family. The old parents may build a separate hut adjoining the huts of their married children, or even live in the hut of one of their offspring, who will probably build an extension for the purpose. But during adolescence children may well be separated from their biological parents by both time and space. Similarly in adulthood there is not infrequently friction between brothers, sometimes leading to fission within the band.

Finally, in connection with the importance of age as a structural 611
principle, it should be pointed out that the lack of a unilineal sys- 769
tem of descent among the Mbuti is associated with a lack of any 181
developed form of ancestor worship. Practices associated with death will be dealt with more fully later; here it need only be said that far from remembering the dead by word or action, the main objective seems to be to forget them. They may never be referred to again, particularly by name, and there is no memorial maintained in their honor, no marked or tended grave site. However, they are by the same token not feared, and insofar as they are remembered at all they are remembered with affection. The concern of the Mbuti is almost ex-
clusively with the present. This is not to say that they deny a past or [829]
a future, either in this life or the next; it is merely to say that they believe that by a correct fulfillment of the present, the past and the future will take care of themselves. This correlates with the age- [561]
group system and with the dominance and prestige of the two middle groups, the youths and the hunters, for in their hands lies the fulfillment of the present.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 181]

CHAPTER 11

Government: Internal

INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

Before attempting to understand the over-all system of government 621
in Mbuti society, it is necessary to distinguish between different fields 121
of authority, for each field of activity has its own leaders, drawn from 571
a particular segment of the community. It is in this way that authority 554
is dispersed throughout the band; every adult is accorded special respect in one field or another, but none can claim respect in all fields. Individual authority is unthinkable, and not only are there no chiefs [622]
or headmen in Mbuti society; there are not even any councils of [623]
elders or any ritual specialists such as prophets or diviners. Such [791]
adults as have respect in any particular field at any particular moment do not even have any authority; they can merely claim to be heard. Their decision is likely to be given general assent and, as in economic matters, that decision is then said to be "good," and "pleasing" to the forest. The forest personified as a benevolent divinity remains 778
as the only recognized authority, one which sometimes expresses its 571
feelings with unmistakable clarity; an excessive storm, falling trees, 787
poor hunting and ill health may all be taken as signs of displeasure, while good weather and good health and good hunting are indications that all is well. But often the forest remains silent. Then the Mbuti have to sound its feelings out through discussion. Dreams may be taken into account, but there is no question of waiting for visible signs of the forest's pleasure. The delegation of authority is 778
clear; the decision of the whole band, the very fact of unanimity, 571
is sufficient sign of the favor of the forest. There is always diversity [829]
of opinion, freely expressed, but prolonged disagreement is considered as "noise," and offensive to the forest. Unanimity, therefore, is [192]
a powerful and positive value, equated with the opposite to noise—quiet, or *ekimi*.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

their honey trees, "you in this direction, you in that." But Moké did an unusual thing. He said it was all right for the camp to split, but it would displease the forest if it split badly, and it *was* splitting badly (*"apa ndaso aké sinana"*). Tungana had gone to the village; Masisi, siding with Tungana but not wanting to join him, was planning to go east, Ekianga to the north; Cephu was going to leave the territory altogether; and Manyalibo's head "walked without sense" (said in KiNgwana: *"kichwa yaké a na tembela wazi-wazi"*) and he didn't know where he was going. This was all bad. For this was one camp, it was Kolongo's.

Kolongo had been dead some three years, and the names of the dead are rarely mentioned. The whole camp fell silent, and very quietly Moké recounted the history of the friendship between Kolongo and Njobo, and how they used to hunt together and kill lots of elephant and catch lots of antelope and how they always had full stomachs. "Kolongo never allowed noise, Njobo never allowed noise. Now there is nothing but noise, and we are hungry. Kolongo is dead, but that person there, Ekianga [Kolongo's younger brother] that person is now Kolongo. Njobo is not here, but that person and that person [Manyalibo and Masisi were indicated but not named] are Njobo. Let us all go our own ways and get lots of honey and sing honey songs and dance honey dances, then come back to one camp as before and hunt again."

The immediate bickering was stopped, and everyone agreed loudly that Moké was indeed right. But as it turned out Manyalibo made Moké's speech an excuse for siding with Ekianga in a hunting-honey camp, and a deep rift opened up between the hitherto inseparable cousins, Manyalibo and Masisi. Moké threw his lot in with Ekianga, in an effort to dissuade them from any grosser sacrilege, with exhortations to Masisi to make a good camp and gather lots of honey. Ekianga's eldest sister, her daughter, and Njobo's wife and some of his nephews and nieces joined Masisi, as did a young married nephew of Cephu, Kelemoké. Others joined Tungana, who prudently moved close to the village, where he could, by virtue of his age, claim gifts of food from all the sections and from his village *kpara*.

5. During the honey season, with the band divided into four sections, Masisi and Manyalibo were again at odds. Manyalibo, with Ekianga and Moké and old Tungana, among others, formed a powerful section at the far northern extreme of the territory, and offended Masisi's much smaller section by continuing to hunt. Masisi argued

 836

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582]
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. [829] •
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

for there are other mechanisms to deal with the situations with which witchcraft, in village life, deals. As indicated, it may play a minor and supplementary role in the dispersal of blame in a dispute, but completely without involving any belief in the actual presence of witchcraft substance. It is highly significant that the concept of supernatural power in this form is utterly foreign to the Mbuti, and this places them in a somewhat disadvantageous position when brought face to face with the village notion of sorcery, and the practice of cursing.

SORCERY

While the Mbuti make limited use of village concepts of magic and witchcraft for their own practical ends, they make no such use of sorcery, having for it a complete abhorrence. The villagers themselves never admit to being sorcerers, for sorcery is by definition antisocial and evil, but they may use the threat of sorcery (pp. 60–62) and claim to have employed a sorcerer against the Mbuti. More likely still, they may seek the aid of the local doctor to effect a curse against the Mbuti for nonfulfillment of their side of a bargain.

From the village point of view there is a world of difference between a sorcerer's curse and a doctor's curse, but from the Mbuti point of view they are one and the same thing. The theoretical and institutional aspects of magic and witchcraft the Mbuti can appreciate and turn to their advantage. Confronted with sorcery they have no recourse but flight. Flight in itself is significant, for it is flight away from the village into the forest or, if already in the forest, then it is flight further into the forest. On the whole it is a firm belief that sorcery is ineffective outside the village, but sometimes circumstances (such as poison) combine to indicate otherwise, and then it becomes a question of proximity to the village. Once again, however, as with magic, we find the Mbuti regarding the forest as a place of refuge, a place where they are sure of protection.

Against witchcraft, all the Mbuti have to do is to acknowledge being witches and go through the necessary purifications; the belief never touches them. Against sorcery, apart from flight, they have no means of defense for there is no counterpart in their experience. Sorcery implies the use of supernatural powers to effect harm on someone. Two concepts are involved that are foreign to the Mbuti: one is that a supernatural power can be used for anything but the social good, and the second is that anyone could wish, anonymously as it

were, harm upon another. Masisi put it as well as it could be put when discussing Aberi's death (pp. 61–62), allegedly due to an Ngwana's use of sorcery. The circumstances were such—the three healthy "accused" all dying within such a short space of time following the curse—that there was a general discussion of village sorcery. There was disagreement of opinion as to whether or not it involved supernatural power, as claimed by the villagers. Most Mbuti stated bluntly that this was impossible, for such power was necessarily good. They held that the deaths had all been caused by poison. Others were not so sure. But the crux of the discussion was that whether caused by supernatural power or by poison, the action was not that of a man. Masisi said, "If you have a quarrel with a man you hit him with a wooden club, and he sees who hit him. You do not go and hide yourself and kill him with your thoughts."

While the Mbuti seek to remove themselves as far as possible from sorcery, feeling as though they were contaminated by it, their attitude to other associated supernatural beliefs of the villagers is quite different, being determined by different experience. A villager who has cursed one man may claim that the sickness of that man's distant cousin is a result of his curse, or that the falling of a tree that nearly killed the man's child was equally a result of the curse. These are not allegations that can be proved or disproved, and the Mbuti consequently have a somewhat ambivalent attitude toward sorcery; their disbelief is tinged, at least, by a reluctant suspicion.

However, the villagers also believe that there exist various malevolent spirits, sometimes spirits of sorcerers, and that these spirits have to be avoided, for there is no sure way of placating or propitiating them. Their abode is the forest, which to the villagers is the abode of all evil. Their powers are phenomenal and almost insuperable, avoidance being the only sure safeguard, ritual propitiation being enough to prevent the spirits from entering the village. Thus the forest is a place to be avoided on account of the spirits.

The Mbuti see two things very clearly. One is that such spirits simply do not exist in their forest, and the other is that this particular village belief deserves to be maintained for as long as it is effective in keeping villagers out of the forest. Consequently the Mbuti, who are great storytellers at all times, delight in stories—among themselves and in front of villagers—that enumerate the powers and horrors of such evil forest spirits. Sometimes the stories are of village origin, embellished by Mbuti imagination; sometimes they are pure

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

539 186 825 245 The elephants came. They began to kill all the bananas. They began to completely kill the plantation. The youths ran to the old man and said, "Oh, Father, the elephants have come again and are killing our plantation." [The old man said], "Good, I shall go and chat with them. All of you stay here, completely quiet."

The old man went to the plantation. He cried and cried. He threw himself on the ground. The elephants looked at him and said, "What thing is this? The youths have not come to chase us away, only an old Mbuti and he just cries. It is good, we shall eat quietly."

They ate many bananas, and the youths remained completely quiet in the camp. The old man cried greatly, "Oh, my children, all are dead. Oh, my children, where are they?"

The elephants heard, and said to the old man, "Why are you crying like that? And where are the youths? We shall eat up all the plantation." The old man replied, "Eat, eat it all. My children are all dead." And he continued crying.

539 186 825 245 776 The elephants said, "But you have many children. How did they die?" The old man said, "It was an evil spirit, very evil indeed. He walked with two spears.[2] He was very fat, like you. Every day I sent someone to cut bananas and the evil spirit ate him. Now he has eaten all my children. He said it was his plantation and that he would kill everyone who came here. Oh, my children have all died emptily. Why did the evil spirit not bother some other plantation, why did he curse mine?" He cried greatly and he left.

The elephants said, "Ha! If a spirit that bad has cursed this plantation, we should go somewhere else. Let us go quickly, before he kills us!"

Because elephants are like people of the village, and they are afraid of evil spirits. But they are afraid emptily. They went far. The old man called all his children and said, "Now the elephants will not come back. They think this is a place full of bad spirits. Thus we shall remain quiet. It is our plantation. Nobody else will bother us."

539 186 829 Although the scene is the plantation, thus asserting their claim to the plantations of the villagers, the Mbuti plainly are really referring

[765] [2] Evidently a feature that to the Mbuti conveys a real fear of or respect for the supernatural, for in the morning rampages of the *molimo*, in its role as judge and when seeking Mbuti who are committing the crime of sleeping during the singing, the hunter acting the part carries a spear under each arm. See also in the second legend cited, where a spirit wanders through the night with two firebrands, which is the way in which the entrance of the *molimo* trumpet into the camp is often marked.

2: Turnbull E>6 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

to their forest sanctuary, and describing their tactics for keeping it free of bothersome, elephant-like villagers. Hunting is not mentioned; the two spears (and in the next legend the two firebrands) are uniquely related to the *molimo*, which, as is seen in the next chapter, offers major roles to the elders and the youths; precise age levels are specified in this legend. Thus the defense of the forest is considered as part of the role of the *molimo*. There is significantly no talk of a resort to magic or witchcraft or sorcery, and the mention of the evil spirits is accompanied by no belief in them.

In the second legend, however, the first part is a very straight description of exactly how an Mbuti might cheat a villager simply by concealing a portion of his honey, whereas the second part describes how the Mbuti is himself cheated. The second part alone could be taken as another way in which Mbuti explain to villagers why they have no meat or honey for them (see a third legend at the end of this chapter for such an example), but in this juxtaposition seems to indicate a certain belief that the Mbuti themselves might be cheated in this way.

LEGEND OF DOUBLE TRICKERY

I went to the forest to collect honey. I went, I went, I went. I went very far, beyond the big river [an indication of trespass, perhaps, making it a situation displeasing to the forest; hence the ultimate defeat of the Mbuti?]. I heard the sound of bees. Way up high I saw the place of the honey. I said, "Ha! Nobody has enclosed this tree with a vine; it is my tree, it is my honey."

I sharpened my ax, very sharp indeed. I cut a vine, I fanned up my fire and put the fire [smoking embers] in my basket. I began to climb. I climbed, I climbed, I climbed. The honey was very high up, it was real honey, not *apuma* [a special fermented honey]. I reached it. I fastened the vine and I sat. I put the fire [in a leaf cone] into the hole and I blew. Much smoke came and the bees ran away. I chopped, I chopped, I chopped. While I was cutting I heard someone walking below. "Ah! Who is walking below me? It is my master [*kpara*]. He heard me cutting [the adverse aspect of noise] and followed me."

I began to sing. I sang loudly. He called to me, but I pretended that I did not hear him. I sang and I chopped. I sang, "Ah! I am chopping out honey to give to my *kpara!*" And slowly I chopped out the honey. I got a lot of it. But I only put part of it in my basket. The

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and because she was my grandmother I could not strike her or stop her, and she ran off down the trail. 539 776

"As she was running she changed into a spirit again so that she could run faster, and as soon as my grandmother was a spirit once more I could fight, so I fought and fought, and the spirit nearly killed me, and he went off in the manner of spirits and left me with nothing, not even my basket.

"When I came to the village I was crying because I had nothing to offer my master, and when my master asked me what was wrong I told him this story. He was terribly sorry because he knew what dreadful lives we Mbuti lead, surrounded by all these bad spirits. He said if it was not for the spirits he would come into the forest and hunt himself, but everyone knows how dangerous the spirits are to villagers. Then I asked him if I could have some rice, as I had lost all my own food as well as his. He said, 'Of course, my poor Mbuti. You have tried to help your master, and you can't help it if you are just an Mbuti and have to live among all those dreadful spirits.' 539 776 186 571 [262]

"So he gave me the rice and plantains and I came away happy. How kind the villagers are to their 'poor Mbuti'!"

Such stories are legion, being told by the Mbuti almost every time they are questioned by the villagers as to why they have brought no meat. They are equally, if not even more frequently, told, however, in the forest hunting camps, and are part of the constant effort of the Mbuti to affirm at all times the distinction between the two worlds, the forest and the village. Magic, witchcraft, sorcery and the belief in forest spirits are all turned to the same effect, among others, and combine to keep the worlds apart not only in theory but also in practice. 538 186 829

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

"to call the bees" (in the sense of attracting their attention, not of summoning them). The belief is that these whistles will halt the game or the bees, so that they may be found more easily.

All such whistling, whether by lip or by *piki*, is done by men. Women rarely whistle, though they may do so to the same end as the men. If they do, it is considered all the more *mota*.

It could easily be explained by the Mbuti that the sound itself paralyzes the animals or the bees, and has this direct effect (and could so be more properly called magical), but they deny this strongly and say that the forest hears the *piki* and leads them to the bees or the game (or alternatively that the forest holds the bees and the game still for its children to find them).

In ordinary conversation, sounds are widely used to convey different ideas, a snap of the fingers indicating that the action being described was done suddenly, a high-pitched, drawn-out exhalation indicating it was done slowly. Wherever possible, the narrative is illustrated by imitations of the sound of the action described. Vowel sounds, unformed into words, are used in conversation similarly to heighten ideas, convey added emotion, to supply an element that would otherwise be missing and which is plainly of great importance to the Mbuti. For the forest is nearly always full of sound, and the Mbuti refer to this constant background by saying "the forest is talking" (*ndura a lufu*). The Mbuti listen, and interpret, and make use of what they hear. If the forest stops "talking," then it is a sign that something is very wrong and alerts the Mbuti to imminent danger.

It is not surprising, then, that sound so carefully controlled as song should be considered as *mota nengo, mota ngbekbekbei*, the "strongest" possible kind of sound, activated by the breath that is so mysteriously connected with *pepo*. Song is used to communicate with the forest, and it is significant that the emphasis is on the actual sound, not on the words. Frequently the mere vowel sounds are used, sometimes imitative of animals, birds or bees but more often simply to suit the melodic line of the song. When words are used they are most often trivial, and may be spontaneous and highly sketchy references to one or another event of the day. That the song is directed at the forest, and intended to awaken the forest, is most clearly seen in the *molimo* festivals, which are the Mbuti reaction to crisis. The *molimo* is named for the festival, for the society that performs the festival, and for the central and solitary piece of paraphernalia, the trumpet that echoes the song of the Mbuti on into the depths of the forest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

601 Another important aspect of the terminology is that it does not
602 differentiate between cognates and affines, and is used to include all, without any distinction of this kind. In an Mbuti hunting band, a hunter may well have a uterine brother hunting to one side of him and his uterine sister's husband to the other side. He depends on each equally for both success and for safety, and any preferential behavior, such as might be signified in another form of terminology,
[621] must be avoided. To distinguish between cognates and affines in the daily hunting and camp life of the Mbuti, as to distinguish between matrikin and patrikin, or even between kith and kin, on any grounds except age and locality, is not only needless, it is destructive of the sense of unity that is vital to the close cooperative nature of Mbuti economic and political life.

601 Mbuti personal terminology, as in the more conventional kinship
602 systems, equally reflects interpersonal bonds, then, but they clearly
571 cut across all strictly kinship considerations. This can to some extent
621 be construed as a denial of kinship ties, and it certainly implies that such ties do not form the basis of social organization in the band.
[648] But it is better expressed as a lack of concern for kinship that, whatever its origins, is particularly well suited to one of the band's major objectives, the preservation of the greatest possible political distance
[182] between itself and the village. It will be readily seen that whereas lineage considerations would divide the Mbuti, the generational system, if considered vertically, effects the widest possible classificatory unity from which the villagers are absolutely excluded. But for the moment to keep to the forest context, the same unity is in perfect consonance with the nonlineal nature of the band, the unity of which any lineal system would destroy. Here we have to refer to one other usage of the same personal terminology; namely, when the Mbuti refer to themselves as *bamiki ba ndura*, the children of the forest.
[778] This, together with their habitual reference to the forest as mother
[829] and father, extends the nuclear-family model to incorporate the larger

601 *père, père des pères; ou bien on se sert de termes qui remontent à certaines représenta-*
152 *tions mythiques, et dont le nombre est très élevé.*" ("Names attributed to the Godhead
778 fall into two categories. Either one simply invokes the name *afa*, *bapapa* or *odu* . . . father, grandfather, or father of fathers . . . or else one uses terms that derive from mythological beings, of which there are a very great number.")

This indicates the same filial attitude to the forest that I found among the net-hunters. Among the archers, I myself most frequently heard *afa*, used with the same degree of affection as *ema* or *eba*. However, among the archers I equally often heard the forest (God) addressed as *ema* (mother), rarely heard *bapapa*, and never *odu*. My participation in the religious life of archer bands, however, was limited.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

group—be it the sub-band, the band, or even the total Mbuti population—as a politico-economic unity. The situation is somewhat analogous to the more common lineal patterns, where a people see their ultimate unity in descent from a common ancestor; the Mbuti find their unity in their common dependence upon the forest.

Taking care not to become involved in issues of causality, we can now see the structural implications of this lack of concern with actual kinship, for it alone makes possible not only the nonlineal nature of the band but the fluidity of its composition. But here we have to introduce another factor, the absence of which would lead to the rapid disintegration of the corporate nature of the band. In the absence of the continuity provided by any kinship system, particularly under the condition of flux we have described for this Mbuti band, continuity and corporateness are seen in terms of territory. We have pointed out that the band can be defined only in terms of territory, the individuals forming that band changing from month to month; perhaps even this is implied in the personal terminology which, as seen, differentiates the sexes only at the parental level in terms of the family hearth—the most basic territorial unit of all.

The system also indicates a lack of concern with problems of superordination and subordination. Even problems are resolved in the forest context by the use of relative age. Their resolution is only truly difficult in one vital context, once again the forest-village relationship. It is consistent with the essentially egalitarian nature of Mbuti social behavior, and it successfully avoids lending any support to the assumption of individual authority on grounds of lineal seniority, which authority would again destroy the essential cooperative unity of the band.

The non-lineal nature of the band itself calls for some explanation, and now we are in a better position to understand it, for we can see clear structural elements that are only obscured when seeking to find principles of band organization in terms of kinship. The terminological system reflects as neatly as could any diagram the essential principle of age. This is the one factor it emphasizes above all others, except the common Mbuti unity as *bamiki ba ndura* (children of the forest). We have seen throughout our description of Mbuti forest life how activity and responsibility are regulated according to age level, and the terminology clearly indicates where one's loyalties lie. Such loyalties are entirely incompatible in so small a cooperative society with

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

in their mouths, or hold them in their hands. Burning coals are put 372
in the mouth of the trumpet. When the trumpet enters the camp at 765
night it is preceded by a youth carrying burning embers which he waves in the air and touches to the ground to leave a trail of glowing cinders, the "footsteps" of the *molimo*. And of course the *molimo* fire is the object of attention of the old lady and her attendant. The final extinction of the fire is the signal for the return of the *molimo* to the forest, and the end of the festival.

The festival emphasizes and reaffirms everything of importance in 765
the life of the Mbuti. And perhaps one of the most important things 621
it emphasizes is accompanied by the least ritual—the closing of the 182
path leading to the village. To the same end, but more dramatic, is 186
the way in which a *molimo* festival will come to a complete halt if a 829 •
villager comes to the camp. For the *molimo* not only reaffirms the unity of the band; it reaffirms the unity of the Mbuti in opposition to the village. It is essentially a "matter of the forest," and the entire system that it upholds operates only in relation to the forest.

In the same way that a solitary villager can transform a forest camp into a village camp, just by his presence, so is any contact between the two worlds, except one of opposition, impossible. The system that the *molimo* recreates in the forest, the very life of the Mbuti that in itself is a ritual of pleasing the forest, cannot persist in the village. The ritual closing of the path is clearly symbolic of the Mbuti [177]*
concern to keep the village out of the forest, to keep the two worlds apart. When they, as individuals or as a band, leave the forest and visit the village, they do precisely that—they leave the forest. It is this opposition, which is so sharply defined in the *molimo*, that is the basis of the Mbuti relationship with the villagers.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife, from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

Since I had been with them before, the group had changed slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

763 atmosphere was so tense I wondered if there was at last going to be
761 a real accusation of witchcraft, though from what I had seen the Pygmies had no great belief in such things. But Moke's first words put me at ease. Choking back a little sob, he managed to say in a matter-of-fact way, "She died well."

There was a general nodding of heads. Manyalibo, who was a nephew of Balekimito's, said in his gruff way that everyone should be happy that she had lived so long, happy that she had died so well, and that all this wailing should stop at once. He added that the death was a "big thing," and that it was a "matter for the forest."
[765] There was a silence, and, looking around to make sure that there were no women about, Manyalibo announced, "I shall call out my molimo, and we will feast not for a week but for a month, or two months, or even three; we shall feast the molimo and make the forest happy."

763 Njobo, the great elephant hunter, had the final say. He stirred
[555] the fire idly with a stick, sending showers of sparks and ashes up
[829] into the warm air. "We have been in the village too long," he said.
[186] "We should have gone back to the forest before; that is where we
[768] belong. Now we must go back, far away from the village and from the people of the village. It is a bad place."

He said that a few would stay behind to finish the work on my house, but that the rest of us should gather together all the food we could and be ready to move within a couple of days. The next day we would put Balekimito in the ground, and maybe the day after that we would leave.

At this everyone cheered up visibly and began criticizing the women and children who were still pouring in and out of Ekianga's house, beating themselves and crying. Masisi said crossly that they
[152] would never behave this way if they were in the forest, and as he
[828] talked he raised his voice until he worked himself into a real temper. He stalked out of the veranda and down to the far end of the little

THE CRIME OF CEPHU

he caught the first of the animals fleeing from the beaters, but he had not been able to retreat before he was discovered.

I had never heard of this happening before, and it was obviously a serious offense. In a small and tightly knit hunting band, survival can be achieved only by the closest co-operation and by an elaborate system of reciprocal obligations which insures that everyone has some share in the day's catch. Some days one gets more than others, but nobody ever goes without. There is, as often as not, a great deal of squabbling over the division of the game, but that is expected, and nobody tries to take what is not his due.

Cephu tried very weakly to say that he had lost touch with the others and was still waiting when he heard the beating begin. It was only then that he had set up his net, where he was. Knowing that nobody believed him, he added that in any case he felt he deserved a better place in the line of nets. After all, was he not an important man, a chief, in fact, of his own band? Manyalibo tugged at Ekianga to sit down, and sitting down himself he said there was obviously no use prolonging the discussion. Cephu was a big chief, and a chief was a villager, for the BaMbuti never have chiefs. And Cephu had his own band, of which he was chief, so let him go with it and hunt elsewhere and be a chief elsewhere. Manyalibo ended a very eloquent speech with *"Pisa me taba"* ("Pass me the tobacco").

Cephu knew he was defeated and humiliated. Alone, his band of four or five families was too small to make an efficient hunting unit. He apologized profusely, reiterated that he really did not know he had set up his net in front of the others, and said that in any case he would hand over all the meat. This settled the matter, and accompanied by most of the group he returned to his little camp and brusquely ordered his wife to hand over the spoils. She had little chance to refuse, as hands were already reaching into her basket and under the leaves of the roof where she had hidden some liver in anticipation of just such a contingency. Even her cooking pot was

224 emptied. Then each of the other huts was searched and all the meat
156 taken. Cephu's family protested loudly and Cephu tried hard to
558 cry, but this time it was forced and everyone laughed at him. He
626 clutched his stomach and said he would die; die because he was hungry and his brothers had taken away all his food; die because he was not respected.

765 The kumamolimo was festive once again, and the camp seemed
621 restored to good spirits. An hour later, when it was dark and fires
264 were flickering outside every hut, there was a great blaze at the central hearth and the men talked about the morrow's hunt. From
[201] Cephu's camp came the sound of the old man, still trying hard to cry, moaning about his unfortunate situation, making noises that were meant to indicate hunger. From our own camp came the jeers of women, ridiculing him and imitating his moans.

[602] When Masisi had finished his meal he took a pot full of meat with mushroom sauce, cooked by his wife, and quietly slipped away into the shadows in the direction of his unhappy kinsman. The moaning stopped, and when the evening molimo singing was at its height
[516] I saw Cephu in our midst. Like most of us he was sitting on the
[829] ground, in the manner of an animal. But he was singing, and that meant that he was just as much a BaMbuti as anyone else.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

The women can throw in their opinions, particularly if they know 621 that the area the men have selected is barren of vegetable foods. But 626 578 the men usually know this anyway.

If the question is one of marriage, and a father announces that he 626 does not like the girl his son has chosen, his son can call on all his 593 friends to help him. If he is strong and holds out, the whole group 584 will be assembled to discuss the case. If they agree with the father, then either the boy has to give up his talk of matrimony or else make up his mind to marry the girl anyway. In the latter case he would probably go and live with her hunting group. But it is seldom that things come to such a pass.

In fact, Pygmies dislike and avoid personal authority, though they 626 are by no means devoid of a sense of responsibility. It is rather that 157 they think of responsibility as communal. If you ask a father, or a 181 husband, why he allows his son to flirt with a married girl, or his wife to flirt with other men, he will answer, "It is not my affair," and he is right. It is *their* affair, and the affair of the other men and women, and of their brothers and sisters. He will try to settle it himself, either by argument or by a good beating, but if this fails he brings everyone else into the dispute so that he is absolved of personal responsibility.

If you ask a Pygmy why his people have no chiefs, no lawgivers, 621 no councils, or no leaders, he will answer with misleading simplicity, 829 • "Because we are the people of the forest." The forest, the great pro- 778 vider, is the one standard by which all deeds and thoughts are judged; it is the chief, the lawgiver, the leader, and the final arbitrator.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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so far out into the forest. Everybody was unhappy, and we resumed our journey at a slower pace.

We were in an area where there were a number of streams, tributaries to three large rivers which had their source not far to the northeast, spreading out in different directions. There was a lot of heavy undergrowth and we had to follow trails made by antelope. Even the Pygmies had to bend almost double. Hari was leading, and Kenge shouted at him from behind that there was a much better and quicker way. Hari laughed at his cousin and said, jokingly, that Kenge was a white man's Pygmy, how could he know anything about the forest? Kenge made some uncomplimentary retort, and motioned for me to follow him. We ducked off to one side, and for a while the going was worse than ever. Very quickly the sounds of the other two were lost, and I had momentary doubts, for every now and again Kenge stopped to listen, peering this direction and that. After another couple of hours Kenge pointed ahead and I heard a new sound, a distant waterfall. *"Apa nde Kaweki,"* he said; "Kaweki's camp." Usually he would have said a good deal more, but I was glad to see that the long day's trek had left even Kenge breathless.

We came to the narrow but swift River Kare, and waded through it with caution. Kenge said it was a dangerous river, unexpectedly deep in places, and full of the small but vicious forest crocodile. It was here that Kolongo, Ekianga's older brother, had died two years ago. The waters swirled angrily; they were muddy and full of debris, the banks were slippery, and it was plain there must have been a heavy rainfall recently. On the far side the ground rose sharply before dipping down to the valley where the Itoro River flowed with a grandeur only found with forest rivers. The undergrowth disappeared, and once again we were in one of those sylvan glades where every leaf seemed to tremble a welcome. It was warm and friendly, and as we began to descend the rumble of the waterfall swelled into a roar.

Kenge made his way to the edge of the Itoro, just below the falls;

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 583 829 177 C 583 462 Sometimes Pygmies talked about the system of bride-wealth used by the villagers, and sometimes they wished that they could use the same system. But for the villager the woman is a laborer in the fields who can cultivate crops that can be sold for cash. From the village groom's point of view it is important to make a satisfactory payment as it not only enhances his prestige but also gives him the assurance that his in-laws will be on his side, not wanting to have to return so much wealth should their daughter change her mind. For the Pygmies this is unworkable. To them a woman is more than a mere producer of wealth; she is an essential partner in the economy. Without a wife a man can not hunt; he has no hearth; he has nobody to build his house, gather fruits and vegetables and cook for him. So a group that loses a woman looks for a woman in return. The Pygmies extend the term "brother" or "sister" so that it can be applied to almost anyone of the same age group, however distantly related, and this means it is seldom impossible to find someone to exchange, and someone who is willing. But sometimes a little coercion is needed. So it was with my friend Kenge.

P 583 462 [581] P [601] [561]

P 583 177 186 C 563 583 Kenge often laughed at the villagers, and at the way they sponsor Pygmy weddings, even paying bride-wealth to each other—the "owner" of the groom to the "owner" of the bride. He found it particularly funny when such a marriage broke up, because the two Pygmies considered it a mere flirtation, and the villagers then had to fight over the necessary restitution of wealth. But he wished he had been able to use the system to get himself a wife.

P 581 593 He was deeply in love with a particularly attractive young girl named Maliamo and badly wanted to marry her. He had three sisters, but one was married to Masimongo, one was still too young, and the third was unwilling. Yambabo, the unwilling one, was a very determined girl, as stubborn as Kenge himself. She was quite fond of Maliamo's brother, a slim, light-skinned youth called Taphu. But nothing in the world would make her admit it once she saw that Kenge wanted to use her in order to get Maliamo.

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 622 574 186 [829]

to go into the forest to visit some of his Pygmies and had come to pay our respects first. He said brusquely that he did not know where any Pygmies were to be found. Then he looked at Kenge and asked him if it was usual for a Pygmy to sit beside a white man. Kenge countered by asking if it was usual for a big chief to keep a white man waiting while he slept, and to leave him sitting on a log without so much as a glass of water to drink or to wash with. At that the other villagers began joining in, and feeling more than uncomfortable at being made the center of a fight between them and Kenge, I told Lupao that we were very tired, and asked if it would be all right for us to stay the night in his village. Lupao, who by then was engrossed with a steaming bowl of chicken soup, said he supposed so, and indicated with a nod of his head for his son to go and find us a place to sleep.

C 622 574 186 P 177 186 829

I made a few more attempts at polite conversation but did not get so much as a look in response. Everyone was silent, staring either at us or up at the smoky roof above us. It had been quite dark for some time, and after waiting to see if the son was going to do anything about sleeping quarters, I got up and said loudly to Kenge that I was going to sleep in the car and asked if he was going to do the same. He replied that he would sleep outside to guard me from the thieves and murderers that made up the entire population of the village. This was putting it a little more strongly than I had intended, and we had now given real cause for offense. As we left there was a stony silence. Lupao refused to look up and allow me to take my leave of him. I can hardly blame him, but the tradition of hospitality among most African villagers is so strong that one comes to accept it and to expect it, and the behavior of the BaLese was very unusual.

When Lupao saw that we were really leaving in such an unceremonious huff, he called his son, who had remained in the baraza all the time, and sent him running after us to tell us that a house would

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

be ready soon. Kenge replied that the car was clean, which was a little too subtle for the young man. He returned half an hour later with some food, and this time Kenge was more direct. He lowered the window of the car enough to say, "We people of the forest don't eat excrement!" and then hurriedly wound it up. We passed an uneasy night, and in the first glimmer of morning, without as much as looking for a stream to wash in, we left. Nobody even came to watch us go.

We were so exhausted that we decided to call on the Catholic mission at Nduye and at least get cleaned up. We drove through the little village, and on the outskirts turned onto a steep stone track that wound up the hillside. It climbed erratically past a temporary church, near which rough-hewn stones were being assembled for the building of a more permanent structure, and onto a ledge just wide enough to hold the long, low mission house and a neat terrace in front, where the ground dropped away sharply.

The welcome we got there was very different. A huge, bearded figure in white robes came striding up the hill after us, shouting instructions in KiNgwana to cook another half dozen eggs. To us he said, "You are late for breakfast." And after a second look, "You need hot baths."

Father Longo would not hear of our going anywhere else and insisted that we stay for at least a week, a month if we liked. There was plenty of work we could do and we looked as though we needed to go to church. Then he asked me if we were Catholics. When I replied that I was a not very good Protestant and that Kenge was a practicing heathen, he roared with laughter and said that at least Kenge didn't know what a mistake he had made. His good humor put Kenge immediately at ease, and there was only a momentary flicker of doubt when Father Longo called for his Lese catechist to show Kenge where he could wash, eat and sleep. Shortly afterward I heard him in the distance, telling his new companions in his loudest

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impunity gives severe stomach disorder to the Pygmy, who is used to the fresh clean water of forest streams. Flies and mosquitoes carry germs unknown to him in his natural home. But above all, his entire
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code of behavior and thought is geared to his nomadic forest life: to bring him to a settled life in a village is to ask him overnight to abandon one way of life, a way he has lived for thousands of years, and adopt another. Where the Pygmies did make the attempt there was complete moral as well as physical disintegration. Not long ago a Belgian friend from the Congo told me that the day before he had left, on one small "model plantation" where the Pygmies were being liberated, twenty-nine had died in one day from sunstroke.

I spoke about the plan to many Pygmies, and when Kenge got back to Epulu he talked as much about it as about anything else that he had seen on his journey to the outside world. Old Moke summed
[829]
up the attitude that I had found everywhere. "The forest is our home; when we leave the forest, or when the forest dies, we shall die. We are the people of the forest."

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 · FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

361 camp to hear his stories. But none of his stories fascinated the Pyg-
361 mies as much as those of the model Pygmy villages we had passed
177 on our way home. He was made to repeat these accounts over and over again, giving every detail. While the younger men and women laughed until they could laugh no more at Kenge's description of the distribution of beans for planting, and how most of them ended up in the cooking pot, the older people were less amused. "But are they actually living in those villages?" they asked. And when Kenge answered that some of them were, the next question was "What if there is no game nearby?" Kenge could only tell them what the administrator had said: "You are welcome to hunt so long as you continue to look after the plantations." Everyone knew that to be impossible. Hunting is a full-time occupation, and it could lead a group away for months on end. It called for the co-operation of men, women and children. Who was to stay to look after the fields?

Other questions brought equally unsatisfactory answers, even so far as the younger people were concerned. There were no trees in the "model" villages—every last one had been cut down, exposing the huts to the full heat of the sun. The Pygmies were to be supplied with free seeds to plant, but they would be expected to produce a definite yield, and they knew that villagers who failed to come up to the mark were fined, and if they were unable to pay their fines they
[312] went to jail. Every village had been placed near a supply of fresh water, tested by the administrator himself (by looking at it—he was horrified when I drank some). But the Pygmies knew that however clean it might be to start with, it would soon be polluted; and in any case there was no guarantee that it would continue throughout the year.

361 Far from being "liberated" from the villagers, the Pygmies felt
• 829 that in these model plantations they would be in greater danger than
177 ever. In the forest they knew that they were safe, because the forest was theirs, but once out in the open they were subject to all the evil

influences of the villagers, particularly witchcraft. The theory was that they would be independent because they would no longer have to rely on the villagers for plantains, rice, peanuts, or other village foods. In point of fact the only thing for which the Pygmies might really be considered to depend on their neighbors was metal for their knife and spear blades. And this was the one thing the model plan for liberation did not teach them to produce or work for themselves.

It may have been coincidence, or it may have been the result of all this talk of Pygmy villages and of the way that elsewhere the forest was being cut down by modern machinery to build new roads, to open up new mines, or to cultivate more coffee, but within a few days what had been a happy-go-lucky camp became silent and depressed. The unhappy Pygmies argued that the more the forest was cut down for roads and mines and foreign plantations, the more would have to be cut down to make more plantations to feed all the laborers. It was not a happy outlook for them. Then, as always happened when they were upset, they began to sing one evening. They sang and sang, and even those who had been sleeping came out to join in.

During a pause between songs, while everyone was silent, we heard quite distinctly the long-drawn-out whistling cry that the Pygmies say comes from the chameleon. There was a shout of delight, and the singing immediately started again, but this time to a quite different tempo. The rhythm was given out by the sharp clapping of two short sticks which Amabosu had quickly cut from a nearby tree. They rang clear and true. The cry of the chameleon and the use of the *ngbengbe* sticks meant only one thing—there was honey nearby. Within a few days there was not a Pygmy left in the village.

Of all the many foods in the forest, honey attracts the Pygmies the most strongly. At all times of the year game is to be caught, different kinds of mushrooms and fruits and nuts and berries are to be

[ARCHERS]

535 and old, men and women, is the dance, which is accompanied by music and song." Most of the instruments Schebesta (1941, 244–253) describes serve to accompany dance. He makes three classifications: sportive, mimetic, and erotic dances. The former are not mere exuberant acrobatics, but follow certain choreographic rules; he does not give the rules. The usual form of dance is circular, he says: an outer circle composed of women and an inner circle of men, with the drummer in the center. If there are only a few dancers, the men may dance solos, leaping one by one in toward the drummer, then back to their places in the still-moving circle.

[372] Schebesta also mentions the existence of fire dances, one of which he witnessed on the occasion of a birth in the camp.

535 Erotic dances generally involve two lines of
• 831 dancers, one line male, one female. Each woman comes out of the line in turn and makes an

[P. 188-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P 188-C]

obscene gesture to one of the men, returning to her place as the man follows her and makes a similar gesture. 535 [83]

Mimetic dances usually concern the hunt, says Schebesta.

Drama, chiefly in the form of mime, is sometimes associated with dance and sometimes separate. Schebesta mentions its importance and the ability of the Mbuti in this art, but gives no details. 536

From the material available it is impossible to gauge even the exact nature of these art forms among the Efe archers, let alone their functions in archer society, apart from their obvious recreational role, which seems to have been the only function assigned to them by Schebesta. 53

RELIGIOUS LIFE

Early sources offer only contradiction and confusion concerning the magico-religious system of the Mbuti. A few affirm that the Mbuti are ridden with superstition, but most report that they are without superstition and even without religion. 774 114

[NET HUNTERS]

Games and pastimes are the same as those 526
for the archers, with the addition of a form of [84]
spear practice. A large forest fruit is fixed to the end of a vine which is swung around in a circle. Men standing in a group surrounding the swinger throw their spears as the fruit comes past them, dashing in to retrieve the weapons that miss.

Legend telling, like dance and song, is an im- 538
portant medium of expression as well as recreation. Instrumental music among this group of 534
Mbuti is virtually nil. In a hunting camp a 533
lukembi (*sanza*) may be heard, a musical bow, and possibly, though rarely, a notched flute. If the camp is near a village the men may borrow or steal a drum for the dance; otherwise, they use sticks as clappers, either shaved at the end to give a flat sound, or left smooth to give a sharp, hollow sound. The women add to the rhythm with handclaps, and both sexes with stampings of the feet.

There are two kinds of secular dance, erotic 535
and imitative, as described by Schebesta. The [831]
third kind of dance described for the archers, [372]
[84]
[P 212-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C] sundown they return to their hut, which they 881 enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533] taught to the new initiates by the old woman in charge. The women of the camp sit outside and also sing, having armed themselves with whips made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to her lover, who may be of the same band but [613] must be of a different lineage. He must fight his way into the hut, through the women armed with whips and against the shower of missiles hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881 young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836 had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering his maiden. He remained with her all night. The next day he was bound with vine and kept a prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [831] (i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [613] try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [837] of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.227-C]

for the particularly long and intense singing at 575 533 that time. 765

I myself witnessed only one such meeting of 796 the *molimo*,[1] the occasion for which was not 575 clear and which took place down near the vil- 534 lage. One villager took part. The trumpet and 533 the performer, covered with a cloth, were car- 796 ried in from the forest on a crude litter and dis- [114] appeared behind one of the huts. As the playing and singing proceeded, the villager and one or two Mbuti danced around the camp, tearing leaves off the roofs of huts and placing them against the door of the hut behind which the trumpet was playing. There was much laughter, but everyone spoke in low tones. Finally, the player and trumpet were carried away as they arrived, and everyone went to bed.

The other meetings of the *molimo* that I have 765 witnessed were of the more serious kind, follow- 533 ing the general disruption in the district among villagers and Mbuti alike when Patrick Putnam died. At these meetings no drums were used, [534] even though they were sometimes available. But even at such meetings there was generally [535] a period, early in the night, during which the [831] men started singing a *molimo* song that mocked the womenfolk, accompanied by a mildly obscene dance around the fire, with much laugh-

the ground, and any who are timid or slow get whisked back into the air again as the sapling rebounds, and are much laughed at for their failure. 221 222 524

The tug-of-war separates the sexes, and although it is primarily an adult game, youths and children sometimes join in. However, it is likely to become rough, and youngsters are not encouraged. A man may, and sometimes does, pull on the side of the women, to make a better match, but he may also go to their side as if to help and then start pulling in the opposite direction. It is then up to the women to decide whether they are better off continuing to pull, or whether it is worth their while for two or three of them to attack the man. They themselves will sometimes leave their side and go to the men's side and simply try and pull them away from the vine rope. No restrictions were evident, and each contest continued until the complete collapse of one side or the other. If anything, among the Epulu net-hunters the women seemed to win more frequently. An immense amount of energy was dissipated in this way, yet one tug-of-war would follow another for sometimes as long as an hour. 221 222 524 562

The division of sexes visible in this contest, and the same implied symbolic conflict, was also visible in the *ekokomea* dance which I saw among the Epulu net-hunters during two honey seasons; but I have also seen the dance in the same band during the course of a *molimo* festival. I found it to be known among all other bands I visited, though I never actually saw it practiced among the archers. With these other bands it is said to be danced on occasions of great importance to the band, such occasions not being specified. 221 222 562 535 831

Ekokomea involves a reversal of the sexes, and everyone from the oldest to the youngest may take part. Usually the children follow the youths and adults and imitate the dance on their own. Women put heavy objects in the bark cloth between their legs and stride along in a way that emphasizes the swinging motion of their "genitalia." The men indicate their assumed female sex by performing divers actions typical only of women, often pretending to clean their private parts as women do. Both men and women, but mainly men, may take a leaf or a small strip of bark cloth or skin, make a slit in it, and proudly display it, occasionally putting a finger through the slit so as to leave the symbolism in no doubt.

The dance begins spontaneously, without preparation, with two or three individuals assuming the reversed roles and marching in line from hut to hut, singing, "*Ekokomes.*" No satisfactory translation

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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of the word was ever given to me; it simply refers to an elbow, a chicken or a fallen tree, according to pronunciation. It is pronounced all ways, and all forms of translation are given, stories being invented ad lib to explain the dance.

As people come out of their huts or leave their hearths to join in the line, the movements get more and more suggestive and rhythmic, and when the line is complete couples will break away and dance into the center and there imitate the act of copulation according to their reversed roles, while the others dance around, singing and laughing loudly. Each couple tries to outdo the others in exaggeration and suggestiveness, and just about every conceivable abnormal situation is imitated, dogs, chickens, children, even infants being dragged into the act if they are within reach.

The end of the dance is the usual near-hysterical laughter that is brought on by any form of exaggerated mime or storytelling, with the dancers rolling on the ground and clapping their hands to show their amusement. As soon as this has subsided the dance is likely to start all over again for a second or even a third time.

Ekokomea, however, is by no means danced every day, even during the honey season; more than once or twice a week would be rather frequent. It is similar during the *molimo*. So throughout the year the dance is not likely to take place in any one band more than a dozen times. This is one dance that I have seen danced both in the forest and in the village. It is never danced by the villagers, who regard it as a sign of Mbuti depravity, but who nonetheless watch it with the greatest pleasure. The older Mbuti say it would not be danced in the village, but even to them either its exact significance is not clear or else it is something they were unwilling to discuss.

Much more directly connected with the honey season is a mimetic dance in which the men enact the honey gatherers, the women the bees. The men form a line and dance around the camp as though going through the forest looking and listening for bees. Parallel to them, and sometimes on the verge of the camp or even in the forest, is a line of women. The men sing a honey song, the women buzz like bees. When the men pretend they find the honey and are about to take it, the women descend on them and beat the burning embers they carry above the men's heads so that the sparks fall on them—stinging them like bees, they say. This is often followed by a good-natured fight which may develop either into the tug-of-war or *ekokomea*.

Because of the rarity of ritual performances there is one which

776 828 169 534 but everyone agreed that it was a clear indication that he should try. He became the leading trumpet singer, then, not through divine choice but simply through his experience in the *keti* world. He was not regarded as more spiritual, merely as more experienced. However, 776 778 insofar as both Mbuti and *keti* derive their *pepo* from the forest, if the forest wills them to hunt together in the same time and place [224] then the mirror images coincide exactly and it is, indeed, a "strong" hunt. Such coincidence is exhausting, however, and it is not something actively wished for except, possibly, in times of particularly poor hunting. Ideally the Mbuti and the *keti* should follow each other closely, but always remain just slightly apart.

BORU

778 761 826 A rather difficult concept of the "house" (*endu*—the same word as for a hut) inhabited by *pepo*. The human and animal body of flesh [192] and blood is, in a sense, *boru*, and so is the invisibility of the *keti*. It is a term seldom used, but the concept affords a firm basis for a code of respect for the body, abuse or mutilation of which may drive away the *pepo*, causing "death" (which for the Mbuti is simply the departure of *pepo* and its return to the forest or the world of *keti*). Thus physical violence as a means of settling a dispute is abhorred as a sacrilege. A sound thrashing is perfectly in order, but any violence that produces blood causes an opening through which *pepo* may escape. For although associated with air and wind and thus with breath, it is not thought of as *being* any of these things, and its exact means of escape is unknown. The bodily apertures are all regarded as re- 778 761 826 831 quiring attention, however, as possible avenues. It might be pointed out here that insofar as *pepo* is associated with life and may escape through these apertures, this is perfectly consistent with the Mbuti recognition of the sexual act as a means of conveying life, though they do not explicitly refer to semen as *pepo*. It is also consistent with the [535] variations on the sexual act found in the *ekokomea* dance, where not only are the sexes reversed but attention is drawn to the less usual apertures, to be somewhat delicate. The role of *ekokomea* as a major [765] feature of the death festival becomes immediately more understandable, its burlesque form allowing for the stated antipathy of the Mbuti to the unproductive forms of sexual perversion *ekokomea* so graphically depicts.

765 given fire to eat, just as water is passed through it to "cool" it. It is
372 rubbed with ashes and earth. It is brought into direct contact with
534 every individual by being passed over their heads as they sit around the fire singing, and each individual will at some time or another, at his own whim, scoop up ashes and rub the trumpet with them. And in
[535] the evening appearances of the trumpet at the *molimo* hearth, while
[831] the singer holds one end to his mouth and sings, the youth holding the far end pumps it up and down as he dances in imitation of the sexual act, sometimes holding the mouth of the trumpet close to his genitals, imitating the part of either man or woman. Little doubt is left about the symbolic connection between fire and life.[9]

765 There is an important distinction between the evening and the
561 morning appearances of the *molimo* trumpet, and between the roles
533 played by different age groups. In the evening the singing is primarily in control of the *mangesé*, or elders. Frequently, they have their own fire, the hunters have theirs, and the *kiyana*, or male youths, have theirs. Everyone joins in the singing, the elders maintaining over-all control and the hunters being the most prominent singers, except for the *molimo*-trumpet singer, who may be a youth or a young hunter, being chosen because of his ability as a singer rather than for any
[535] other reason. It is the youths that do most of the dancing at their fire or at the central *molimo* fire (from which theirs is made by taking burning embers and setting them separately). The whole intent of the evening is to rejoice the forest, and this is done by singing throughout the night, and by eating a feast specially prepared from food contributed to the *molimo* hearth. (Just as with food, so with firewood and with fire itself—every single household in the camp is expected to contribute.) In the early days of the festival the old lady does not ap-
[535] pear, and there is no attempt to stamp out the fire, though erotic
[831] dances are constantly being danced around and over it. It is only toward the end of the festival that the nightlong songfest is dramatized by the appearance of the old lady, her dancing through the fire in an attempt to destroy it, and her tying up of the men (referred to
765 as both tying up the hunt and tying up the *molimo*). The evening meetings of the *molimo*, though full of the joy the Mbuti wish to convey to the forest, are nonetheless solemn in that the purpose is

[831] [9] Fire is primarily connected with women; the hearth is often referred to as the vagina; the association of blood and fire is considered particularly dangerous. Thus the association of the male *molimo* trumpet with the fire and the ashes gives the trumpet phallic significance in this context. Elsewhere, this precise symbolism seems unimportant, the important factor being simply the trumpet's masculinity.

Death itself is recognized as deriving from the forest, so is accepted
761 with regret, but there is enormous concern to conceal the regret and
152 avoid any excessive show of grief, for crying is *akami*. The uncom-
778 fortable fact of death has to be obliterated from the memory as quickly
182 and effectively as possible, and the band, which has received a blow at its strength, must be rejuvenated in an exaggerated display of all the things pleasing to the forest—good hunting, singing, dancing,
765 feasting and, above all, *ekimi*. More than this, the *molimo*, as we have
182 seen, is a means of reaffirming the effective division of the band into
621 age groups, and through both the participation of the old lady, who
535 demonstrates the power of the women over the men, and through the
• 831 *ekokomea* dance, the lack of sex differentiation is emphasized. *Ekokomea* may also be regarded in a similar light as the erotic dance over the fire, where the men symbolically copulate over the scattered embers, fanning them to life. Certainly the sexual act is represented in the *molimo* dances, if not in the symbolism of the *molimo* trumpet itself and the way in which it is handled, and there is very evidently expressed concern with the regeneration of life.

765 The *molimo* is also an occasion on which the band reaffirms all its
621 interpersonal loyalties, and its unity as a band, regardless of kinship
182 considerations. (This is not to deny that the band, and the *molimo*, may at one time have had a more definitely lineal structure.) It is significant that it insists on participation by all adult males, including not only affines but adult visitors living temporarily with the band under an obligation, default in which is punishable by death. Such death itself is said to be brought by the *molimo*; informants differed as to *how* death would actually take place—some said by two spears, some by beating—but in all cases it was held that the *molimo* would bring death to any who did not fulfill his obligations.

778 Thus the forest is intimately associated with the Mbuti at death,
824 just as it is at birth. The same forest that gives life and strength
76 through the juices of the vine, and through the vine and wooden
[789] charms tied around an infant's wrist, may bring death to that infant, if as an adult he fails to rejoice the forest during the *molimo* festival.

392 Fire, which is the gift of the forest, but whose ownership is dis-
[778] puted, is central in the life of the Mbuti, representing life itself. (One
[761] legend has it that fire was first owned by a chimpanzee; another by
[793] woman; another by the *keti*. In any case, man [Mbuti] ultimately stole it and now possesses it.) During the *molimo*, men pass their
392 hands through the flames and then rub gently over their faces. The
765 *molimo* trumpet is passed over the flames. Sometimes men put coals

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

and fathers when youths go around trying to snare food from each hut (the women ultimately letting them have it, often ostentatiously). The opposition of adjacent age levels, and particularly the hostility between sons and fathers, is plainly manifest in the morning rampages of the *molimo* trumpet. The forest itself is symbolized by the leaves that conceal the trumpet (itself the symbol of the life-giving organ), and *ekimi* is the avowed objective sought through song. *Akami*, its antithesis, is symbolized again in the morning rampage, frequently a physical battle between older and younger youths (dividing brothers) and between youths and hunters, and always a wordy battle, with the hunters winning if for no other reason than that there is a limit to the energy even of Mbuti youths.

Thus the *molimo* admirably reinforces social values and allows for the harmless expression of hostility in areas of conflict. The only symbolic representation of sexual conflict is *ekokomea*, and of course the fire dance. But here the symbolism runs deeper, and concerns the ultimate end, for just as *akami* is associated with death, so is *ekimi* associated with life. The fire is not as realistically symbolic as the trumpet, though it is undoubtedly as feminine as the trumpet is masculine. But it is impossible not to be reminded of other instances of the use of fire and sex symbolism.[10]

And perhaps we should see this concern with life not only in terms of the threat of death from the village. Death is a threat to all societies, and for the Mbuti it is probably the one imperfection in an otherwise perfect life; that is to say, it is the one thing for which they have no certain answer, and to a practical people such as the Mbuti uncertainty is imperfection.

Ultimately the efforts of the Mbuti, if not of their system, are directed to keeping the villagers physically out of the forest, an effort that is successful largely because the villagers are only too thankful not to have to go into the forest. But just the fact that one villager can set up a fishing camp in mid-forest and be visited by other villagers, or that a chief can send his representative to a hunting camp to demand (but not necessarily obtain) meat, means that even the forest

[10] For instance, Audrey Richards (1956) writes of the Bemba that access to the ancestral spirits is to be had through the correct handling of fire and sex, and stresses (*ibid.*, p. 30, *seq.*) the ritual association of sex, blood and fire as the *idée maîtresse* behind most of the ritual behavior of the Bemba. Hocart would certainly have seen the *molimo*, and the "baptism of fire" (when Moké passes his hands through the flames and rubs them over his face, then gently touches the hands of all those around), as a request "for the gift of undying life" (Hocart, 1952, p. 47).

ground with their feet and dancing with their arms and bodies, but never moving from where they stood. The old woman grew taller and more upright. Her bent old frame straightened out and she stood proudly, arms at her side, bent at the elbows so that her hands were out in front. Those hands had a life of their own, pointing and gesticulating and dancing with infinite grace at the end of motionless arms. The old woman no longer looked from side to side. She knew she had nothing to fear now, that she was the victor. And when she stooped once more to approach the fire she did not stoop so low, and each step was a step forward. As the singing quickened so did her steps, until with a burst of frenzied shouting she was driven right into the flames.

She seemed to hover there an instant, that skinny old crone who should have been burned to a cinder in a flash. Then she whirled around and kicked out with her feet, scattering the sacred molimo fire in all directions. Blazing logs and glowing embers alike she scattered, right among the circle of men surrounding her. And then she danced away, erect and proud. The men, without even faltering in their song, quickly gathered all the scattered embers and threw them back onto the remaining coals, and then for the first time they moved in a dance of their own. They danced in a wild circle, and as they danced their bodies swayed backward and forward, facing the fire, as though by imitation of the act of generation they were giving the fire new life. And as they danced the flames slowly began to rise, and as they rose the men danced all the more violently, until they had brought the fire of the molimo back to life.

Twice more this happened. Each time the old woman made a more determined effort to stamp the fire out of existence. And each time the strangely beautiful and exciting erotic dance of the men gave it new life. Finally the old woman conceded defeat and retreated among the others. Shortly afterward all the women disappeared, and

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads [836] watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For [684] the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [177] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180 - B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.180-C]

Marriage, however, is not necessarily preceded by a period of courtship. Schebesta (1952, 233) attests to the betrothal of infants by their parents but does not know how frequently these betrothals result in marriage. The ultimate essential is agreement between individuals and their respective lineages. The qualities in a man appreciated by a girl are courage, decision, prowess in the hunt, and ability in the dance. Her hunting band also appreciates these qualities and receives favorably any suitor who brings presents of game that he has killed, but it is said to be more interested in the suitor's band. There is no formal adult betrothal; the boy visits the girl's camp and spends some days there, giving her small presents. Her acceptance of the presents and reciprocation of his attentions constitute betrothal; it remains only to secure the agreement of the two bands and to overcome the obstacle of exchange price. If a youth fears that his prowess as a hunter or dancer is not sufficiently impressive to prove his manliness, he will resort to various love philters. Philters are also used by Mbuti girls.

584 [581] [431] [832]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 182-A]

832 Mbuti, considered as signs that adultery has
[845] taken place. An offended wife has the right to
[827] leave her husband; an offended husband may chastise his wife and attack his rival, possibly leading to a feud between two bands. If he finds his wife *in flagrante delicto*, he has the right to kill her lover. However, Schebesta cites no case histories.

Separation

586 A husband's justification for separation is based on the constant infidelity of the wife, her sterility, her selfishness leading to neglect of her husband, sickness, or suspicion of sorcery. On the woman's side, separation is justified by ill treatment by her husband, neglect of his hunting duties, and his infidelity. Separation is achieved simply by each band's reclaiming the daughter it gave in exchange, or effecting compensation. It does not necessarily involve hostility between the two bands, in which case the children may remain with their father, without their mother's becoming ostracized from the community. Also, a child may remain with its mother, even if she returns to her own band or remarries into another. Only when a child marries is there a necessity to settle the question of its economic allegiance.

551 Thus in the Epulu region most Mbuti have both Ngwana and Bira names, not necessarily with [613] the same meaning. The occasional use of a grandfather's name is another indication of the [602] lack of importance attached to lineal ties in this group, and an indication of the size of the largest group to which they conceive of themselves as belonging. Clan names (ancestor [614] names) exist, but these seem to have little social significance. Place names are used fre- [103] quently to differentiate one hunting band from [101] another.

621 It is virtually impossible to distinguish any 563 of the alien families that have attached themselves to a net-hunting band, so completely are they assimilated. Perhaps the easiest indication [832] would be open flirtation between members of the opposite sex within a hunting band. And 621 finally (see below, p. 257, for a fuller treat- 575 ment), there is the *elima*, the women's religious 562 association which unites the women of the band 182 in opposition to the men (regardless of lineage), and at the same time acknowledges the common values of both, so unites them as a single group in relation to the forest. It also unifies the total [186] band in relationship to the worlds of spirits, animals, villagers, and presumably of other semi-human beings such as Europeans. It never unifies the band in opposition to other hunting bands or lineages.

[P. 246-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

the first appearance in a girl of menstrual blood. But there the similarity ends.

Be that as it may, the villagers do not take nearly as much interest in the puberty of the Mbuti girls as they do in the puberty of the boys. The Mbuti generally seem to hold part of their *elima* festivals in the forest, and the closing part in the village. In this way they are able to pursue their own way through the festival without interference, claiming a feast at village expense only when the forest festival is virtually ended. Village interest in the *elima* while it is in the forest is not manifest in any practical way, although a particularly fond *kpara's* wife might send out an occasional gift of plantains or manioc. But when the *elima* moves to the village there is invariably some conflict, because the closing phase of the Mbuti *elima* is particularly untraditional in the eyes of the villagers (as well it might be, for in fact it is probably a totally different tradition) and offensive to their tribal lore. In particular in recent years, there has been a tendency for Mbuti girls to imitate the boy's *nkumbi*, of which they are supposed to know almost nothing. They display an intimate knowledge of the most jealously guarded secrets, and there have been, throughout the Ndaka and Bira tribal areas, instances of *elima* girls adopting both the costumes of the boy initiates and some of their behavior.

In 1958 the Epulu band went so far that both the Bira and the Ndaka chiefs and ritual specialists joined in complaint, and threatened the *elima* girls (the two candidates and their companions, known jointly as the *bamelima*) with a death curse if they did not desist. The girls were upset because they claimed that they had merely adopted the boys' costume because it was so much prettier than the traditional costume approved by villagers for village *elima* girls. And was not the whole idea to look pretty? Of course from the village point of view the whole idea was to behave as one defiled, and this is one of several indications of the total difference between the two attitudes to the event of puberty.

We shall see that the Mbuti attitude is that a girl's first menstrual period is an indication of her readiness for motherhood, and is therefore a time for great and public rejoicing (see Turnbull, 1960[1]). It is also a time when boys and girls should get together and think about settling down in marriage, so it is a time for experimentation. The girls are expected, during the last stages of the festival, to look their best at all times, and they paint and decorate and dress themselves to

excellent effect. They flaunt themselves in public, to the increased dismay of the villagers.

The villagers regard the appearance of menstrual blood as a disaster, and as the inauguration of a time of great danger for the girl, her family and, by extension, the whole tribe. She is considered as unclean, and is rigorously secluded and abased. Her family has to undertake a series of purification rituals ending in a feast (the part of the ceremony for which the Mbuti solicit "help"). They also have to discover the cause of the blood, which is believed by the Plains Bira and still by a number of the Forest Bira to be due to intercourse. The girl is questioned as to who caused the blood, and she names the youth on whom she has set her heart. He may acknowledge the blame, whether or not he ever had intercourse with her, and can then resolve the unclean situation by marrying her. If his wishes are otherwise he can deny her accusation and she will have to try elsewhere. The girl's parents will guide her accusations as they think necessary, but the actual extent to which the village *elima* leads thus directly into marriage seems to vary. Sometimes it is sufficient to secure admission of guilt and payment in lieu of marriage. But the villagers seldom try to follow an Mbuti *elima* through its full course; their major concern is that the impurity of the *elima* girls should not touch them. The provision of the final feast gives them an opportunity, which they do not always take, for supervising the ritual purification of the girls by bathing, the cleansing of the *elima* house, and the ritual disposal of all clothing and bedding and utensils used by the *bamelima*. The latter they do generally supervise, as the Mbuti are notoriously loath to part with perfectly good clothing or bedding for such *bulé* reasons, and will try to avoid having them destroyed.

If anything, the *elima* sets the villagers and the Mbuti apart, rather than offering any means for drawing them closer together. This is perhaps because while the *nkumbi* involves the village ancestors and is in honor of them, and secures their blessing, the village *elima* involves malevolent spirits more than it involves the ancestors. And as far as the villagers are concerned, evil spirits emanate from the forest. The *elima* offers no opportunity to the villagers for placing Mbuti girls under the control of the ancestral spirits; at the most, it offers them a responsibility for freeing them from contamination by the evil spirits. They sometimes voice the opinion that the Mbuti are in league with those spirits emanating from the forest, and rigorously avoid any contact with an Mbuti *elima*.

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
[578] them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

602 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6 shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 224 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] • 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the 881
end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There 584
is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample [836]
opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last [832]
two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For 881
the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire 832
band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable 533
candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, 881
and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise 783
of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early 515
hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable op- 584
portunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a
837 villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met
627 (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

833 That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

832 18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the
837 married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's
578 daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began
[579] fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

837 Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in
627 and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hun-
[683] dred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

593 19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced
578 on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

115 group, as often happens. But Kenge was his son by another wife,
602 from a totally unrelated group. By Njobo's sister his father had one daughter, and she was Kenge's only real blood relative in the whole
[832] group. This was important, as it enabled him to flirt with almost any of the other girls, with the added spice of its being thought incestuous, because they belonged to his group even though they were totally unrelated.

361 Since I had been with them before, the group had changed
177 slightly, with a few additions and subtractions. At their suggestion
[123] I decided to build my own house in their village camp. It looked as
[122] if we were in for a long spell in the village. The camp was in a strategic position between the village of the workers of the motel and Station de Chasse and that of Camp Putnam, near the stores and the beer house, and—even more important—near all the surrounding plantations. Progressive old Tungana said that it was a good site because tourists could drive close by and take their photographs and give them money. Manyalibo, in his dry way, said the only good thing about it was that it was close to the plantations so he didn't have to go far to steal his food. The youngsters liked it because it was near the houses of Negro villagers, where they could go begging for cigarettes, old clothes, and palm wine.

177 It looked, in fact, as if these Pygmies had become as professional as those that line the roadside at Beni, on the edge of the forest, selling their services to tourists, letting themselves be photographed doing things they would never do in the forest, wearing clothes they wouldn't wear except in a village, even selling the tourist weapons
177 used only by Negroes. But Moke reassured me. His face wrinkled
166 up in smiles, and in his soft, toothless voice he told me not to worry, that we would all be back in the forest long before my house was
[829] finished. "That is where we belong," he said, "and we shall return soon. We cannot refuse the forest." He was right, but it was in

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the 361
camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news [578]
that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In [224]
spite of the auspicious killing of a sondu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge [151]
stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a 361
band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of 576
the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path 361
to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her hus- 156
band, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at [551]
hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild [224]
pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, 156
was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two 837 826
had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon- [842]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

156
832 dabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts.
876 Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate
[302] decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known,
156 and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed
832 her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black
302 juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cica-
304 trized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked
[361] just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

765 During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—went around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the
[283] entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from *nkusa* vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a
[262] noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut
765 the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket
392 was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

765 I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this
582

765 ever, thin and straight, with eyes still wide and unblinking and, it
562 seemed, unseeing. She sat in the middle of the group, hugging her
142 knees. Her skin sagged in withered folds, her bones stuck out in
[292] ugly lines and bumps. She made a strange contrast with the background of young feminine beauty and vitality. The only time she so much as moved was when Kondabate joined the group.

765 Kondabate, the belle with filed teeth and great diamond-shaped
562 scarifications on her stomach; Kondabate the beauty, who after two
832 years of married life still preserved her fine upstanding breasts and
[304] trim figure—but also Kondabate the childless. She had on a headdress like the old woman's, and her eyes, too, seemed unnaturally
765 wide and staring. She was smiling and happy—until she sat down
562 opposite the old lady. That was when the old woman moved, looking
152 up from the fire into Kondabate's eyes. In an instant Kondabate seemed to lose her smile and her happiness. She became as empty as the withered old shell of a woman in front of her, and she sat as quietly, staring into the flickering flames.

765 After a while the men started singing again, but gently, and then
562 with a shock I realized that the women were singing as well, the
533 sacred songs of the molimo. And they were not just joining in, they were leading the singing. Songs that I had thought only the men knew and were allowed to sing—all of a sudden the women were showing that they not only knew them but could sing them with
765 just as much intensity. Kondabate suddenly sprang up and seized
562 the banja sticks from Kelemoke, and began beating the urgent mo-
535 limo rhythm: *one* two, *one* two three, *one* two three. She beat the
[534] banja faster and faster, and I saw the old woman begin to twitch in every muscle. Kondabate was already half dancing, and it was as though she was passing the life and force from her body into the dried-up skinny old body in front of her. The old crone's legs started stamping up and down, and she sat back on her buttocks so that she could lift her feet higher. Then her arms began moving, pointing in

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 765 574 177 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women P 881 took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful P [832] young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

the young bachelors. And together with the older women they began to sing, in deep contralto tones. The men protested loudly that they were tired and wanted to sleep. But the women just laughed and sang all the louder. The elima had started in earnest. 881 [832] [533]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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something to eat." He gave Hari's sister a playful push on the head, then lay back and seemed to go to sleep.

Hari led us out and into the long triangular hut. We went right through to the back and there, on each side, was a narrow bed of sticks. Here, he said, Kenge and I were to sleep. This was the visitors' hut, he exclaimed. He and his sister slept in Kaweki's house. I asked who the visitors were, as Kaweki was reputed to have none. "Oh, I don't mean villagers," Hari said. "I mean Pygmies, his friends."

I had barely washed and sat down in the middle of the clearing to eat the food prepared by Hari's sister, when there was the unmistakable sound of a band of Pygmies approaching. In a few minutes a score of them burst into the clearing—young men and women, laughing and shouting their greetings.

They said that they had heard that Kaweki was ill, so they had come to hunt for him and make him well. What had promised to be a peaceful rest in a lazy fishing camp now threatened to be something very different. These Pygmies had come as far as we had, but within minutes of arrival they were off again for a quick hunt before the sun set. Kenge himself joined them, taking Kaweki's two hunting dogs and arming himself with a stout short-shafted spear. The women stayed behind to improvise some shelter for the night. But they decided it was too much work, so they just added some sticks and leaves to the visitors' hut, forming an elongated windbreak that reached almost over to Kaweki's house. By the time the men came back, empty-handed, they had installed themselves and were boiling pots of plantains and manioc, together with fish to which they had helped themselves from Kaweki's rack. That night those who could not squeeze into the shelters or into the overcrowded visitors' hut slept in Kaweki's house. I myself found that the longed-for blessing of sleep did not come easily. Kenge had, of course, found an old girl friend among the newcomers, and the two of them lay together,

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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P C 123 571 574 beside me, all night long, flirting and laughing. Even though I lost a lot of sleep I learned several new facts of life.

P [832] Over the next few days I saw the hunters go off to bring back the meat that would make their friend well and strong; and each day P C 571 574 177 758 they collected roots and herbs which they prepared and gave to Hari's sister to treat Kaweki with. Just their very presence, boisterous and cheerful, was a tonic to the invalid. On the second night he came out into the clearing and lay down beside the fire, covered with a blanket. He joined in the conversation of the Pygmies, joking and telling stories in their own manner. Then he half sang and half chanted legends of the past, urged on by Hari, who sat nearby with all the attentiveness and affection of a son, smiling happily when he saw the villager that he loved as a father slowly regain his strength and life.

In a few days Kaweki was up and about, though he still tired quickly. He thanked his friends and told them that they had no need to stay longer if they wanted to go. But it was a happy camp, and everyone was in favor of staying. Kaweki had built a dam above C [226] the falls, channeling all the fish into a long wicker trap—some twenty feet of elaborate basketry which caught the fish and held them firmly in its meshes until they were pulled out and killed. But the recent storm, which had broken just the day before we arrived, had breached the dam and damaged the trap. The Pygmies decided that they would rebuild it for Kaweki, and while a few of them hunted the rest went off and cut the wood needed, and returned to work under Kaweki's supervision.

In the evenings the Pygmies sang songs they would ordinarily never have sung in the presence of a villager. But Kaweki was a lover of the forest, and to the Pygmies that was all that mattered. P [533] On the evening when Kaweki actually danced and declared himself completely cured, the Pygmies responded by singing a song of the

though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

The girl enters seclusion, but not the seclusion of the village girl. She takes with her all her young friends, those who have not yet reached maturity, and some older ones.

In the house of the elima the girls celebrate the happy event together. Together they are taught the arts and crafts of motherhood by an old and respected relative. They learn not only how to live like adults, but how to sing the songs of adult women. Day after day, night after night, the elima house resounds with the throaty contralto of the older women and the high, piping voices of the youngest. It is a time of gladness and happiness, not for the women alone but for the whole people. Pygmies from all around come to pay their respects, the young men standing or sitting about outside the elima house in the hopes of a glimpse of the young beauties inside. And there are special elima songs which they sing to one another, the girls singing a light, cascading melody in intricate harmony, the men replying with a rich, vital chorus. For the Pygmies the elima is one of the happiest, most joyful occasions in their lives.

And so it was with happiness that we all heard that not one but two girls in our camp had been blessed by the moon.

At first it was just Akidinimba, daughter of Manyalibo's sister. Akidinimba was a notorious flirt who considered herself the most beautiful girl in the world. She was just sufficiently plump to be envied by less well-endowed girls, but not so plump that her maidenly

881 figure was lost. She was particularly proud of her breasts, which
832 were certainly the largest in that part of the forest, and she showed them off to advantage, when dancing, by adopting an unusually springy gait. As her breasts bounced up and down the eyes of all the bachelors followed their movement with pleasure. Everyone agreed that Akidinimba's elima would be a lively one.

881 But Manyalibo's niece was in no hurry, so for the first few days she remained in the hut of her cousin, Kondabate, and there were no particular signs of activity visible from the outside.

Then we heard that Kidaya had also been blessed with the blood,
[159] and she went to join Akidinimba. Kidaya was a niece of Ekianga, and she was more modest than the really shameless Akidinimba. Kidaya was handsome rather than pretty, and she had a reputation for being able to beat up even the strongest youths if their advances were not welcome to her. So the elima promised to be exciting as well as lively.

The two girls each chose their personal assistants and called in all their young friends to join them in the hut of Kondabate and her husband, Ausu. Kondabate built on a special extension to accommodate them. This was in Apa Kadiketu, and not long afterward the elima was moved to the village, where it took over Ekianga's house. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, went with them to be "father of the elima," to make sure that they were protected and properly cared for. Asofalinda, Kidaya's aunt, went as "mother of the elima," to look after the personal needs of the girls, to see that they got the right food, and generally to act as chaperone. Mambunia was a bachelor, and Asofalinda a widow.

When we arrived at the village for the close of the molimo festival, the elima was well under way. The girls had already learned most of their songs, and they were now at the stage where they were taking a more active, even an aggressive interest in the eligible bachelors of the neighborhood. In the evenings, when they assembled

outside their hut to sing, they were carefully guarded by their 881
mothers and older sisters. But the girls and their attendants cast sly glances at the young men who always drew close to watch and listen. They whispered and laughed among themselves, and when they 881
stood up to dance they often made it very clear by their gestures 832
which boy had taken their fancy. Sometimes they chose at random simply to annoy a special lover, and boys often stalked away in a huff. That was a mistake.

At any time of the day the girls were likely to emerge from the [411]
elima house armed with long fito whips. If you were close enough you could hear them plotting their strategy behind the door, but there was no escape once they burst out into the open. Any males, young or old, and particularly those who had shown annoyance at being teased, were liable to be chased and whipped by the eager young furies.

I myself was chased once, for a good half-mile down a forest trail, [123]
running as fast as I could. It was considered cowardly to run, but I ran with good reason, for to be whipped establishes an obligation to visit your assailant in the elima house. Once inside there is no need to do anything further, but you are subject to considerable attention if you refuse. And to get into the house, in the first place, requires no small amount of courage and strength. So I ran. Most other bachelors had less reason and no desire to escape, so they contented themselves with giving as good as they got, throwing sticks and stones at the girls, running around the village, dodging behind houses and through fields of sugar cane. The battles never lasted long, but sometimes they came to an abrupt end.

The girls often whipped old men or young boys, and in either case it was generally considered a compliment and did not carry the same obligations that it would have done had they been eligible bachelors. But sometimes they hit too hard, and the old men resented this and shouted, while the boys simply screamed their heads off.

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881 In the one case Mambunia would come out of his hut in a temper
832 and send all the girls back to their house, and in the other case Asofalinda would run amok among the girls, boxing their ears until they, in turn, cried like the children they had beaten.

881 But the elima beauties did not confine themselves to their own
574 village. After all, most of the men there were relatives and so could not decently be invited into the elima house. Many strangers came to visit from other groups, but sometimes the attendance was disappointing. Then the girls would set out to visit one of their hunting
[123] camps. I followed them on one such escapade, having secured a promise first that I would be given complete immunity. It was a strange procession, the girls all oiled and painted to look their best, wearing grass skirts in imitation of the boys' initiation (an innovation that infuriated the villagers, who felt that their customs were being desecrated, and that caused open hostilities in the end), and carrying stout whips, twice as tall as they were. There were about eight of them in all, led of course by the irrepressible Akidinimba, bouncing her breasts up and down in a determined manner as she marched along the road, past the Station de Chasse, and over the bridge to the far side of the Epulu River. The villagers came out to look as we passed, but from a respectful distance. On other occasions I have seen a party such as this dive into the midst of a group of village men and women, lashing out with all their might—not entirely in the friendly way in which they would whip, say, old Tungana, as a compliment to his virility.

On the far side of the Epulu we climbed up the hill toward Eboyo, the sun beating down on us so that the chatter and laughter of the girls was almost stilled. But just before reaching Eboyo we turned off, following a trail through an old plantation and into the
881 forest. As the trees closed in around and above us, the girls began to
574 sing. They sang loudly and proudly, marching with even more de-
533 termination than before, their heads back, looking at the familiar

leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest. 881 574 533

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her. 881 574 [487]

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba 881 832

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Mbuti

881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
• 832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown. 881 832 574

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted. [152]

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry. [411]

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere. 881 832 372 574

881 everywhere. The men retreated to the outskirts of the clearing and
• 832 stood uncertainly, peering around trees or over the tops of huts, their
574 bows and banana skins at the ready.

But the girls felt they had achieved their end. Each one had marked her victim, who was bound by the strongest bonds of self-respect to respond to the challenge and brave the elima house itself. Pumba, who had followed at a safe distance, sat disconsolately on a log that Akidinimba had thrown at him in a friendly way, and he did not even look up as we left.

881 The girls sang all the way home; even when they left the forest and made their way back across the Epulu, gleaming orange and gold in the late afternoon light, they sang. They sang so that everyone should know that they were the *Bamelima*, the people of the elima, girls who had been blessed with the blood and were now women.

881 There were occasions when the mood was different. One evening
224 in particular, after a relatively quiet day, nearly all the women of the group gathered together outside the elima house. It was toward the end of the time that had been set, in an arbitrary fashion, for the duration of the festival. The Pygmies felt they had been in the village long enough, and the elima was interfering with their hunting. As much as the young men enjoyed hunting, the attraction of the elima house offered strong competition. If the boys were away too long, due to pressure from their parents, the girls complained that they were not being treated properly. Everyone agreed that this was an insoluble conflict, unless the elima was either brought to an end or moved out to the forest. It was not only the boys that were away from the hunt, but also the women and girls, who would otherwise have been gainfully employed gathering and helping to drive more animals into the men's nets. And the women said they were having far too good a time in the village. So it was decided to bring the elima to an end.

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it 581
did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a [832]
confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People [836]
pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see 584
rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of 581
terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where 593
Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge 152
dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

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Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, 512
with the exception of termite hunting which is 222
conducted at whatever time of the day or night
termites are found to be swarming.

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninter- 844
rupted throughout the year, except when camp [512]
is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant
on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these
occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account
that birth arouses the least public interest. The 844
band welcomes each birth gladly but at the 621
same time accepts it as no more than its due.
The wives of its menfolk are expected to pro- [562]
duce children; it is their primary function in the
eyes of both the band and their husbands, and
even in their own eyes.

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual 842
blood is an important factor in conception 833
(Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the [841]
connection between coition and conception
(1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hear-
ing the opinion expressed that repeated coition
would hasten the hour of birth.

[P 177-D]

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 832
body and birth of twins are, among some 845
[P. 181-D] 827

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification.

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative.

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern.

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will.

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also

881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[584] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[2]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [2] The drama not only appears like a reenactment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's sister for wife and there will be no more noise."

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the fact that there were far too many young people around who should be married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

757 IMPOTENCE IN MALE: *tededani* (rubiaceae)
824 Leaves are roasted, and the ashes rubbed into light incisions made
833 above the penis.

tebe (rubiaceae)
Leaves are roasted, and if the penis pains, the ashes are rubbed into incisions in the skin of the penis itself.

757 TOE ROT: *apatekaka* (hippocrateaceae)
750 Leaves are roasted and rubbed into incisions.
824 FOOT SORES: *ikenghe* (ochnaceae)
Stem of plant is warmed over a fire, then blown through, so that the juice enters the sores.

ikenghe (convolvulaceae)
Same as above.

HEART PAINS: *benga bememé* (compositae)
Leaves are pounded, soaked with water, which is drunk when it becomes red.

HEMORRHOIDS: *amekulu* (beilschmieda spp.)
Stem is roasted, the ashes rubbed well into the buttocks around the affected area, and left on. Repeated after three days.

TOOTHACHE: *amabulubulubu* (tiliaceae)
Leaves are pulped to a juice, diluted with water for a child, funneled through a leaf into the nostrils. Said to afford instantaneous relief.

mangarua (leeaceae)
Berries are roasted, crushed, and the ashes rubbed into incisions on the jaw.

OPEN WOUNDS: *ndindimia* (connaraceae)
The bark of a twig is carefully shaved, and the juice blown through the twig into the sore or wound. The bark is then packed into the wound to stop bleeding and to prevent dirt from entering. After three days the bark is removed and a fresh application is made, using less bark shavings to allow the wound to close gradually.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

time of the cotton harvest. On the other hand, Chief Nakubai, another Lesé Chief to the north, always seemed to have Mbuti at his beck and call, though he maintained them in rather distant plantations, not close to his village, and as far as I know used them only to provide supplies of forest products, and to help guard the plantations.

The lesser chiefs and village headmen, with no police force at their disposal and with less wealth to use in bribes, were rather more successful because the relationship was more intimate and personal. It is not infrequent for a strong attachment to grow between the villagers and Mbuti, and in such cases the economic exchange is much more balanced. In all other cases there can be no doubt that the Mbuti, with less necessity on their side, have all the advantages while the villagers are the losers. It is significant that on the one hand the Mbuti delight in deliberately shortchanging their exchange partners, thus in their eyes proving their own superiority, while on the other hand the villagers are forced by lack of political control to accept such short change with relative passivity, and indeed find ways of rationalizing it. They do this either by referring to the Mbuti as *nyama*, or animals, thus excluding them from the realm of normal, moral human behavior, or else they openly admit the Mbuti are right to help themselves to plantation products.

This latter admission is one of respect for the anteriority of the Mbuti in the forest and is common throughout the Ituri, and beyond, though by no means always open. It is manifest in certain rituals, such as when villagers offer firstfruits from a new plantation to "their" Mbuti (effectively, any Mbuti that happen to be on hand at the time), or when Mbuti are offered places of honor during funerary ceremonies for important villagers. An exceptional example of this respect occurs among the Tembo/Rega populations of the Kivu district (Map 4), one instance of which occurred in September of 1958 at Mayolo village, where a new chief, Butahiri, was inaugurated. I did not witness the occasion, but he told me that on the day that he was crowned with the traditional bead hat, he had to sleep with his sister ("same stomach"). The next night he had to sleep with an Mbuti girl presented to him by the Mbuti "Chief." Butahiri insisted that there was such a Chief, and said that traditionally the girl was meant to be his daughter, but this was not always possible and in that case it was "some other" unmarried female relative. He said he only had to sleep with her once, after which she was sent

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 829 648 622 563 834 P 648 622 834 C [835]

back to the forest and was never again to be allowed to see him or any of his family, but would be well cared for.

On attempting to find this Mbuti Chief, I discovered that he was in fact just an elderly hunter, and that the girl was his granddaughter. The local Mbuti denied any system of chieftainship, but said that they always appointed one person to deal with the villagers, as in this instance. Both they and the villagers claimed that the legitimate heirs to the chieftainship had to be born of either one of these two formal unions, and that in fact the Chief would sleep again with one or the other girl until she bore him at least two boys. They also said that obviously he would not sleep again with his sister (he himself seemed somewhat disgusted at the recollection of his first night as Chief), and so it would be his Mbuti wife who would provide the tribe with its heir.

C 648 574 P 648

There are also firstfruit offerings to the Mbuti in this area, and the same elements of respect and of economic unbalance extend right out of the forest into Ruanda and Burundi, even to the Twa in their relationship with the Tussi. For our present purposes, however, the two situations are not strictly comparable.

P C 648 [439]

But however the villagers might rationalize the economic advantages that accrue to the Mbuti, they do not accept the situation entirely passively. They attempt to create some mechanism by which they can exert authority over the Mbuti and compel them to their service. It is quite evident that if the powerful tribal chiefs backed by armed police are unable to pursue the Mbuti in the forest (even the Belgian administration did not attempt to extend their authority this far), the lesser chiefs are going to be that much more incapable of asserting direct political control. Chiefs such as Kachui, Hamadi, Lupao and Nakubai did not even enter disputes concerning Mbuti in their tribunal records, preferring to deal with such cases "directly." I have witnessed a number of such cases, most of them involving alleged theft, or failure to reciprocate in the exchange of food. The Mbuti claim is invariably that the land is his (even when the charge is for theft of property, not of food), and the villager claim is, equally invariably, that the Mbuti are servants of the villagers, bound to them by indissoluble bonds of heredity and by the fact that the villagers "rescued" the Mbuti from the forest. To this the Mbuti may reply that they "dug" the villagers from a hole in the ground and taught them "how to see and smell and hear and talk." If the case involves food, each side claims original ownership of the plantain

P C 648 691 C [522] P C 648 691 423 186 [173]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 F04 Pygmies F04
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

P 224 372 789 rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

P 224 372 789 * 177 There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider *anjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

P 224 * 177 • 834 One clear example of village influence is that in any village context the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt. These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating P [841] woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

P 778 * 177 However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of actual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the C 778 belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 the food for the festivities, but nobody was helping him. At this
593 point, instead of naming his wife, he named another sister, living in
578 the same camp, and said that she had not done her part. He added, as an afterthought, that his own wife was equally responsible, and stepped down.

765 Moké took his place and began a long harangue, telling the camp
626 that the *molimo* was nothing to play with, that it was big and it was
593 dangerous, and it could kill you. He pointed out that there had been no singing for two days and two nights, because of rain, and that indeed the *molimo* had become empty. The men should have built a hut for the *molimo*. But even so it was bad for Baumbao to take down the baskets. These should have been kept full; an empty *molimo* basket is bad for the forest. Moké then turned to Baumbao and said, "Your wife is one of us, she belongs to this hearth; it is for you to see that she keeps the basket full." Baumbao then stalked off in a temper, and Eyalo, his sister's husband, said that Baumbao never dreamed of anything but his wife's bad cooking and the whole *molimo* was empty and he was not going to contribute to an empty *molimo*, nor was his wife.

Moké replied, "Empty or not empty, that is the *molimo* hearth and it has to be looked after as long as it is there." He left, and a number of youths began to restore the sticks that had held the baskets, and then carried the baskets around from hut to hut, collecting offerings from each one. That night there was some singing, and for the next few nights. Then the festival was brought to an end. It was noticeable, however, that Tabakali was constantly being helped by her youngest sister-in-law both in collecting food for the *molimo* basket, and in cooking it.

• 834 DISPUTES CONCERNING SEX

578 13. There is a great deal of latitude in any Mbuti band on the sexual behavior of its members, but there are certain things that are known to cause offense. One is the playing with the private parts of a woman in front of her kin or her husband. One morning the camp clown, Matungi, was playing in this manner with Kengé's half sister, married to Kokoyo and mother of two children. Kengé was nearby and took great offense, and said that if Matungi wanted to play with the girl elsewhere that was all right, but not in front of her brother. Matungi replied by becoming even more intimate, whereupon

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Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do 578
that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and 589
Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted 581
desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It 589
was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké 581
had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill 753
that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but [577]
it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are counte- 836
nanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately [578]
descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become en- 836
raged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, 578
Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 836

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

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17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

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Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

In the middle
of the day the sun found its way through the leaves and struck this 133
bank, and the women liked to wade out to it and do their washing [296]
there. When the river was as low as this you could wade all the way
across, if you knew where to step, but at other times a huge fallen
tree was used as a bridge.

On the far side the ground rose sharply, and though at first the [137]
forest was still open and friendly, as soon as you reached the top
of the rise it became thick and closed in around you, and the only
paths were those made by animals, narrow and twisting.

Kenge showed me all this with his chest puffed up with pride.
He told me I could drink water from any of the streams or from the [312]
Lelo itself; it was not like living in the village where both the food
and water were dirty. He showed where the women would bathe, 515
and warned me to keep upstream of the shingle bar, so as not to 834
offend them. The other youths had already stripped naked and were [123]
splashing in the water, unashamed, though in deference to an over-
clad Westerner they held their hands in front of them when they
turned to face me.

We went back to the campsite and Kenge started clearing the 554
ground. Very shortly afterward three of the great hunters arrived— 361
Njobo, the killer of elephants; Masisi, the proud father; and Many-
alibo, the gruff, good-humored conservative. They shouted a greeting
as they came into the clearing, and looking around they threw down
their hunting nets where they thought they would like to have their
houses built. Njobo chose to be just to the south of the hillock; [605]
Manyalibo and Masisi, good cousins that they were, put their nets
down beside each other, opposite. Then almost immediately they 224
disappeared into the forest, each in a different direction, each with
bow and arrows. In less than fifteen minutes Kenge, who had been
examining the tracks of a huge buffalo that had passed by the night
before, suddenly stood still and motioned me to be quiet. With his [825]
hands he mimed an antelope running and pointed into the forest
behind Manyalibo's chosen site.

825 614 262 Not only does the pygmy avoid eating the flesh of his totemic animal, but he cannot even eat out of any dish or container in which any of its flesh has been cooked; moreover, he avoids the animal itself when he sees it in the forest, and may even flee from it. Carrying the principle of avoidance even further, a pygmy whose totem animal is the chimpanzee will not even eat the berries that are that animal's favorite food.

The breach of any of these tabus is supposed to bring on illness or death, while their observance is, of course, an automatic mechanism to intensify the mutual relations of the members of the clan, who may be scattered through the forest in different bands. As the clan members become more and more distant from each other, as their frequency of relations falls below a certain level, the tabus will break down and the scattered members will take over the prohibitions of the people among whom they live and with whom they have in time come to identify themselves.

784 834 Besides the clan food tabus, there are sex tabus, condition tabus, and personal tabus. The sex tabus serve to symbolize the difference in activities between men and women. Women and 262 children will eat frogs and toads, but men refuse to touch them. These amphibians probably symbolize water, and hence storms, and since it is the men who do the hunting they are the ones who are peculiarly vulnerable to storms.

784 262 [171] The condition tabus are the same type as those described by A. R. Brown in *The Andaman Islanders*. A pygmy going through the puberty period, pregnancy, mourning, or any other crisis in the life cycle will abstain from certain foods, and the animals concerned are thus symbols of this critical situation. 262 The personal tabus involve simply the refusal of an individual to eat certain

[P.338-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

villagers, instead of using the appropriate village term, *kola*, they are apt to bring in the concept of relative age and specify *alwa'e na epa* or *moto e na epa*. For, not themselves distinguishing between cross and parallel relationships, the Mbuti see that the villagers refer to their mother's sisters according to their relative age (*om-ema* or *mot-ema*), and to the Mbuti this age differential is of recognizable significance.

In their own usage, however, their father's sisters and their mother's sisters are all equally *ema*, as are indeed any unrelated females who fall into that age group. So with other terms, for with the Mbuti age rather than kinship is the determining factor. I have known a man with a brother much younger than he refer to him as *miki*, and the younger brother refer to his older brother as *epa*. The older brother at that time was a married man and a great hunter; the younger brother was single and not yet a net-owner and not a great hunter. Their activities were therefore different, and each assumed the "kinship" term that included him in his appropriate economic age group.

There are appropriate corresponding structural differences between villagers and Mbuti; for instance, an orphaned child among the villagers is taken in by his father's brothers, with precedence being given to the older brother. Among the Mbuti a child may be adopted by any "father" or "mother," which effectively means anyone of the same age group as his biological parents. Generally a boy or girl goes to live with his mother and her natal family if his father dies, and stays with his father, living with one of his father's married brothers, if his mother dies. This is assuming that the marriage has been patrilocal; if it has been matrilocal, as it frequently is, the reverse applies. But in every case there is great freedom of choice, and each instance is decided according to the context of the moment.

It is plain, then, that the personal terminology of the Mbuti stresses their relative age and economic status rather than their kinship, and both for address and reference it is used mostly in economic contexts, personal names being most widely used in other contexts. The only time that biological kinship becomes an important factor in discussion is in connection with sex and marriage. Relationships are then spelled out and traced through the "stomachs" from which the individuals concerned are born. People who are related through the stomachs of their mother or of their father's mother may not marry or have extramarital sexual relationships. This is the one and only

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little
[578] between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
[855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

60¼ Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[60] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

60! Table 6[A] shows quite clearly the effective difference between the village system[A] and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 328 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, 881
for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of 86
and sleeping with lovers. 561

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, 881
but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social hori- 864
zons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental 867
and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are [836]
also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit 881
neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for 836
several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It [574]
is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her [835]. father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

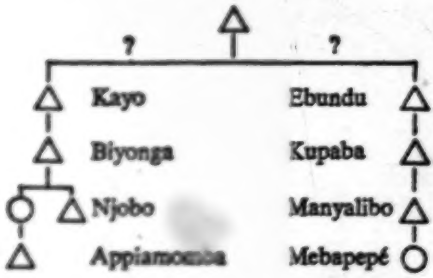
2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

836 578 upset her father so much as all the accompanying noise. In particular he was irate when waked up by a suitor crawling over him in the middle of the night to get at his daughter. In this instance he gave chase, and woke the whole camp up with a harangue from midcamp. The accused's reply was effective—that if he had made noise and wakened Manyalibo, it was not as bad as Manyalibo's noise, which had awakened the whole camp for nothing.

16. By and large all that the parents can complain about in the sexual life of their children is the noise. If the noise becomes too much, however, it then becomes a matter for the band.

836 578 835 61 Such a matter became the affair between Appiamomba, nephew of Njobo, and Mebapepé, Manyalibo's flighty daughter. The situation was aggravated by the relationship between the two lovers, Appiamomba's mother being descended in the male line from the allegedly same great-grandfather as Manyalibo. When accused of being of the same clan (using the village term) as Mebapepé, Appiamomba denied it and said they shared different hearths. He was then asked, "You cannot deny your mother was a Mupuemi; then so are you."[8] However, his argument about being of a different hearth carried weight, the more so as Njobo was not at this time in the same section of the camp as Manyalibo, and had not been for nearly a year.

One night Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya, chased Appiamomba away and called on the other youths to beat the offender. The others demanded what offense had been committed; there had been no noise. This was the beginning of a major argument which quickly spread all over the camp. Manyalibo went to the midcamp site and said, "Appiamomba is my child and he does not listen to me. Mebapepé is my child and she does not listen. My children are sleeping together and this is bad, for they are making noise all the



[8] An example of a common confusion concerning lineal descent among the Mbuti.

 836

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582]
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. [829]
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

participate, but only after the entire camp had been involved in discussing the case. Less serious offenses were settled in the simplest way, by the litigants themselves either arguing out the case, or engaging in a mild fight.

I came across only one instance of the first type of crime. We had all eaten in the evening and were sitting around our fires. It was with Kenge and a group of the bachelors, talking about something quite trivial, when all of a sudden there was a tremendous wailing and crying from Cephu's camp. A few seconds later there was shouting from the path connecting the two camps and young Kelemoke came rushing through our camp, hotly pursued by other youths who were armed with spears and knives. Everyone ran into the huts and closed the little doorways. The bachelors, however, instead of going in with their families, ran to the nearest trees and climbed up into the lower branches. I followed Kenge up one of the smaller trees and sat among the ants, whose persistent biting I hardly noticed. What was going on below took all my attention.

Kelemoke tried to take refuge in a hut, but he was turned away with angry remarks, and a burning log was thrown after him. Masisi yelled at him to run to the forest. His pursuers were nearly on top of him when they all disappeared at the far end of the camp.

At this point three girls came running out of Cephu's camp, right into the middle of our clearing. They also carried knives—the little paring knives they used for cutting vines and for peeling and shredding roots. They were not only shouting curses against Kelemoke and his immediate family, but they were weeping, with tears streaming down their faces. When they did not find Kelemoke, one of them threw her knife into the ground and started beating herself with her fists, shouting over and over again, "He has killed me, he has killed me!" After a pause for breath she added, "I shall never be able to live again!" Kenge made a caustic comment on the logic of the statement, from the safety of his branch, and immediately the girls turned

684 their attention to our tree and began to threaten us. They called us all
835 manner of names, and then they fell on the ground and rolled over
[152] and over, beating themselves, tearing their hair, and wailing loudly.

Just then there came more shouts from two directions. One set was from the youths who had evidently found Kelemoke hiding just outside the camp. At this the girls leaped up and, brandishing their knives, set off to join the pursuit. The other shouts, for the first time from adult men and women, came from the camp of Cephu. I could not make out what they were about, but I could see the glow of flames.

I asked Kenge what had happened. He looked very grave now and said that it was the greatest shame that could befall a Pygmy—Kelemoke had committed incest. In some African tribes it is actually preferred that cousins should marry each other, but among the Ba-Mbuti this was considered almost as incestuous as sleeping with a brother or sister. I asked Kenge if they would kill Kelemoke if they found him, but Kenge said they would not find him.

684 "He has been driven to the forest," he said, "and he will have to
835 live there alone. Nobody will accept him into their group after what
627 he has done. And he will die, because one cannot live alone in the
[153] forest. The forest will kill him. And if it does not kill him he will die of leprosy." Then, in typical Pygmy fashion, he burst into smothered laughter, clapped his hands and said, "He has been doing it for months; he must have been very stupid to let himself be caught. No wonder they chased him into the forest." To Kenge, evidently, the greater crime was Kelemoke's stupidity in being found out.

All the doors to the huts still remained tight shut. Njobo and Moke had both been called on by the youths to show themselves and settle the matter, but they had both refused to leave their huts, leaving Kelemoke to his fate. Now there was an even greater uproar over in Cephu's camp, and Kenge and I decided to climb down from the tree and see what was going on.

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling going on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito should have taught him better. This started the argument off on different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

835 684 happened. All the youths told me not to worry about Kelemoke, that they were secretly bringing him food in the forest, he was not far away.

835 684 626 Three days later, when the hunt returned in the late afternoon, Kelemoke came wandering idly into the camp behind them, as though he too had been hunting. He looked around cautiously, but nobody said a word or even looked at him. If they ignored him, at least they did not curse him. He came over to the bachelor's fire and sat down. For several minutes the conversation continued as though he were not there. I saw his face twitching, but he was too proud to speak first. Then a small child was sent over by her mother with a bowl of food, which she put in Kelemoke's hands and gave him a shy, friendly smile.

[554] Kelemoke never flirted with his cousin again, and now, five years later, he is happily married and has two fine children. He does not have leprosy, and he is one of the best liked and most respected of the hunters.

626 I have never heard of anyone being completely ostracized, but the threat is always there, and is usually sufficient to insure good behavior. The two attitudes which disturb the Pygmy most are contempt and ridicule. Contempt is most effectively shown by ignoring someone, even if he comes and sits at the same fire. But it is difficult to maintain for long because hunters cannot afford to ignore a fellow hunter. So ostracism of this kind is infrequent and does not last. Almost as effective, and of much longer duration, is ridicule. The [157] BaMbuti are good-natured people with an irresistible sense of humor; [181] they are always making jokes about one another, even about them- [522] selves, but their humor can be turned into an instrument of punishment when they choose.

593 578 Such a case was a great fight between the same two brothers who had fallen out over Kelemoke's misdemeanors, Aberi and Masalito.

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that [836] in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For the Efe, he records what appears to be a borrowed custom of making payments to the father [684] [777] of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai bopa*), and [839] adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora bopa*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[P. 180 - B]

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C]
sundown they return to their hut, which they 881
enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533]
taught to the new initiates by the old woman in
charge. The women of the camp sit outside and
also sing, having armed themselves with whips
made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to
her lover, who may be of the same band but [613]
must be of a different lineage. He must fight his
way into the hut, through the women armed
with whips and against the shower of missiles
hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the
old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be
serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881
young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836
had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering
his maiden. He remained with her all night. The
next day he was bound with vine and kept a
prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was
then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed
to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [831]
(i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [613]
try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [837]
of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

[NET HUNTERS]

claim compensation from him. The women guardians also could make it easy or difficult for the candidates, according to their inclinations. Any man, having fought his way through, had to secure the girl's permission before he slept with her. But reliable Mbuti informants reported that a large number merely fought for the prestige acquired and sought no intercourse with the girls. Outwardly, there is no change, except that instead of firing arrows from their bows the men fire fruit peel, and the fighting is less severe than that described in the tales of olden times. Exactly what happens inside the hut is not known, but the festival is evidently an opportunity for young men to prove their valor, and for young maidens to prove their womanliness, each one attesting to his or her readiness for marriage. There is unfortunately no evidence as to how far the opening of the *elima* constitutes a betrothal, nor how frequently it is followed by marriage. 881 836 [554]

During the course of the *elima* the girls are under certain food restrictions, which include a prohibition on all meat. *Elima* singing goes on all night. Presumably, as with the *nkumbi* initiation of boys, this is a period of discipline as well as of education. Apart from the special *elima* songs, apparently special dances are 881 [533] [535]

[P 216-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-C]

married life free from the normal household chores. 669 57 585

Unlike Schebesta's description of passionate lovers who, as married couples, in no way exhibit their affection in public, both premarital and postmarital sexual relations among the net hunters seem equally open, if not quite equally free. Flirtations among unmarried boys and girls of the same band, providing again they do not openly flout exogamic convention and do not result in childbirth, arouse no interest among the adults other than casual gossip. Married women, while as incorrigibly flirtatious as ever, are not expected to have sexual intercourse with any but their husbands. On the other hand, no social convention prevents the husband from having sexual intercourse with unmarried girls, though he does so with care to avoid unpleasantness with his wife. 836 837

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 224 626

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been
561 forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will
571 provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.
182

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

881 Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role,
602 and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

881 Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the
86 arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

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881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
• 836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[574] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[9]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[9] The drama not only appears like a remarkment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.
[583]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the 881
end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There 584
is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample [836]
opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last [832]
two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For 881
the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire 832
band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable 533
candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, 881
and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise 783
of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early 515
hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable op- 584
portunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

 834

Kengé called out loudly that the only kind of person who would do 578
that was one whose mother's private parts were smelly.

Matungi leapt into the center of the camp and challenged Kengé to a fight. Kengé refused, until called a coward. He and Matungi then each raised one foot against the other, and grappled. At this point the older men intervened and pulled them apart. By then it was time to go hunting, and the incident was forgotten.

14. Two of the most popular people in the band were Moké and 589
Mayuma. The one was a widower, the other a widow. Mayuma wanted 581
desperately to marry Moké, and as fond as he was of her, he equally desperately wanted to remain single. He had reared one family, he said, and had grandchildren, and that was enough. He wanted quiet, and women were noise.

But everyone else thought it would be a good match, and they plotted to help Mayuma. They tried to shame Moké into sleeping with her, at least, by getting her to ask him publicly to do just that. Moké refused.

Shortly afterward Mayuma became ill, and Moké was blamed. It 589
was recalled by Mayuma's kin that after her husband had died, Moké 581
had slept with her and offered her marriage. Now his refusal to fulfill 753
that promise had brought about her illness.

Moké sat and listened, then restated his reasons for not wanting to marry Mayuma, but said that nonetheless he was very fond of her and would help to feed her and make her well. This was accepted, but [577] it was still considered that thwarted love is a very bad thing, and nobody should deliberately mislead another in such matters.

15. Sexual relations between unmarried youngsters are counte- 836
nanced happily unless they approach the rather hazy realm of incest, or unless they create a disturbance. Parents were constantly complaining of the noise their children made while engaged upon amorous expeditions; they preferred being able to turn a deaf ear. One youth went too far when he called out from inside his girl friend's hut to the group outside (which included her parents), and begged them to continue singing because "it is so sweet to [make love] to song, just like in the *elima* hut." His phrase for lovemaking was somewhat intimately [578] descriptive, and brought cries of protest and his immediate ejection from the hut.

There are numerous other examples where parents become en- 836
raged simply at having their attention forced. Manyalibo's daughter, 578
Mebapepé, was courted by all and sundry, and it was not this that

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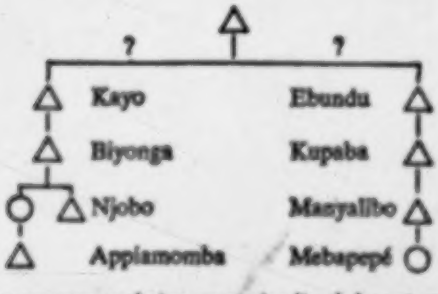
upset her father so much as all the accompanying noise. In particular he was irate when waked up by a suitor crawling over him in the middle of the night to get at his daughter. In this instance he gave chase, and woke the whole camp up with a harangue from midcamp. The accused's reply was effective—that if he had made noise and wakened Manyalibo, it was not as bad as Manyalibo's noise, which had awakened the whole camp for nothing.

16. By and large all that the parents can complain about in the sexual life of their children is the noise. If the noise becomes too much, however, it then becomes a matter for the band.

Such a matter became the affair between Appiamomba, nephew of Njobo, and Mebapepé, Manyalibo's flighty daughter. The situation was aggravated by the relationship between the two lovers, Appiamomba's mother being descended in the male line from the allegedly same great-grandfather as Manyalibo. When accused of being of the same clan (using the village term) as Mebapepé, Appiamomba denied it and said they shared different hearths. He was then asked, "You cannot deny your mother was a Mupuemi; then so are you."[9] However, his argument about being of a different hearth carried weight, the more so as Njobo was not at this time in the same section of the camp as Manyalibo, and had not been for nearly a year.

One night Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya, chased Appiamomba away and called on the other youths to beat the offender. The others demanded what offense had been committed; there had been no noise. This was the beginning of a major argument which quickly spread all over the camp. Manyalibo went to the midcamp site and said, "Appiamomba is my child and he does not listen to me. Mebapepé is my child and she does not listen. My children are sleeping together and this is bad, for they are making noise all the



[9] An example of a common confusion concerning lineal descent among the Mbuti.

 836 •

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582]
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. [829]
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 000

was not a good dancer, and when he tried to illustrate the leap he fell flat on his face.

That was the end of the matter for Aberi. For weeks he was ridiculed, everyone asking him if he had lost his spear, or telling him to be careful not to trip and fall. But it was not quite the end of the matter for Masalito. He felt more angry than ever at his brother, because Aberi had made himself, and so the whole family, an object of ridicule. Masalito felt this an added insult to himself. Even Kelemoke was furious. So relations between the two brothers got worse and worse, and every time there was a silence in the camp Masalito would complain in a loud voice about his brother and his brother's wife.

At first this was tolerated, but finally it threatened to split the camp in two. Masalito began naming all his friends and relatives to support him in ignoring Aberi; he refused to say a word to his brother. Of course his brother could claim support from the same relatives and friends, and tension was spreading throughout both camps. That was when the molimo stepped in and showed public disapproval of Masalito. The original source of the dispute, and Aberi's undoubted wrongdoing, were forgotten. Masalito was guilty of the much more serious crime of splitting the hunting band into opposing factions. He himself was then ridiculed and shamed into silence. After that it was only one or two days before the two brothers became good friends and hunting companions once again.

Disputes were generally settled with little reference to the alleged rights and wrongs of the case, but chiefly with the intention of restoring peace to the community. One night Kenge slipped out of our hut on an amorous expedition to the hut of Manyalibo, who had an attractive daughter, one of Kenge's many admirers. Shortly afterward there was a howl of rage and Kenge came flying back across the

clearing with a furious Manyalibo hurling sticks and stones after him. Manyalibo then took up a position in the middle of the clearing and woke the whole camp up, calling out in a loud voice and denouncing Kenge as an incestuous good-for-nothing. Actually Kenge was only very distantly related to the girl, and the flirtation was not at all out of order, though marriage might have been. Several people tried to point this out to Manyalibo, but he became increasingly vociferous. He said that it wasn't so much that Kenge had tried to sleep with his daughter, but that he had been brazen enough to crawl right over her sleeping father to get at her waking him up in the process. This was a considered insult, for any decent youth would have made a prior arrangement to meet his girl elsewhere. He called on Kenge to justify himself. But Kenge was too busy laughing and only managed to call out "You are making too much noise!" This seemed a poor defense, but in fact it was not. Manyalibo set up another hue and cry about Kenge's general immorality and disrespect for his elders, and strode up and down the camp rattling on the roofs of huts to call everyone to his defense.

Moke took the place in the center of the camp where Manyalibo had stood, and where everyone stands who wants to address the whole camp formally. He gave a low whistle, like the whistle given on the hunt to call for silence. When everyone was quiet he told Manyalibo that the noise was giving him a headache, and he wanted to sleep. Manyalibo retorted that this matter was more serious than Moke's sleep. Moke replied in a very deliberate, quiet voice, "You are making too much noise—you are killing the beat, you are killing the hunt. It is for us older men to sleep at night and not to worry about the youngsters. They know what to do and what not to do." Manyalibo growled with dissatisfaction, but he went back to his hut, taunted by well-directed remarks from Kenge and his friends.

Whether Kenge had done something wrong or not was relatively immaterial. Manyalibo had done the greater wrong by waking the

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village. 361

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake. 857 152 883 177 152

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine 883 177 521 273 [836]

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881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
77 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
[765] dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed
[533] as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
182

THE MARRIAGE OF KENGE

Kenge's decision came almost as much as a surprise to her as it did to the rest of us, as he was as notorious as Akidinimba for being a confirmed flirt. In fact, most people thought he would marry Biyo, Tungana's daughter. But Kenge said no, Tungana was almost like a relative to him, and it would be incest to marry his daughter. People pointed out that this had not stopped him from sleeping with Biyo, but Kenge maintained that the two situations were totally different. Anyway, he had set his heart on Maliamo, and she had set her heart on him.

The situation dragged on for so long that Kenge began to see rather more of Maliamo than was allowed by customary flirtation, and people began to whisper. This drove him to take more desperate measures with his sister.

One morning the village camp was awakened to the sound of terrified screaming from the house directly opposite mine, where Yambabo was sleeping. I looked out of my window and saw Kenge dragging his sister out of the hut by one arm, pulling her over the ground and shouting to the camp that she was no good and should be killed. He pointed to her breasts and said that she had enough milk to feed a dozen children, why did she refuse to marry? Yambabo was as strong as a buffalo, he continued, so why did she refuse to work? He then gave what he considered could be the only reason, which was extremely personal and uncomplimentary. Yambabo tried to get to her feet to hit him, but every time she began struggling he simply thumped her on the back with his fist, still keeping a tight hold of her with his other hand.

People came sleepily out of their huts to watch, all rather agreeing that Yambabo really should have married long ago and deserved a brotherly beating. Encouraged by this, Kenge began kicking her, and she responded by biting him in the leg. Moke tried to intervene, but it was no good. Kenge was ready for murder, and by the time he had finished with Yambabo she was a sorry sight, scratched and

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593 152 bleeding, with one eye swollen. And still she refused to marry
[581] Taphu.

From that morning on, we all accepted the fact that Kenge was going to continue beating his sister until she gave in, and it was just a question of how long she could hold out. One day, when her brother had been particularly bad-tempered with her she ran away to their mother's home, many miles to the east. I asked Kenge if he was going to follow her, but he shook his head. He said, "Our mother will beat her much more severely than I. She knows that
[236] Yambabo loves Taphu but is too lazy to get married. All she wants to do is to sleep with him. She is as bad as Akidinimba." And so he stayed, sitting by the fire all day in a sulk, leaving me to cook my own food and his.

593 That evening the old men discussed the case by the central fire,
521 with the women throwing in remarks from the huts all around. They were unanimous in believing that Kenge had done the only thing he could have done. Perhaps he should have beaten her harder,
583 Tungana said, for some girls like being beaten. And after all, it was
584 not as though he had chosen her husband as the villagers do, sometimes forcing a young girl to marry an old and ugly man merely because he can pay more bride-wealth than a younger man. Everyone knew that Taphu loved Yambabo as much as she loved him. He had asked her to marry him half a dozen times at least and was constantly giving little presents of meat and honey to her mother.

593 The next morning, shortly after dawn, I heard loud weeping and
584 saw a bedraggled Yambabo being marched into the camp by her irate mother, Badorinji. Kenge was wandering about searching for firewood, but he hardly even looked up. He just muttered, "Now you will see, I did not beat her for myself alone."

Badorinji led her daughter by the wrist into the middle of the little village. She called out in her loud, musical voice that her son had always been a good son, a father to his sisters ever since their

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He then went up to his mother and greeted her, which he had not done since she entered the camp. She put her arms around him, and it was strange to see the proud, sophisticated and very adult Kenge allowing himself to be embraced with such a show of affection. But what Badorinji had said was true—he was a good son. And he was a good brother too, for when Badorinji had finished hugging him, doing a little dance at the same time, he took the weeping Yambabo's hand and led her to the hut opposite mine, and there he put his arm around her and whispered something in her ear and he sent her inside to lie down and sleep.

Taphu sent word back that Yambabo would have to hurry as he was off to the forest and would not be back for a long time. Maliamo also sent a message, to say that the villagers would not let her come until Yambabo had married Taphu, because they did not trust Yambabo. The villagers announced their opinion that Kenge had already slept with Maliamo so much that it would not hurt him to wait. Kenge was furious, because this meant that he would have to go through a village wedding, unless he wanted to alienate the villagers by ignoring them. This would have meant losing good exchange-friends who kept him supplied with village goods in return for a few favors in the forest. Kenge enjoyed all the fun and games of a village wedding when someone else was involved, and he was content for Yambabo to go through the ceremony, but for himself he wanted no part of stupid village customs. He was going to carry Maliamo away and give her parents an antelope, or maybe an elephant, like any self-respecting Pygmy. He began dreaming out loud, describing exactly how he was going to track the elephant, and maybe kill a buffalo or two on the way, and he only came back to earth when I asked him how he was going to bring the elephant back to the village. He said that I would see; he was going to Maliamo right now. He set off at once. The next day he returned alone. Maliamo had gone into hiding, not wanting to jeopardize her broth-

583 form, this means that a man must offer his sister for marriage to his intended wife's brother. However, since all families do not contain an even number of boys and girls, this principle may be extended to the larger family group, and a young man may offer a cousin, or an older man a niece, as his exchange partner.

586 Divorce is common and as informal as marriage. Usually it is the woman who makes the initial decision: she simply packs up her belongings and moves out. She will take her children with her and will be considered a member of her own parents' kinship group until she should remarry. This principle is also followed in the case of a widowed woman. A divorced woman's sons will remain with her until they are old enough to go hunting, when they will rejoin their father.

Although the original pair in an exchange marriage may have been drawn to each other by mutual affection; the same is not always the case with the exchange partners, whose union may not be of long duration. The really [583] unpleasant feature of exchange marriage is that if one union breaks up, the complementary marriage must also be dissolved; hence, if one couple cannot tolerate each other they will cause the separation of the other.

589 836 Because of the scarcity of women, a certain number of young men are forced to live out a painful bachelorhood for a number of years. Such bachelors usually, if not always, dally with girls whom they cannot marry because of kinship, or with other men's wives, and are a constant cause of 583 trouble. However, if the family group 591 of a boy's father fails to get him a wife, 584 he may, in desperation, appeal to his 602 mother's family group to provide one. If they do, he will go to live with his mother's people, although he is still technically a member of his father's

[P. 337-A]

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
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827
[P 181- D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C]
sundown they return to their hut, which they 881
enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533]
taught to the new initiates by the old woman in
charge. The women of the camp sit outside and
also sing, having armed themselves with whips
made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to
her lover, who may be of the same band but [613]
must be of a different lineage. He must fight his
way into the hut, through the women armed
with whips and against the shower of missiles
hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the
old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be
serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881
young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836
had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering
his maiden. He remained with her all night. The
next day he was bound with vine and kept a
prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was
then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed
to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [331]
(i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [613]
try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [337]
of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 221-C]

married life free from the normal household chores. 69 87 385

Unlike Schebesta's description of passionate lovers who, as married couples, in no way exhibit their affection in public, both premarital and postmarital sexual relations among the net hunters seem equally open, if not quite equally free. Flirtations among unmarried boys and girls of the same band, providing again they do not openly flout exogamic convention and do not result in childbirth, arouse no interest among the adults other than casual gossip. Married women, while as incorrigibly flirtatious as ever, are not expected to have sexual intercourse with any but their husbands. On the other hand, no social convention prevents the husband from having sexual intercourse with unmarried girls, though he does so with care to avoid unpleasantness with his wife. 836 837.

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
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846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sion, during which any latent dispute might be aired. I could not definitely trace any heightening of reciprocal prestations between the individuals concerned, but it could have taken place in divers ways without my knowing it. 626 683

12. A number of disputes arising over food indicate trivial domestic disagreements, and seldom reach major proportions. A wife is late in cooking her husband's food, or cooks it badly; he spills some precious oil or fails to catch any game on the hunt. Such disagreements are confined almost entirely to the younger married couples, and they usually settle them by beating each other. If the beating gets too severe then the older women intervene, slapping both boys and girls soundly. If a marital dispute is more serious it may still emerge through a trivial incident in the hopes that it will be settled peacefully. If it is ignored, or mistaken as another petty squabble, then a more serious incident has to be created. 593 578 152

Baumbao, Tungana's eldest son, was having trouble with his wife, Tabakali. She was frequently away, back with her parents, and was suspected of having innumerable liaisons with other men. Baumbao said that this was particularly bad because of the *molimo* that was going on at the time. She had changed her hearth when she married him, and was now a member of this hearth, and she had to contribute to the *molimo*. He first brought the issue up simply by accusing her of cooking badly, and slapping her so hard that an old widow intervened, hitting Baumbao on the back with a burning log. Then everyone agreed that Tabakali was indeed a bad cook but that Baumbao knew that when he married her. 593 578 152 765 [387]

Baumbao took drastic measures. He took down the baskets full of offerings to the *molimo* from the *molimo* hearth, uprooted the sticks and the vine marking the site, and threw the lot onto the ground. While doing this he was busily saying that the *molimo* was empty. He said he had dreamed that his dead sister, Beselinda (naming her), had appeared to him in a dream and told him it was time someone made a good *molimo* trumpet and stopped using drainpipes.[7] She told him to make one and, having made it, to use it and then keep it carefully and not let it rot. He had done this and had been supplying 765 593 578 [787] [534]

[7] As described elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961), the Mbuti on one occasion made use of some metal drainpiping they found in the local administrative center. Recognizing its musical potentialities, they stole two lengths and used them as *molimo* trumpets. Everyone agreed that the main thing was that the sound was undeniably good, but the more conservative elements strongly felt the lack of the identity between the conventional trumpet (made of a forest wood) and the forest itself. [177]*

A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a villager. On returning to the hunting camp the first youth she met (Pepei, totally unrelated) beat her up severely, throwing her to the ground, holding her by one arm and kicking her. Nobody intervened, even her parents, and not a word was said about the incident.

That evening Pepei complained to the camp that no girls would sleep with him because he was an orphan, but when he began to make allusions indicating that this was one reason why he beat up the girl, Moké broke in and said that the only reason girls didn't sleep with Pepei was that he was so old. He was about nineteen.

18. It is seldom that within a camp a girl will go after one of the married men as blatantly as did Biyokenama, one of Tungana's daughters. Moreover, Biyokenama's father was distantly related to Masisi, the father of her lover, Ageronga. One morning she went so far as to follow Ageronga down to the section of the stream where the men bathed, taking off her cloth as she went. Ageronga's wife, Ambelema, a husky maiden, went in pursuit, hurling abuse. Biyokenama was heard yelling that Ambelema had no business suggesting such dreadful things; how could anyone think that she, Biyo, would flirt with her "brother"? But Ambelema had seen enough and began fighting. Tough as she was, she lost three teeth and came running back to the camp in tears. Biyokenama prudently took off for the village.

Everyone waited for Ageronga, who eventually came wandering in and went up to Biyokenama's mother and said he wanted three hundred francs, one for each tooth her daughter had taken from his wife. He said Biyokenama followed him without reason, that he wanted nothing to do with her, that she was a nuisance. Nobody believed this, but it was clearly a statement of loyalty, and sympathy swung to his side. It was agreed, in a discussion in which mainly youths took part, that Ambelema should not have said such dreadful things to Biyokenama, that even if true they were better not said; but the blame was more firmly placed on Biyokenama, and her mother was urged to take better care of her in future.

19. Marital disputes that are overheard but not deliberately forced on the attention of the band are ignored for the most part. If they are noisy and keep people awake, there may be complaints or there may be some ridicule. Certainly a fight going on between husband and wife inside a hut is followed with zest by all the youths and some of the younger married couples. These may even stand around watching

the hut shake, ready to catch whoever comes flying out first and prevent further damage.

Sometimes after such a squabble the young man and wife will equally loudly make up, so that everyone can hear, and will then emerge from the hut hand in hand and walk up and down the camp in ostentatious amity. This is considered a very good thing.

The custom of sister exchange, and the lack of any system of patrilocal residence, however, lead to conflicts of loyalties, and brothers or sisters find themselves drawn into disputes that are not strictly theirs. Ekianga was the cause of one such situation that continued for months, manifesting itself in a whole series of apparently unrelated disputes.

He had three wives, the youngest of which, Kamaikan, was the sister of Amabosu. Amabosu's wife, Amaloku, was in turn Ekianga's sister. Kamaikan was not only the youngest of the wives but by far the prettiest, and Ekianga ignored his marital obligations to the other two wives, even to the point of retaining favored portions of the game for Kamaikan. And only with Kamaikan would he sleep.

The other two wives responded in different ways. The oldest, Arobanai, ostentatiously built her own house and did nothing for Ekianga's. She said she was finished with her husband; if he wouldn't sleep with her she would sleep with his child. She phrased this in a way that made it sound rather incestuous as a form of insult, but everyone agreed that it was good for her to keep herself and her children out of Ekianga's hut.

Loku, the middle wife, had no children, and she retaliated simply by occasionally going off to join another band and letting it be known that she was available for temporary liaisons, owing to her husband's incapacity. This again was a blow at Ekianga's vital spot, his pride. But still he slept on with Kamaikan.

When Kamaikan became pregnant, Loku and Arobanai both rejoined Ekianga, thinking this was surely their chance. But when a boy was born, Ekianga still showed no signs of changing his ways. Arobanai brought her complaint to the band by striding up and down the camp listing all her grievances against her husband, one after the other. Moké came out and agreed that it was bad but that it was something that should be settled by them, and not made an issue for everyone else. But Amabosu now felt he had to intervene, and he sided with Arobanai, saying that Ekianga was doing a bad and dangerous thing continuing to sleep with Kamaikan. Everyone agreed

tall," he said, "but we call him Ebamunyama, because his father 123
killed a buffalo, and he hunts with us in our forest."

We left early in the morning. It would have been earlier if Kenge 484
had not found an agreeable girl to sleep with, who insisted on cook- 133
ing him an elaborate breakfast. But we finally got away about an [837]
hour after sunrise and headed eastward. The ground was much more hilly than in the Epulu area, but the forest itself was much the same: tall and grand, dimly illuminated by the same filtered light. Underfoot the ground was even more clear of vegetation, as for the most part we were well above the streams and rivers. It was more rocky, 484
and we passed a number of caves, where our guide, an elderly Pygmy 485
with a serious face that kept breaking out into wrinkled smiles, told 133
us that we could pass the night if we were delayed, or if his friends had gone on to another camp. I did not much fancy the idea, and on looking inside one grotto I liked it even less; it was damp, and full of rotting leaves where some earlier travelers had made themselves a bed. There was barely room to sit up, and if it rained the water would certainly have drained into the cave.

We passed several trees of a kind I had not seen before, and Kenge 139
said he had seen them only at the extreme northern boundaries of 824
the Epulu district. The roots climbed into the air, gigantic gnarled spirals, almost as thick as a man's body, joining the main trunk which towered above. Our guide told us that the Mabudo called this the "elephant tree," because they always took refuge in one if they were attacked by elephants. He dodged inside one to show us, hiding behind the roots. Even a Mabudo would have been able to stand upright with perfect ease. But the roots were close together, and an elephant could only get its trunk between them, he explained. And then the Mabudo sliced it off with their machettis. He imitated the [522]
action, laughing at the ridiculous picture he presented, trying to be the elephant and the Mabudo at one and the same time.

Kenge asked in amazement if the Mabudo actually came so far 000

[ARCHERS]

584 62 [581] Marriage is certainly an economic factor of the greatest importance to the band, and the decision of the elders usually prevails. But according to Schebesta, if there is particularly ardent affection between an unmarried couple, they may be strong enough to resist group opinion even to the point of ignoring its just claims, in which case a compromise will be reached by the bands concerned. Although there may be preferences for marriage between certain bands, no marriage is arranged with disregard for individual inclinations. Each union is usually preceded by a period of flirtation and courtship.

613 62 832 The rule of exogamy bars any flirtation within a hunting band that consists of a single lineage. If the band consists of two lineages, there may be flirtation but controlled by the parents, the mother keeping an eye on her daughter, and the fathers or lineage heads [836] watching over the boys. Schebesta believes that in spite of such supervision there is, in fact, great premarital freedom, though always outside the bounds of exogamic prohibition. For [684] the Efe, he records what appears to be a bor- [177] rowed custom of making payments to the father of the girl, or to her mother, either for the privilege of having an affair with their daughter or as a penalty for being discovered.[1]

[1] [839] Masturbation (*ai ofuni*), homosexuality (*ai hope*), and adultery are known among the archers, but rarely. Lesbians [838] (*dora hope*) are unknown. Mbuti who practice such behavior are regarded by men with derision; women have a particular horror of homosexuals.

[p. 180-B]

Women are equally quick to ridicule the menfolk when there is justification. 535 824 622

This is also a time favored by youths for slipping off into the forest with their girl friends for some not very quiet lovemaking. Although lovemaking is not performed openly, no great attempt is made to conceal it. The general feeling is that if surprised in the act, one simply says hello (*karibu*) politely and expects the intruder to continue on his way. Fathers, and mothers too, refer to the nuisance of a flirtatious son or daughter whom they might surprise in this way. The parent pretends to see nothing in such a case, and the youths claim, with more bravado than truth perhaps, not to be unduly disturbed unless they are making love to a relative. 833 836

Lovemaking generally takes place in the forest, though there is no fixed rule. It is thought somewhat exciting to make love in a hut, but not very healthy. There are preferences that individuals have for making love near a stream, or in a splash of sunlight, or in the dark depths of the forest. It is evidently a purely aesthetic consideration, and I have heard a number of youths who stated that the best time was while hunting. But moonlight evidently attracts a great number, and I have met several who talk, with great poetry, of the joys of masturbation when alone in the moonlight. On three rare occasions I have seen different individuals dancing, by themselves, in the moonlight and in the forest, away from the camp. The intimacy between the individual and the forest—one might almost say the act of making love to the forest—was expressed by one Mbuti who said, when I questioned him as to why he was dancing alone, that he was dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon. He then continued his dance with the utmost unconcern. 833 [839] [778] [535]

Not all lovemaking is quite so romantic, however, and when boys and girls are following a trail together, the procession may degenerate into a good-humored but undeniably lusty orgy. A boy may rip off a girl's outer bark cloth, if he can catch her, but he may never have intercourse with her without her permission. I know of no cases of rape, though boys often talk about their intentions of forcing reluctant maidens to their will. [832] 833 839

There are no formal bachelor huts, but many camps have informal variants. They are sometimes built for an older youth by his mother, or they may be taken over by adolescent boys or girls when the occupant leaves for some reason. In such huts, and even out in the open, around the campfire, it is usual to see not only youths but also 838 513 [342]

838 513 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place, [578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which [535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomas*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

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[P. 180-8]

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[P 181- D] 829

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

• 84 184 845

Conception and Childbirth

The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also. Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

But here we may note a significant difference in attitude to magic, or curative activity. Childbirth is a time which is thought of by both Mbuti and villagers as being attended by the possibility of danger, at least. The Mbuti think in terms of physical danger, and they have precautions that they take in the diet and behavior of the expectant mother before birth, and apparently effective knowledge of midwifery, including recognized ways of dealing with difficult births. After birth there are known cures for any weakness the infant or mother might show. What is lacking, among the Mbuti, is precisely what is dominant among the villagers: a felt need for protection against the supernatural.

A village mother and child will both have, according to how wealthy the family is, a number of potions to drink (which may or may not have medical significance, but are thought of as being protective) and divers charms to wear. The protection is thought to be necessary against unknown dangers. The difference between the two peoples is in the extent of this unknown. An Mbuti infant will have a vine bracelet or belt tied to it almost immediately after birth, and a small piece of wood or two will be fixed to the vine. It is stated that the vine and the wood convey to the child the health and strength of the forest. There is no apparent concern for any supernatural dangers, and no precautionary steps taken.

From the village point of view the lack of such measures involves the child and possibly the mother in great danger, and out of self-concern as much as out of concern for the Mbuti, the villagers proffer charms in abundance to expectant mothers and newborn children. However, the need is only felt by the villagers, not by the Mbuti.

This is precisely the difference we find when we seek other situations for which only the villagers have a cure—they are situations in

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, 512
with the exception of termite hunting which is 222
conducted at whatever time of the day or night
termites are found to be swarming.

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninter- 844
rupted throughout the year, except when camp [512]
is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant
on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these
occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account
that birth arouses the least public interest. The 844
band welcomes each birth gladly but at the 621
same time accepts it as no more than its due.
The wives of its menfolk are expected to pro- [562]
duce children; it is their primary function in the
eyes of both the band and their husbands, and
even in their own eyes.

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual 842
blood is an important factor in conception 833
(Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the [841]
connection between coition and conception
(1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hear-
ing the opinion expressed that repeated coition
would hasten the hour of birth.

[P 177-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[ARCHERS]

Various rites and magical instruments are logically consistent with this notion: the *segbe* pipes that are able to deflect the storm, attract game, or defeat the enemy; the magic horn of the *maigwa* antelope that seeks out thieves; and the various charms and amulets used by hunters either on their bodies or on their weapons. Certain animals are reputed to possess an abundance of *megbe*, notably crows, crabs, the snake (*mageda*), the antelope (*maigwa*), the chameleon, the toad, and the tortoise. 778 761 789 [825]

According to various legends, menstrual blood is also possessed of magical force. [841]

Opposed to *megbe* is *uda*, the force of black magic. As mentioned above, the archer accepts death as inevitable, the recalling by God of *boru e'i*, the life principle Schebesta translates as "soul." But death may be caused by sorcerers through the use of *uda*. *Uda* is associated with menstrual blood, and Schebesta compares this notion with the legends that explain one cause of death as being the curiosity or greed of woman. This second cause of death, through *uda*, is thus attributed to the "original sin" of woman, who from curiosity or greed violated God's laws or lured man to do so. 754 761 [841] [773]

Costermans (1938) and Boelaert (1936a) both criticize Schebesta on this point, saying that the material does not justify his conclu- 114

[P. 192-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.193-C] [ARCHERS]

The celestial God is an old man, with a beard which brings wind and storm to the earth world when it shakes. The Mbuti respect him, but offer no cult to him; he is too far removed and plays no direct part in the life of the earth world. He is linked to it, however, and plays his part in the Pygmy rationale as the ultimate source of all vital force which creates and gives life. It flows from the sky God into human beings, but his superabundance of the life force insures his permanent overlordship. The Mbuti regard him as the source of all creation and the support of the universe, without seeking to understand how he creates and preserves, or why he destroys by reclaiming the vital force he dispenses. 776 [821] [961]

Schebesta states that the Mbuti place this sky God in the moon and thus even *deus otiosus* is involved in dualism, for the moon by its brightness is associated with fire, and by its periodicity with menstrual blood—the two symbols of life and death. (Both fire and menstrual blood have the dual association.) 776 772 761 821 [372] [341]

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place, [579] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which [535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomos*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village [842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa Fol

P 224 392 789 rounded by a vine that is carefully staked into the ground by V-shaped twigs. Within the circle long twigs, clean of bark, sometimes simply burned to create a pattern, are stuck into the ground pointing in the direction the hunt is to take place. Any animal caught is brought back and placed within the circle before being divided.

P 224 392 789 * 177 There is undoubtedly village influence to be found in some of the more elaborate magical practices. The Mbuti themselves consider *anjo* as village magic, also the magic sticks within the hunting-fire circle. The fire, however, is used everywhere, and regardless of any other accompanying ritual, there is no ritual attitude toward it other than the belief that it will secure the attention, hence the blessing, of the protective forest.

P 224 * 177 834 One clear example of village influence is that in any village context the Mbuti are likely to state sexual taboos connected with the hunt. These vary according to the village tribal custom, and may involve prohibition of sexual intercourse before the hunt, either as a permanent rule (which would be inconvenient for people who hunt almost daily) or for special occasions or classes of people. A menstruating P • [841] woman and her husband are forbidden to take part in the hunt, according to some village customs. A pregnant woman may be under restrictions, as may be her husband, and childbirth involves further restrictions among many village tribes. To all such customary practices the Mbuti gladly pay lip service. In the forest, however, forest values prevail, and I have come across no sexual taboos associated directly with the hunt. Indeed, the hunt is considered by many, married and unmarried, as an excellent and exciting time to slip away into the bush and copulate. But sexual activity is above everything else a matter of personal taste. If a pregnant woman stays in camp, it is more likely because she feels unwell. If a father stays behind with his wife and her newborn child, it is probably because he wishes to be with them, though there are sometimes stated prohibitions on hunting or eating meat until the family net traps a large antelope. This will be made the occasion for lifting the taboo and for naming the child.

P 778 * 177 However, it is impossible to discover any consistent pattern of actual behavior, the only consistency appearing in stated behavior, and this relates directly to local village custom, which is based on the C 778 belief that the forest is ritually dangerous, unclean. Any villager in a position of crisis, such as becoming pregnant, being born, suffering from sickness or even injury, during menstruation or while near

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

(*ndura nde bokbu*), and if pressed begin to enumerate the totality of 778
their experience. Primarily, however, they refer to the forest as mother or father, according to context. On the hunt the men address it as father, the women as mother. A man receiving a sudden unexpected favor, as he sees it (coming across a cache of highly prized mushrooms), is apt to address the forest as mother. A woman who is having a hard time finding the leaves or saplings she wants will, getting into a tangle of undergrowth, almost certainly start addressing the forest as father and accuse it of being far too severe and strict. The terms are so widely and frequently used that I have no means of saying which is the more prevalent. If anything, I would hazard a guess that "mother" is used more often than "father." The Mbuti themselves say that which term they use and when is a matter for their *roho*.

The extent to which the Mbuti personify the forest is seen when in explanation they say that the forest gives them not only food and shelter, warmth and clothing, but also affection (*ndura pisasu bendu, pisasu isa, pisasu ngombe; ndura ekondisu*). The intimacy of the 778
relationship between the individual Mbuti and his forest godhead 535
is most plainly seen in the incident described more fully in *The Forest* 152
People (Chapter 15), where a youth was found dancing all by himself in the moonlight, singing a wordless song as he danced. When questioned as to why he was dancing alone, he answered, "I am not dancing alone, I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon."[9]

9 *Kanga me bi ahlé: me bi na ndura, me bi na songé.*

Schebesta (1952, 303) refers to *songé* (moon) as being one of the net-hunting names 12
for God, regarded as the creator of all things (1952, 305), particularly of man, which 24
songé creates by means of menstrual blood. He does not, unfortunately, give more in- 114
formation or documentation on this interpretation, but there is no doubt that the moon 176
is, to the Mbuti, an object of interest and (as seen above) affection, and at the same time in common discussion they do connect the moon with menstruation, and menstruation with fertility. I have myself not come across any instance of the moon being worshipped as such, unless this moonlight dance be regarded as worship, except in one song of the *molimo*, the words of which were: [539]

Ema songé, ema, ema; okisu ema; pika'i.
Mother moon, mother, mother, hear us mother; come.

This is remarkably similar to a translation given by Bowrs (1962, 70) of a song of the [171]
Gabon pygmies cited by Trilles (1945, 157).

Moon, O mother moon, O mother moon,
mother of living things,
Hear our voice, O mother moon!
O, mother moon, O mother moon,
Keep away the spirits of the dead,
Hear our voice, O mother moon,
O mother moon, O mother moon.

C him. He is then accused and has to make suitable offerings which
881 are necessary not only to help in the protection of the girl and her
584 family, but also for his own protection, since he has been linked with her verbally, however untruthfully. He may then deny the charge, and if the girl's parents think he would make a suitable husband, there may be some litigation. Or they may consider him unsuitable, and let the matter drop. If he likes the girl and accepts the responsibility, this constitutes the first step toward official betrothal. If he disclaims all responsibility, then the girl has to try again; until she has a husband the danger is thought to remain.

C The period of seclusion varies from tribe to tribe, and even from
881 village to village. Sometimes it is just for a week or two; sometimes it lasts a month or more. And sometimes it lasts until the girl is betrothed and can be led from her room of shame to be taken away by her husband. At the final wedding ritual she is ceremonially cut
C off from her family, and told that she is now her husband's respon-
583 sibility and must fend for herself and not come running home every
585 time she gets beaten. The point, of course, is that if she does this her husband can claim back the wealth he will have already paid over in the expectancy of her fidelity and success as a wife and bearer of children. And by the time the disaster occurs her family will almost certainly have spent the money to obtain a bride for one of her brothers.

C The whole affair is a rather shameful one in the eyes of the vil-
881 lagers, as well as a dangerous one. It is something best concealed and not talked about in public. The girl is an object of suspicion, scorn, repulsion, and anger. It is not a happy coming of age.

P For the Pygmies, the people of the forest, it is a very different
881 thing. To them blood, in the usual context in which they see it, is
• 841 equally dreadful. But they recognize it as being the symbol not only
[826] of death, but also of life. And menstrual blood to them means life. Even between a husband and wife it is not a frightening thing,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

The girl enters seclusion, but not the seclusion of the village girl. She takes with her all her young friends, those who have not yet reached maturity, and some older ones.

In the house of the elima the girls celebrate the happy event together. Together they are taught the arts and crafts of motherhood by an old and respected relative. They learn not only how to live like adults, but how to sing the songs of adult women. Day after day, night after night, the elima house resounds with the throaty contralto of the older women and the high, piping voices of the youngest. It is a time of gladness and happiness, not for the women alone but for the whole people. Pygmies from all around come to pay their respects, the young men standing or sitting about outside the elima house in the hopes of a glimpse of the young beauties inside. And there are special elima songs which they sing to one another, the girls singing a light, cascading melody in intricate harmony, the men replying with a rich, vital chorus. For the Pygmies the elima is one of the happiest, most joyful occasions in their lives.

And so it was with happiness that we all heard that not one but two girls in our camp had been blessed by the moon.

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[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, with the exception of termite hunting which is conducted at whatever time of the day or night termites are found to be swarming. 512 222

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninterrupted throughout the year, except when camp is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account that birth arouses the least public interest. The band welcomes each birth gladly but at the same time accepts it as no more than its due. The wives of its menfolk are expected to produce children; it is their primary function in the eyes of both the band and their husbands, and even in their own eyes. 844 [512] 844 621 [562]

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual blood is an important factor in conception (Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the connection between coition and conception (1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hearing the opinion expressed that repeated coition would hasten the hour of birth. 842 833 [841]

[P 177-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomas*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

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837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[584] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[2]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [2] The drama not only appears like a recreatment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Everyone recognises that the slightest rift in the band can lead directly to hunger through failure in economic co-operation.

The clown, however, never passes judgment or exerts authority (except through ridicule); he is better considered, in this role, as a professional scapegoat, a person outwardly not deserving respect or authority. Because of his antics, and the Mbuti love of mime, he is popular, but the blame he takes upon himself is often expressed with feeling, and it is only his ability to turn ridicule upon himself and to laugh at himself that rescues him from what would otherwise be constant opprobrium. His status as a hunter is unaffected by his role as a clown, and depends solely on merit.

There is one type of person, however, and there were two examples in the Epulu band, who leans toward the assumption of individual authority. Every Mbuti is nothing if not a powerful individualist who expresses his opinions with force and clarity. But he generally does not claim any support for his opinions other than his own experience and ability. Some men, because of exceptional hunting skill, may come to resent it when their views are disregarded, but if they try to force those views they are very promptly subjected to ridicule. Ekianga and Njobo were two such hunters in the Epulu band. Ekianga was constantly being ridiculed for his matrimonial difficulties (he was a rare Mbuti, with three wives, living in the same camp with his in-laws by sister exchange). Even his elder sister ridiculed him at times. Njobo was sometimes rather unkindly ridiculed for infertility. Out of four successive wives he only managed to sire one child, a son, who became crippled in adolescence with tuberculosis of the leg. His current wife had given birth to a daughter who out of politeness was generally accepted as Njobo's, though all the evidence pointed in other directions. He was, at least, accredited as the social father.

Of the two, Ekianga probably had the more influence in the band, and his unique position as a polygamist was undoubtedly related to both his prowess and his pride. There is, however, no parallel with the situation acutely described by Lévi-Strauss (1955, pp. 325–39) for the Nambikwara. Ekianga was indeed a potential leader, but the band did not derive its major characteristics from him. Still less was generosity demanded of him (in return for his three wives), and by no means was his undoubted dynamism contrasted by a passivity of the rest of the band. Nonetheless, his three wives and all the consequent "noise" were accepted by the band, and although it was not spoken of as an exchange, it was expected of Ekianga that he would be a

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1954) 1952 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

stalled themselves with the rest of the family at the north end of the camp. Shortly afterward Cephu arrived. Ekianga had brought news that he was on his way, and there had been a lot of argument. In spite of the suspicious killing of a sendu on the first day, the hunting since had not been very good, and already the camp was large. There were about twenty-five huts now, forming two circles, one on each side of the central barrier of brush and trees.

In the early afternoon there was a silence in the camp and Kenge stood listening, looking across the camp to the south. He turned and told me that Cephu was not far away and would be here in a quarter of an hour. Almost to the minute Cephu arrived, leading a band of another five families. Most of them stopped at the edge of the camp at the south end; only Cephu and one other came over to the main camp to greet us and announce his arrival. A new fire had been built in the center of our clearing, opposite Manyalibo's hut, and Cephu sat down there, one of the younger men getting up to give him his chair. He asked about the hunting and gave us news of the village. He said that his brother, who was a cripple, had not wanted to come so far and had made a small camp half way, near Apa Kadiketu. After a few minutes he left, not having been offered anything to eat or any tobacco to smoke, and started building his own camp about fifty yards to the south of the extreme edge of the clearing. He built a tight little circle of huts, connected by a path to the main trail on one side and to the camp on the other. He chose that site because he had some relatives at that end of our camp.

The same day Manyalibo's daughter also arrived, with her husband, Ausu. Ausu was a handsome Pygmy, strong, and clever at hunting both with spear and with net. He had caught many wild pig, although he was only in his early twenties, and once, when still in his teens, he had nearly been killed by one. His wife, Kondabate, was a Pygmy belle if there ever was one, and she knew it. The two had been married for nearly three years but had no children. Kon-

Turnbull E-5 (1951-1959) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Kondabate still had her fine maiden's figure, with firm upstanding breasts. Nobody ever mentioned the fact that they were childless. Kondabate decorated herself more than any other Pygmy girl I have known, and by every possible means, Negro and Pygmy. She not only dyed her body with designs of vines and fruits, painted on with the black juice of the gardenia fruit, but she also had elaborate patterns cicatrized on her stomach, and her teeth were filed to sharp points so that when she smiled or laughed, as she frequently did, she looked just a little dangerous. Kondabate decided to build her house to the north of the hillock, so that she was next to old Sau, and opposite her father.

During the afternoon Amabosu, Sau's son—the great singer—were around from hut to hut with Manyalibo's adopted son, Madyadya. (Manyalibo had offered his molimo for Balekimito's festival, as Ekianga said he had none.) The two youths stood outside the entrance to each hut with a basket and a length of cord made from ekasa vine, the kind of cord used for making hunting nets. Madyadya held one end of the cord while Amabosu tied the other in a noose and laid it in the doorway of the hut. The owner of the hut, or her husband if she was not there, would put a small bunch of bananas in the noose, or a manioc root, or a bundle of mushrooms, or perhaps even a small piece of meat, and Madyadya would jerk the string taut. After a brief mock struggle he would haul in the catch and put it in his basket, then go on to the next hut. From every hut the two collected an offering of food in this way. When their basket was full they hung it up on a tree stump beside the central fire that was now blazing between Manyalibo's hut and the hut his daughter was busily making. This fire had itself been made up from offerings of wood collected from each family hearth. I remembered seeing Manyalibo go around taking an ember or log from every fireplace, whether the owners were there or not.

I noticed that only men sat at this fire and asked Kenge why this

though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

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[ARCHERS]

[P.178-A]

000 would hasten the hour of birth. Pregnancy is
843 recognized by the cessation of the menses and the discoloration of the breasts. During pregnancy a woman is subject to various alimentary taboos, but otherwise lives her full, ordinary life, including the carrying of heavy loads of wood, carrying all household goods when moving camp, going in search of food, and other specific activities of women.

844 Customs attending childbirth vary from region to region, but Schebesta concludes that, although archers have no effective method of dealing with complications, the women normally give birth easily and without any particu-
[184] lar preparation. Although this account does not specifically relate to the Efe archers, Schebesta (1948, 402) writes that, from his observations throughout the forest, certain generalizations
844 are possible. Women alone are admitted to
412 assist in the childbirth. The father cuts the umbilical cord with an arrowpoint, or, among some bands, with a sharp piece of bamboo. Before metal blades were available, Schebesta (1948, 404) says that there is evidence that bamboo knives or sharp leaves were used.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-C]

nose with leaves (Pygmy), making slight cuts 845
on the stomach, arms, and knees and rubbing [177]
in herbal medicines (villager), and rubbing the stomach with cold water (both Pygmy and villager). While these activities were going on, children were playing about and running in and out of the hut where the pregnant woman was kept. Finally, the woman in labor, who, though in great pain, had never uttered a word of complaint was made to sit on a log, while one woman sat behind her and held her up, and another in front massaged the infant out. During the whole period of labor the woman's father and her husband were with her constantly. It [843]
was agreed that her difficulties resulted from her having broken a food taboo and eaten the flesh of an anteater.[1]

Another aid used by the Pygmy woman dur- 844
ing childbirth is described by Anne Putnam (1954, 165). The girl in labor is given one end of a liana to hold; the other end is tied to a tree. Each time the pains start, the girl pulls on the liana as her friends massage her stomach.

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853
father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 [621] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [664]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

had either given in or had actually encouraged Ekianga, and Amabosu had supported her. This brought a mild cry of protest from Amabosu, and hearing it Arobanai rounded on him and asked him whether or not he was an Mbuti, for he had not behaved like one. What did it matter whether he was out of the same stomach as Kamaikan or not, were they not all *apua'i* (the term of friendship that covers brothers, sisters and age mates)? And was it not more important whether something was right or wrong than whose stomach who came from?

Finding this an unexpectedly dramatic declaration, and one which made Moké visibly sit up, and almost certainly feeling somewhat fatigued, Arobanai suddenly stopped and brightly said that she was going to get some sleep, the rest could do as they pleased. As she strode into her hut Moké came over and stirred at the central fire. Not addressing anyone in particular he said that this thing had gone on long enough, and that he did not want to hear another word about it. He said that if disputes continued they would kill the camp completely and absolutely, that the forest would refuse to accept the band and would send all its hunts back empty. And what Ekianga did was a matter for him to think about, for if he continued sleeping with Kamaikan it would almost certainly kill their child, and that would again displease the forest. He ended by saying, still staring carefully at the fire, "It is no longer a matter for us, it is a matter for the forest."

20. A month or so later Kamaikan's young son became ill. Arobanai was not in the camp at the time, but Loku was. Nobody mentioned Moké's warning that the boy would become ill if Ekianga continued sleeping with Kamaikan (as he did), and Amabosu was shouted down when he appeared about to say something to this effect. He changed his mind and went over to Loku, and said that she was to blame; she would have to cure the child by cicatrizing it. In the village this is tantamount to an accusation of sorcery, cicatrization being an admission of unknowing guilt by which the accused at the same time absolves himself and does all that is possible to negate the curse. The Mbuti know the belief and the custom, and sometimes, as in a case like this, they follow the custom without following the belief. Loku put up the expected resistance to the idea, and Amabosu chased her with a stick. The youths and hunters followed the show with enjoyment, and Manyalibo made jokes about nobody daring to come near him because he was the biggest sorcerer of all. Eventually Loku

[ARCHERS]

All activities outside the camp cease at night, 512
with the exception of termite hunting which is 222
conducted at whatever time of the day or night termites are found to be swarming.

Conception and Childbirth

The normal course of daily life runs uninter- 844
rupted throughout the year, except when camp [512]
is moved, or on ceremonial occasions attendant on birth, puberty, marriage, and death. Of these occasions, it seems from Schebesta's account that birth arouses the least public interest. The 844
band welcomes each birth gladly but at the 621
same time accepts it as no more than its due. The wives of its menfolk are expected to pro- [562]
duce children; it is their primary function in the eyes of both the band and their husbands, and even in their own eyes.

The Pygmies seem to believe that menstrual 842
blood is an important factor in conception 833
(Schebesta, 1948, 399) and are well aware of the [841]
connection between coition and conception (1948, 400). Schebesta reports frequently hearing the opinion expressed that repeated coition would hasten the hour of birth.

[P 177-D]

[ARCHERS]

[P.178-A]

000 would hasten the hour of birth. Pregnancy is
843 recognized by the cessation of the menses and the discoloration of the breasts. During pregnancy a woman is subject to various alimentary taboos, but otherwise lives her full, ordinary life, including the carrying of heavy loads of wood, carrying all household goods when moving camp, going in search of food, and other specific activities of women.

• 844 Customs attending childbirth vary from region to region, but Schebesta concludes that, although archers have no effective method of dealing with complications, the women normally give birth easily and without any particu-
[184] lar preparation. Although this account does not specifically relate to the Efe archers, Schebesta (1948, 402) writes that, from his observations throughout the forest, certain generalizations
844 are possible. Women alone are admitted to
412 assist in the childbirth. The father cuts the umbilical cord with an arrowpoint, or, among some bands, with a sharp piece of bamboo. Before metal blades were available, Schebesta (1948, 404) says that there is evidence that bamboo knives or sharp leaves were used.

[ARCHERS]

553 Schebesta reports that the child is not named for some weeks after birth. To name a boy is the father's prerogative or that of the oldest male members of his lineage; to name a girl is the right of the mother or her oldest relatives. There is no uniform custom, except that naming is primarily the privilege of the parents. It is a Pygmy custom to fasten the umbilical cord to the child's elbow and later to bury it in some swamp. Schebesta found no evidence of the truth of Johnston's statement (1902, 1904, 539) that Pygmy women sever the umbilical cord with their teeth. Abortion is known to the Pygmies, but plays no part in marital life.

844 846 [114] 847

Twins

845 847 The birth of twins, among the archers, seems to be considered abnormal and inauspicious. Schebesta frequently heard that following the birth of twins one had died. He was told by an elder that, when twins are born, the elders are immediately informed, and they advise that if both infants are strong and healthy they be allowed to live, otherwise the weaker of the two should be killed. The mother herself smothers the infant by covering its nose and mouth with her hand. The body is immediately buried in the house, which is promptly abandoned. [P. 178-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-C]

nose with leaves (Pygmy), making slight cuts 845
on the stomach, arms, and knees and rubbing [177]
in herbal medicines (villager), and rubbing the stomach with cold water (both Pygmy and villager). While these activities were going on, children were playing about and running in and out of the hut where the pregnant woman was kept. Finally, the woman in labor, who, though in great pain, had never uttered a word of complaint was made to sit on a log, while one woman sat behind her and held her up, and another in front massaged the infant out. During the whole period of labor the woman's father and her husband were with her constantly. It [843]
was agreed that her difficulties resulted from her having broken a food taboo and eaten the flesh of an anteater.[1]

Another aid used by the Pygmy woman dur- 844 •
ing childbirth is described by Anne Putnam (1954, 165). The girl in labor is given one end of a liana to hold; the other end is tied to a tree. Each time the pains start, the girl pulls on the liana as her friends massage her stomach.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

• 844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions
[177] are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

These Mbuti, however, just as much as others, *appear* to have adopted villager religious beliefs and practices. This could be taken as symptomatic of a much closer relationship involving a shared system of values. We cannot help noticing, further, that by retaining a monopoly of ritual specialists the villagers effectively seem to assert their superiority over the Mbuti. When birth or death takes place among the Mbuti while they are in the vicinity of the village, the local villagers take a prominent part in the appropriate festivities, appropriate according to their custom, that is. Marriage between Pygmies, while not always subject to ceremonial "ratification" in the village, is usually performed twice: once according to the simple Mbuti custom of arranging and effecting an exchange of brides with the necessary courtesies of prestation and feasting but with no other ceremonial; and once according to the

Z 563 796 P 177 796 P Z [844] [764] [765] P 583 585 177 Z 563 585

[P.251-D]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
*177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

• 844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely.

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off.

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey.

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters.

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again.

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

• 844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
[751] of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, 851
including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social [171]
position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, [597]
regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among 856 854
the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar [751]
as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of [778]
forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of 844
supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication [782]
that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness de- [778]
rives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although [594]
birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the [621]
band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 PO4 Pygmies PO4
Mbuti

This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and singing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence, is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion. For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to convey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is reinforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song. The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound.

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti.

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.)

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In KiBira the equivalent would be *kobia*.

789 especially those taken from a wild pep-
821 per plant, to stop storms; and the lighting of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[3] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude
[811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is
789 usually a simple business. During the division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[4] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women
862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they
000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 157.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[P.339-B]

[ARCHERS]

553 Schebesta reports that the child is not named for some weeks after birth. To name a boy is the father's prerogative or that of the oldest male members of his lineage; to name a girl is the right of the mother or her oldest relatives. There is no uniform custom, except that naming is primarily the privilege of the parents. 844 It is a Pygmy custom to fasten the umbilical 846 cord to the child's elbow and later to bury it in some swamp. Schebesta found no evidence of [114] the truth of Johnston's statement (1902, 1904, 539) that Pygmy women sever the umbilical 847 cord with their teeth. Abortion is known to the Pygmies, but plays no part in marital life.

Twins

• 845 The birth of twins, among the archers, seems 847 to be considered abnormal and inauspicious. Schebesta frequently heard that following the birth of twins one had died. He was told by an elder that, when twins are born, the elders are immediately informed, and they advise that if both infants are strong and healthy they be allowed to live, otherwise the weaker of the two should be killed. The mother herself smothers the infant by covering its nose and mouth with her hand. The body is immediately buried in the house, which is promptly abandoned. [P.178-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 178-C]

Dances are organized by the women to celebrate the birth of twins, whether or not both live. Schebesta (1948, 409) mentions the fact that, although the neighboring village tribes have similar feelings about abnormal births, they content themselves with evading unhappy consequences by magical dances and other rites. Schebesta (1948, 409) suggests that superstitious terror and fear of attendant sanctions drive the Pygmy mother to the more violent way of avoiding danger. He writes that all abnormal infants are also put to death immediately following birth, either by the mother or by her female attendants; the men are never permitted to see these monsters. They too are buried in the house, which is immediately abandoned. 845 [535] 845 847

Postnatal Care

The mother surrounds her child with every care and attention until she again becomes pregnant, and even subsequently if the child is not yet able to look after itself to some extent. 846

[ARCHERS]

and may devote his time to his bride. He further 593
alleges that the young couple do not exhibit 152
their affection in public, but that one may conclude from various signs that mutual affection continues even in advanced age. Jealousy, however, often comes into the open, and women are particularly suspicious of their husbands. The usual factors leading to the disruption of a 593
marriage are cited as disagreement over the 586
upbringing of the children, idleness of either party, the disputatious nature of the women, or the irascibility of the men.

Sexual relations are maintained during men- 833
struation; Schebesta mentions the fact that the 84
only restriction is during the final stage of pregnancy and for several months following childbirth. In some regions, he adds, there is also a restriction on sexual intercourse between the husband and any woman following the birth of a child to his wife. Such a statement evidently 833
implies an acceptance of extramarital inter- 837
course in other regions, yet he also claims that adultery is considered as a moral transgression offending the divinity; when committed with a married woman, it is criminal. Some allowance is made for a man who cannot have relations with his wife (as during a period of sex taboo); intercourse with an unmarried woman is then generally not considered as adultery. An itching 832
body and birth of twins are, among some 845
[P. 181- D] 827

[ARCHERS]

[P. 182-A]

832 Mbuti, considered as signs that adultery has
[845] taken place. An offended wife has the right to
[827] leave her husband; an offended husband may chastise his wife and attack his rival, possibly leading to a feud between two bands. If he finds his wife *in flagrante delicto*, he has the right to kill her lover. However, Schebesta cites no case histories.

Separation

586 A husband's justification for separation is based on the constant infidelity of the wife, her sterility, her selfishness leading to neglect of her husband, sickness, or suspicion of sorcery. On the woman's side, separation is justified by ill treatment by her husband, neglect of his hunting duties, and his infidelity. Separation is achieved simply by each band's reclaiming the daughter it gave in exchange, or effecting compensation. It does not necessarily involve hostility between the two bands, in which case the children may remain with their father, without their mother's becoming ostracized from the community. Also, a child may remain with its mother, even if she returns to her own band or remarries into another. Only when a child marries is there a necessity to settle the question of its economic allegiance.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

533 four types of song can be distinguished by its musical form alone, but its performance is not necessarily limited to the appropriate occasion. Thus a *molimo* song may be sung around the campfire in the evening without the *molimo* association's necessarily holding a formal meeting, which would exclude the presence of women. Similarly, honey-gathering songs may be sung well out of honey season. A fifth group, play songs, is associated with children's games and mothers' lullabies.

512 Singing, dancing, and story telling may continue late into the night unless it is raining. Families retire to their huts as they feel inclined, but throughout the night there is nearly always a small group of men or boys around the main fire, warming themselves or smoking. This is where the bachelors generally sleep.

84 CONCEPTION AND CHILDBIRTH

184 The general information given by Schebesta for the archers applies to the net hunters also. 845 Putnam has, however, recorded a number of difficult births, and Mrs. Putnam witnessed various measures taken to overcome complications. On one occasion a Pygmy woman was in labor for 36 hours in a village. Villager and [177] Pygmy women came and tried their own individual remedies, including filling the ears and

[P. 213-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 213-C]

nose with leaves (Pygmy), making slight cuts 845
on the stomach, arms, and knees and rubbing [177]
in herbal medicines (villager), and rubbing the stomach with cold water (both Pygmy and villager). While these activities were going on, children were playing about and running in and out of the hut where the pregnant woman was kept. Finally, the woman in labor, who, though in great pain, had never uttered a word of complaint was made to sit on a log, while one woman sat behind her and held her up, and another in front massaged the infant out. During the whole period of labor the woman's father and her husband were with her constantly. It [843]
was agreed that her difficulties resulted from her having broken a food taboo and eaten the flesh of an anteater.[1]

Another aid used by the Pygmy woman dur- 844
ing childbirth is described by Anne Putnam (1954, 165). The girl in labor is given one end of a liana to hold; the other end is tied to a tree. Each time the pains start, the girl pulls on the liana as her friends massage her stomach.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and adoption may also take place if a mother is without milk, or if one woman is childless and a baby is born to a friend or relative who already has a large family. 597 85

Twins

There is no information available, except that twins have been born and survived, and that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is known. It is believed that to separate them is to kill them. 845

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net hunters are given every care and attention. They are breast-fed until after they can walk and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of this group are much more prone than the archer women to leave their children with sisters or close friends for short periods. A great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and trying to climb trees before it can walk. When a camp is moved, an infant is carried either on the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide sling (Fig. 44) across the hip. 854 [84] [853]

The children, as they grow older, tend to play together, frequently away from the camp. 857

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
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[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

[ARCHERS]

553 Schebesta reports that the child is not named for some weeks after birth. To name a boy is the father's prerogative or that of the oldest male members of his lineage; to name a girl is the right of the mother or her oldest relatives. There is no uniform custom, except that naming is primarily the privilege of the parents.

844 It is a Pygmy custom to fasten the umbilical
• 846 cord to the child's elbow and later to bury it in
[114] some swamp. Schebesta found no evidence of the truth of Johnston's statement (1902, 1904, 539) that Pygmy women sever the umbilical
847 cord with their teeth. Abortion is known to the Pygmies, but plays no part in marital life.

Twins

845 The birth of twins, among the archers, seems
847 to be considered abnormal and inauspicious. Schebesta frequently heard that following the birth of twins one had died. He was told by an elder that, when twins are born, the elders are immediately informed, and they advise that if both infants are strong and healthy they be allowed to live, otherwise the weaker of the two should be killed. The mother herself smothers the infant by covering its nose and mouth with her hand. The body is immediately buried in the house, which is promptly abandoned.

[P.178-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 178-C]

Dances are organized by the women to celebrate the birth of twins, whether or not both live. Schebesta (1948, 409) mentions the fact that, although the neighboring village tribes have similar feelings about abnormal births, they content themselves with evading unhappy consequences by magical dances and other rites. Schebesta (1948, 409) suggests that superstitious terror and fear of attendant sanctions drive the Pygmy mother to the more violent way of avoiding danger. He writes that all abnormal infants are also put to death immediately following birth, either by the mother or by her female attendants; the men are never permitted to see these monsters. They too are buried in the house, which is immediately abandoned. 845 [535] 845 847

Postnatal Care

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[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 853]

A woman who has given birth is not allowed to leave her hut until game has fallen into her husband's net. If the camp is moved before this happens, she is hidden in the bush and taken separately to the new camp where she is kept hidden until her new hut is built for her by relatives (not stated which relatives). The husband himself may not join the hunt but sends his net with another member of the group.

The father keeps the arrow that cut the umbilical cord, and the cord itself, until the child is old enough to throw them both away into the forest.

If no animal falls into the husband's net (the rule is extended usually to include some close relative's net) for some weeks, the mother and infant may be brought out of seclusion by the giving of a feast to her relatives. The baby is then shaved with an arrowpoint, bathed, rubbed with oil and red *nkula* paste, and bands [851]

[1] Note that this took place in a village, where such supernatural explanations are always sought by villagers. It is doubtful that the same explanation would have been given in the forest context. [877 871]

[P 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[177] [1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

as being masters, and their help is constantly being sought by villagers, not so well versed in forest lore. It has been shown, however, that where the Mbuti see a remedy that is more effective than theirs, such as modern drugs (only in some cases are these apparently superior), they will eventually seek them. Insofar as local dispensaries were run by villagers, the Mbuti had to rely on the villagers for such drugs. I do not consider this an instance of dependence, however, as up to the end of my last field trip the Mbuti would only seek such help when they were in the village; in the forest they found their own remedies adequate. Even more, when sickness or injury befell them in the village, the common reaction was to return to the forest.

But here we may note a significant difference in attitude to magic, or curative activity. Childbirth is a time which is thought of by both Mbuti and villagers as being attended by the possibility of danger, at least. The Mbuti think in terms of physical danger, and they have precautions that they take in the diet and behavior of the expectant mother before birth, and apparently effective knowledge of midwifery, including recognized ways of dealing with difficult births. After birth there are known cures for any weakness the infant or mother might show. What is lacking, among the Mbuti, is precisely what is dominant among the villagers: a felt need for protection against the supernatural.

A village mother and child will both have, according to how wealthy the family is, a number of potions to drink (which may or may not have medical significance, but are thought of as being protective) and divers charms to wear. The protection is thought to be necessary against *unknown* dangers. The difference between the two peoples is in the extent of this unknown. An Mbuti infant will have a vine bracelet or belt tied to it almost immediately after birth, and a small piece of wood or two will be fixed to the vine. It is stated that the vine and the wood convey to the child the health and strength of the forest. There is no apparent concern for any supernatural dangers, and no precautionary steps taken.

From the village point of view the lack of such measures involves the child and possibly the mother in great danger, and out of self-concern as much as out of concern for the Mbuti, the villagers proffer charms in abundance to expectant mothers and newborn children. However, the need is only felt by the villagers, not by the Mbuti.

This is precisely the difference we find when we seek other situations for which only the villagers have a cure—they are situations in

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

• 846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846 853
if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843
pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512
hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521
they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594]
women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533]
labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561]
Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512
huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354
sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276]
the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165]
occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512
cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462]
bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287]
may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512
groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264
is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594]
youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 [621] [847]

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. [594] [561] [533] [664]

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. [843]

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Everyone agreed
626 that after giving birth a woman should be left alone for a while, and
834 that her belly should not become big again until her child became
846 big.

595 One of the many fights that occurred because of this relationship
593 is described in *The Forest People* (Turnbull, 1961), at the end of
578 Chapter 6. There it is seen that Amabosu sided with his sister, and
626 consequently shared what everyone agreed was at least partly her guilt. Arobanai and Amabosu's mother, Sau, were the two who intervened to stop the fight when it began to get beyond bounds.

Amabosu, who intervened to help his sister, now found himself associated with her in her obstinate disregard of public opinion, so he ignored her and contented himself with continuing, from time to time, to make uncomplimentary remarks about her husband. This created a strain between Amabosu and his wife, Ekianga's sister, and while Sau became the protectress of her daughter-in-law, Arobanai became the protectress of her young co-wife.

One night Arobanai grumbled loud and long throughout the small hours until, about an hour before dawn, she came out into midcamp and woke everyone up with a torrent of abuse that was delivered with such vigor and evident sincerity that men came tumbling out of their huts holding their spears, ready for a large-scale fight. Arobanai had named just about everyone in the camp for some kind of offense,
[201] all of which contributed, she said, to Ekianga's delinquency. To emphasize her points she clapped her hands each time and pointed.
[522] Masisi tried to quiet her down by imitating her and laughing at her, but all but a few were too sleepy to see much humor in the situation, and when he saw he was not achieving anything he abruptly told Arobanai to "close her teeth" and then walked away. Ekianga came out of his hut and also quietly tried to pacify his irate wife, but was equally unsuccessful. Others tried similarly and made equally little impression. Sleep was impossible, and everyone sat around huddled over their family hearth, cold and miserable, listening to the still undiminished flow of invective. Occasionally a finely turned phrase brought some nervous laughter, but on the whole Arobanai was not going after dramatic effect, she was merely cataloguing all the disturbances of the past few months and laying them at her husband's door. After over an hour of nonstop tirade Arobanai began to wind up her argument with an indictment of both Kamaikan and Amabosu. Kamaikan could have resisted Ekianga's attentions, she said, and she added that she had resisted them often enough herself. But Kamaikan

[ARCHERS]

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[ARCHERS]

[P. 178-C]

Dances are organized by the women to celebrate the birth of twins, whether or not both live. Schebesta (1948, 409) mentions the fact that, although the neighboring village tribes have similar feelings about abnormal births, they content themselves with evading unhappy consequences by magical dances and other rites. Schebesta (1948, 409) suggests that superstitious terror and fear of attendant sanctions drive the Pygmy mother to the more violent way of avoiding danger. He writes that all abnormal infants are also put to death immediately following birth, either by the mother or by her female attendants; the men are never permitted to see these monsters. They too are buried in the house, which is immediately abandoned. 845 [535] 845 847

Postnatal Care

The mother surrounds her child with every care and attention until she again becomes pregnant, and even subsequently if the child is not yet able to look after itself to some extent. 846

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.222-C]

Far less important than disease or accidental 165
death is animal hostility—elephants, buffalo, 136
and leopards being the major sources of danger.
It is extremely rare for any Pygmy to be killed
by one of these animals. The net-hunting Mbuti [278]
have effective medicines against poisonous
snakes.

For most illnesses, says Putnam, the Pygmy 757
can find a local remedy. For stomach upsets and
diarrhea an enema (a hollow reed with a gourd
gummed to one end) is administered, with the
use of vegetable decoctions containing *gorogoro*
bark for the former complaint, and *tebvo* liana
for the latter. These enemas are also used to [847]
produce abortions. For ailments that they are [755]
unable to cure and that are foreign to them, [177]
some may seek the help of a villager witch
doctor, though Mbuti opinion varies as to their
efficiency.

Death, then, is accepted as just as natural a 763
phenomenon as birth, and the body is accorded [761]
little ritual respect. There are, unlike Schebesta's
account for the archers, cited examples of wail-
ing. The following instances taken from the
notes of Anne Putnam illustrate its extent.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 232-C]

inch thick, packed tight. The top layer of dry leaves and kindling are soaked with oil and set on fire. The fire is kept going for about four hours, then the patient is taken out and hot leaves are applied. This treatment may be followed by hot baths, scarification and insertion of herbal medicine into the wounds, and resting on a bed, but none of this is said to be absolutely necessary. 757

A young man, given to being seized with trembling fits, is calmed by having incisions on his stomach rubbed with a black powder. A liquid is poured down his nose from a leaf funnel.

A certain type of bark, *ikanya*, extremely poisonous, is used to procure an abortion by making a decoction from it and giving it to the pregnant woman to inhale. It appears that even inhaling the dry bark might be effective, but is not certainly so. 847 • 278 824

effective. The only indication of band interest in birth is the prohibition against married women procuring abortions, which are known and sometimes practiced among the unmarried girls, though rarely. 844 621 847

As far as the nuclear family is concerned the event arouses considerable happiness, and the mother's female age mates may gather with her to sing a few *elima* songs to celebrate the blessing of motherhood; a childless woman is regarded as the most unfortunate of beings. A few of the younger youths may show some interest, as the new child will before long become their responsibility for protection and instruction. After a few days, when the child is brought freely into the open, the hunters and elders will fondle it and compliment the parents. The father is as proud as the mother, and just as likely to carry the child around to show it off. 594 561 533 664

Medical precautions are minimal. The mother is likely to be off on the hunt, or on the trail somewhere when birth takes place; there is no lessening of activity for her during pregnancy. Childbirth is said to be effected easily, with complications only rarely happening. Any woman may act as midwife; the father should not be present. If there is delay the expectant mother may be massaged to help delivery, or she may be brought away from the camp into the forest, and sat close to a tree against which she pulls with a vine rope. Within two hours of delivery, if birth took place in the camp, the mother is apt to appear in the doorway of her hut, with a bundle wrapped in bark cloth held in her arms. Within the same period of time, if birth took place on the trail, she will continue her journey. 843

Although the father is not present at the birth in person, it must be one of his arrow blades, or formerly a wooden or leaf knife made by him, that will cut the umbilical cord. The blade is kept with the cord until the child is old enough to make a bundle of them both, take them to a stream and bury them where they will get carried away by the next flood waters. 844 846 412

There is also knowledge of a custom of couvade, though I did not find anyone who had practiced it. If the birth is slow, the father takes off all his clothes and his sister-in-law washes and rubs him. She then goes to the place of labor, and when the child is born returns to the father, who must make a token gift before he can clothe himself again. 846 844

The father, and the mother's brother, if he is in the camp, cut special vines daily and sprinkle their juices over both the baby and the mother, "to make them strong." Some of these vines contain so much 846 751

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
[751] of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

846 of barkcloth are sewed around its arms and
[851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

844 Putnam emphasizes the normality of childbirth itself, despite the possibility of ensuing complications such as those described above from Anne Putnam's personal observation. The woman makes no allowance for her condition and may actually be moving from one camp to another when her time comes, in which case she gives birth to the child and then moves on (Putnam, 1948, 339). There is no ritual recogni-
851 tion of the birth of a child. Naming takes place
553 only after some weeks when the infant has shown that it "has come to stay." If it dies
[766] before it has been named, there is no particular ceremony and little mourning except by the mother. There is a great deal of fostering and
597 adoption, according to Putnam (1948, 340),
• 85 particularly between sisters and women who are friends and who work together. When a woman with young children dies, her sister takes her girls and young boys and looks after the girls until they are marriageable; the father

[177] [1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old 597
enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and 85.
adoption may also take place if a mother is
without milk, or if one woman is childless and a
baby is born to a friend or relative who already
has a large family.

Twins

There is no information available, except 845
that twins have been born and survived, and
that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is
known. It is believed that to separate them is to
kill them.

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net 854
hunters are given every care and attention. [84]
They are breast-fed until after they can walk [853]
and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of
this group are much more prone than the
archer women to leave their children with
sisters or close friends for short periods. A
great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when
it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing
with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and try-
ing to climb trees before it can walk. When a
camp is moved, an infant is carried either on
the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide
sling (Fig. 44) across the hip.

The children, as they grow older, tend to 857
play together, frequently away from the camp.

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 [853]

A woman who has given birth is not allowed to leave her hut until game has fallen into her husband's net. If the camp is moved before this happens, she is hidden in the bush and taken separately to the new camp where she is kept hidden until her new hut is built for her by relatives (not stated which relatives). The husband himself may not join the hunt but sends his net with another member of the group.

The father keeps the arrow that cut the umbilical cord, and the cord itself, until the child is old enough to throw them both away into the forest.

If no animal falls into the husband's net (the rule is extended usually to include some close relative's net) for some weeks, the mother and infant may be brought out of seclusion by the giving of a feast to her relatives. The baby is then shaved with an arrowpoint, bathed, rubbed with oil and red *nkula* paste, and bands [851]

[1] Note that this took place in a village, where such supernatural explanations are always sought by villagers. It is doubtful that the same explanation would have been given in the forest context. [677] [671]

[P 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 214-A]

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• [851] knees. The father and mother are now freed of most restrictions, but neither may eat meat until the baby can crawl. The exact extent of restrictions on sexual relations[1] during this period is not given by Putnam.

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[177] [1] Again it must be stressed that many such restrictions are part of the village system, and, although the Mbuti may claim to follow them, such adherence is likely to be far from rigid.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

Intermarriage

P 144 582 Z 144 563 582 As pointed out above, this traffic is one-way. There are no records of Pygmy men taking villager wives, nor any acknowledged instances of Pygmy men begetting children by villager mistresses. Blood counts (Schebesta, 1938, 111), however, reveal a small proportion of villager influence in hunting communities, which may or may not be accounted for by the return of the half-breed offspring from the village to the forest. Normally the children of such unions are brought up as villagers. The father will, to the best of his ability, prevent children by his Pygmy wife from returning to the forest, and apparently the Pygmies themselves regard such children as villagers.

P Z [B51]

Z P 582 There are not enough data on individual intermarriage for us to determine how far this one-way tendency is a form of hypergamy. It may, in fact, simply be the result of the practical consideration that no villager woman could fulfill the requirements of a woman and wife in a Pygmy hunting camp. Even if the latter is the case, it does not answer the question as to why a Pygmy girl should marry a villager. Unfortunately, there is no evidence that gives us even the hint of an answer. There is certainly no

P 582 186

[P 251-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 28 1/

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

855
851 a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

882
885
202 b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married. Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

1/,/Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
302
855
851

/Plate 28-A/

/Caption appears on p. 288/

[P.289-A]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

MARRIAGE

Marriage, as we have already seen, may involve the Mbuti in village ritual, and even if their Mbuti claim to have been married in the forest according to their own rites, the villagers try to insist on a village ceremony. Their concern is that the marriage shall be protected, as in village society, against disruption. As the Mbuti not only have no system of paying bride wealth but have no wealth that could be paid, the villagers are obliged to supply the wealth they deem necessary to help stabilize the marriage. They say that a marriage without wealth will not last. But as with the *nkumbi*, they feel that the major safeguard they secure by putting the Mbuti through the village ritual is that the marriage then becomes the concern of the tribal ancestors and subject to supernatural sanctions, all of which operate in the interests of the villagers.

An important part of the village ceremony formalizing a marriage between two Mbuti is the admonition given by a number of villagers to both groom and bride, reminding them of their old obligations and telling them of the new. The bride is introduced to her husband's *kpara* and his wife, and is told exactly what the wife expects of her; at the same time she is reminded of her own *kpara* and admonished not to forget where her "relatives" live. In fact, the place that would be occupied by the parents of the bride and groom in a normal village ceremony are, when two Mbuti are being married, occupied by the *kpara*. Each admonition generally ends with a reminder that the tribal ancestors of the villagers have been invoked for their blessings, and the tribe has provided generous feasts for all the relatives of the bride and groom, and wealth to boot, so any infidelity or any breach of the bond will call down supernatural wrath upon the (Mbuti) families of all those concerned.

In the various crises that may face the couple now, it will be all the more important for the villagers to take the necessary ritual precautions, and to investigate any calamity for evidence of witchcraft. Mbuti marriages tend to be somewhat unstable until the first child is born, and indeed are not considered as marriages by the Mbuti until then, separation and the formation of new unions being the rule rather than the exception. The villagers tend to suspect that witchcraft is at work, sometimes suspecting an Mbuti, sometimes another villager. Bad hunting and sickness are considered to be due to witch-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

584 for permission for her to live with him. He will already have proved his manhood by running the gauntlet and by sleeping with the girl, and the fact that he has succeeded in these endeavors is alone proof of his acceptance. He now only has to prove himself as a hunter, and the act of betrothal is sealed by his killing one of the larger antelope and presenting it to the girl's parents, perhaps also with some other gifts, such as a bow and arrows, bark cloth, or a machete.

584 591 The girl then goes to live with him, unless it is considered preferable, probably on grounds of band size, for the boy to join the girl's band. In either case, or if they both belong to the same band, the girl simply builds a hut without any ceremony, and they live in it. No particular note is made of the occasion, though there may be a few jokes made at their expense, and they will be allowed considerable 58 freedom from camp routine for a few days. No further change in status [851] takes place until the girl becomes pregnant, at which time we might consider that the betrothal becomes effective as marriage. Separation before this takes place is perfectly possible and likely, and takes place without any comment, difficulty or restitution. Separation later, after childbirth, is more rare. If a couple have lived together for a long time (over a year) without having children, they will also be considered as married. This is unusual, however, for the object of marriage is in good part to have children, and if a couple fails, each will accuse the other of sterility and seek a new partner.

584 621 583 In seeking a partner who has not slept with him in the *elima* hut, a boy goes through the same procedure, except that the band will be called on to give its approval, and the prospective union will be discussed, elders having the most say. If he is refused, and if he and the girl are persistent, they may elope, joining another band. In this case that other band will be expected to provide a girl in exchange, for the system, such as it is, is one of sister exchange in the widest classificatory sense of the term. It frequently does take place between full brothers and sisters, but equally frequently there is no attempt to effect exchange so long as the married couple remains within the band. If the marriage is out of the band, then any return marriage, regardless of kinship, is considered to restore the balance. Again, in view of the constant fluctuation in band composition, it would be of no advantage for any more formal system to pertain.

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

If no foster mother is available, an infant whose mother dies during childbirth is fed banana water, supplied by the villagers, through a leaf funnel. When an infant is in such danger, the juice from a certain liana is sprinkled over it to make it strong. 846 [853].

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[P 213-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

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2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.108-H]

361
344
352
142
291
516

9. The Mbuti village baraza was never completed, and remained marked only by four posts.

142
516
412
415
853
482

10. While in the village camp, an Mbuti mother borrows or steals many luxuries too bulky or heavy to carry with her into the forest. Of the mortar and pestle, stool, metal cooking vessels, enamel bowls and bottle of palm oil, she will probably return to the forest with only one vessel.

838 married men sleeping together. The two age groups do not mix, but
513 among themselves members of the same sex think nothing of sleeping close to each other and deriving mild sexual satisfaction from the physical contact. They state very carefully rules as to how to lie, with legs thrown backwards around the other's legs, or even around his hips or waist, and they say one may entwine legs while lying front to front, though it is not considered good to hold each other too closely with the arms. The thought of any sexual intercourse taking place,
[578] however, is greeted with apparent horror, and homosexuality is never alluded to except as a great insult, under the most dire provocation. There is, however, a dance in which the sexes are effectively reversed, and which is danced with the utmost humor, but the role of which
[535] I could never exactly determine. The dance, *ekokomea*, is dealt with later in the context in which it occurs; namely, at the time of the *molimo* festival.

837 If a considerable amount of sexual liberty is allowed the youths, a
834 fair amount is at least said to be taken by the younger married hunters. I have not, however, been able to record a single instance of a marital dispute involving the band that arose out of infidelity on either side. There are few restrictions on sexual intercourse, though the villagers state many on behalf of the Mbuti. The married hunters, as do the youths, regard the hunt as an opportune time for ac-
841 tivity of this kind. At menstruation, which is a time when a village
[842] woman is under the strictest ritual prohibitions, the Mbuti attitude is that it all depends on whether or not you want children, as this is when conception is most likely to take place. There are those who enjoy sex at this time, and those who find it distasteful. The only restriction is that a wife should inform her husband, or a girl her boy friend, that she is "with blood" so that he will know.

846 Immediately following childbirth is a rather vague period, some-
837 times stated as days, sometimes more grandiosely as years, when intercourse is forbidden. Unfortunately I was able to follow up only on three instances of childbirth, but in each of these the Mbuti fathers did exactly what they said they would do; two of them refrained from intercourse with their wives for about a year, during which time they flirted with as many girls as they liked, and did not deny open gossip
846 that they were "sleeping around." This is the generally accepted pat-
853 tern, the reason being given that a woman can only feed one child at a time, so she must not become pregnant again until her last child is weaned. This may be from one to three years. If during that time

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

her milk dries up and the child is given to someone else to feed, or 846 if it is weaned early, then intercourse is apparently resumed. The third 853 father, however, while acknowledging this to be the accepted pattern, began sleeping with his wife again within a month. This he did even though he had the rare advantage for an Mbuti of having two other wives. His action caused a major dispute. (See p. 207 *seq.*)

During pregnancy there are no restrictions; sexual activity in early 843 pregnancy is believed to hurry matters along, and during the latter stages is merely considered uncomfortable, and possibly physically injurious to the child and mother.

As the evening settles in, nuclear families sit around their family 512 hearths outside the huts, talking across the camp at each other until 521 they go inside to sleep, or simply lie down to sleep by the fire (the [594] women nearly always sleep inside, but youths and men frequently sleep on their hunting nets either by their own fire or by a central fire). Even when families have retired inside their huts, conversation continues between them. If there is any singing, other than of lul- [533] labies, the camp divides into age groups, each building its own fire. [561] Unless there is an *elima* or *molimo* festival, there is no marked division between the sexes.

On retiring for the night family hearths are brought inside the 512 huts, and any central fires are also brought inside unless someone is 354 sleeping by them. When a central fire is broken up, each family tends to take an ember and add it to their own hearth. A fire is not left untended at night. During the night a man may awaken and stoke up a fire, warming himself by the blaze. At such times, when cold, [276] the Mbuti smoke particularly heavily, and as a result they sometimes fall unconscious. They may fall into the fire and suffer serious burns, [165] occasionally fatal, and this is one of the few generally cited causes of accidental death—other than falling from a tree.

On days when the hunt stays in the camp, because of rain or be- 512 cause some dispute has caused a rift, both men and women attend to specific chores. Men repair and add to their nets and make new [462] bows and arrows; the women roll twine and work at basketry. Both [287] may make and decorate bark cloth, a major activity on such a day. A good part of the day is always given to singing, dancing, playing games and storytelling. There is a constant shifting from family 512 groupings to age groupings, but mealtime is the only time when there 264 is a definite emphasis on the nuclear family. Even then, male [594] youths, hunters and elders may take their food to a central fire and [561]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
[751] of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

• 853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.228-D]

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25. Akidinimba celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage during an elima dance.

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26. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to fondle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

himself for comfort. He stayed in the forest for nearly twenty-four 685
hours, and when he came back the next night he went straight to 159
his hut, unseen, and lay down to sleep. His hut was between mine 627
and Sau's, and I heard him come in, and I heard him crying softly [152]
because even his brother wouldn't speak to him.

The next day Pepei was his old self, and everyone was glad to see him laughing; they were happy to be able to listen to his jokes, and they all gave him food so that he wouldn't have to steal again.

But sometimes a dispute cannot be settled in any of these ways. It 578
blows up too quickly to be ended by ridicule; the participants are too old to be thrashed; yet it is not serious enough to merit ostracism. Such disputes are usually trivial in origin, and often arise from the confined and close conditions of living. Personal relations become very 578
involved in a hunting group, particularly when both members of a 583
sister-exchange marriage are living in the same group.

Under this system, when a boy chooses a wife he becomes obliged to find a "sister"—actually any girl relative—to offer in exchange to his bride's family for one of their bachelor sons. This can be quite a chore, as it may be difficult to find a "sister" who is willing to marry the youth his in-laws have in mind as a groom, and whom the groom himself will also like.

Amabosu had married Ekianga's sister, and Ekianga had married, 593
as his third wife, Amabosu's sister, the beautiful Kamaikan. He had 595
just had a child by her, while Amabosu was still childless. Since 578
Kamaikan was nursing a child, Ekianga was under an obligation not 853 •
to sleep with her, and his two other wives were happy that at last they 607
could expect him to pay them some attention. But to everyone's dismay he continued to sleep with Kamaikan. And one day Amabosu started making loud remarks across the camp about his sister's health. [583]

This was not at Apa Lelo, but at a later camp, Apa Kadiketu. Amabosu's hut was to my right, and it faced directly across toward

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

607 593 595 853 578 [252] the first of Ekianga's huts, the largest and the best, built by himself and Kamaikan. Amabosu was sitting down at his fire at the time, and his wife was sitting near him, peeling mushrooms for the evening meal. Ekianga was inside the hut with Kamaikan, who had given the baby to her old mother, Sau, to look after for a few hours. At first Amabosu's remarks brought no response from the closed hut. But he became more and more explicit, denouncing Ekianga's shame in considerable and intimate detail, hinting that what was going on inside the hut at that moment was precisely what every new mother should avoid if she was to be able to look after the baby properly and give it lots of milk.

593 595 411 578 607 At last Ekianga retorted angrily from inside the hut. Amabosu continued to sit quietly, staring into the fire, with his wide, strange eyes. He answered in as caustic tones as he could find. In the end, Ekianga's door burst open and Ekianga appeared, spear in hand. He looked wild with fury and shame, and he flexed his muscles and hurled the spear at Amabosu with all his might. Amabosu looked up from the fire for the first time, but sat perfectly still with not a flicker of emotion on his face, his eyes still wide and cold and staring. The spear struck the ground within twelve inches of his feet, which was probably exactly where it had been intended to land. Amabosu calmly rose, pulled the spear free, and tossed it behind his hut into the rubbish dump. This was just about as insulting a gesture as he could have made at that moment, and it started one of the most dramatic fights I have seen in a Pygmy camp, and one of the most complicated.

593 595 578 607 As long as it was between the two men all was well, but the wives were torn between their loyalties as wives and as sisters. Amabosu's wife entered the fray by swearing at her husband for throwing her brother's spear into the rubbish dump. Amabosu countered by smacking her firmly across the face. Normally Ekianga would have approved of such manly assertion of authority over a disloyal wife, but as

the wife was his sister he retaliated by going into his hut and dragging 593
out Kamaikan, whom he in turn publicly smacked across *her* face. 595
Kamaikan was made of tough stock. She picked up a log from the 598
fire and beat her husband over the back with it. It is difficult to 607
remember just exactly what the sequence of events was after that.

The two wives began fighting tooth and nail, quite literally. The men battled with burning logs, three or four feet long, swinging them from the cool end, but always just missing each other. Every now and again one of the girls would break free and go to the assistance of her brother, and the other would run and pull her away.

As always, a large crowd gathered—men, women and children. But nobody volunteered to stop the fight or to adjudicate in any way. They took one side or the other, either according to the rights and wrongs of the issue, or merely on the grounds that one or the other was the better fighter and more likely to win. The general opinion [853] was that Ekianga should certainly not be sleeping with Kamaikan while she was nursing a baby, but since Kamaikan was equally at fault, Amabosu was wrong in defending her. By and large, however, the onlookers were more interested in the fight than the issue at stake.

As the fight grew more serious, and some visible damage was being done to all four parties, first relatives and then friends began to take sides more vigorously, and it looked as though fighting were going to break out all over the camp. At that moment Arobanai, Ekianga's senior wife, came striding out of her hut and announced in her deep contralto voice that she couldn't rest with all this noise going on, so it would have to stop. To make her impartiality quite plain she added that her animal of a husband could sleep with anyone he wanted to as far as she was concerned. She then went to where the two girls were locked together, both looking very much the worse for wear. She pulled them apart, and having given Amabosu's wife a hefty kick she took Kamaikan tenderly and led her back to her own hut.

[P. 165-C]

Among Putnam's net hunters, a more frequent use of skin, of late, has been in the form of a sling for carrying babies, but this is still rare. 237 854

Clay and stone are likewise ignored as possible raw materials, nor are there any reports that the Mbuti worked metal at any time. Apart from an exceptional case among the net hunters, quoted by Schebesta (1933), such metal as they require for knife and ax blades, and for arrow and spearheads, they obtain already worked from the villagers. 325 [317] [316] [177] [411] [412] [439]

If the villager supplies the handle as well as the triangular blade, Putnam (1948, 326) writes that the invariable method of hafting is to burn a hole through the wood to take the narrow end of the blade. If the blade alone is supplied, the Pygmy takes a thin sapling or a light branch, splits it, and, without removing the bark, lashes the blade in place with twine or rattan. If a Pygmy is using an ax up in a tree, he will always choose one of his own hafting, because it is lighter. Both men and women use these axes. Putnam (1948, 326) writes that they never use adzes, which are the chief tools of the village woodworkers. 412 284 412

[ARCHERS]

There are different types of knives, some hafted, 412
some unhafted, always worn in the belt by 177
women and used for preparing food and for
sharpening the pointed sticks used by them in
both gathering activities and in cooking. Other 41
items that might be found in or around an Efe
archer hut include hunting equipment, such as a [534]
bow and quiver of arrows (Figs. 6–9), a dog bell [231]
(Fig. 7i), an ax for cutting small saplings and [276]
sometimes used in the search for honey, an [854]
ivory or wooden beater for barkcloth, clay pipe [789]
bowls (Fig. 5), hide slings for carrying children,
and a few personal possessions such as hunting
charms. Of exceptional interest, perhaps, is the 285
basketry press (Fig. 11), used among the arch- 252
ers for extraction of juice from fruits.

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Clothing consists mainly of barkcloth worn
tucked between the legs. The upper part of the
body is rarely covered, and then only by a skin
cape worn over the shoulders by old men. Bas-
ketry caps are worn by men, and sometimes fur
bands which may also be worn on the arm.
Schebesta also mentions bracelets of shredded 301
bark. Both men and women may wear, around
the upper arm or wrist, fiber cords to which
small pieces of wood, teeth, and other charms
are attached. Leaves, flowers, nuts, and feathers
[P.167–D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 168-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P.177-A]

621 own lineages and can at all times return to them
609 or count on their aid, but economically they are
613 members of the lineage with which they are living.

462 Among the archers a woman's daily activity
512 is concerned primarily with the welfare of the
individual family and only indirectly with that
592 of the band. She takes no part in the hunt (unless it is the rare *begbe* hunt; see p. 172), and her gathering activities, which may be undertaken alone or with friends, benefit her own family
[B54] only. She carries her youngest baby on her hip or her back, and the rest of the children play together or follow her about. She collects the wood for the family fire, and the materials for building and repairing her house.

593 Her husband spends less time near the family
594 hut. He is more concerned with the welfare of
621 the band than that of his own family. The children are more attached to their mother than to their father, except for the older boys who gradually transfer their loyalty to the band as a
593 whole. Schebesta (1952, 214) reports that in
594 general, however, a family eats together, though
264 the father may eat apart with his sons. The separation by sex at meal times is more of a villager custom.

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 202-C]

The net-hunting technique is similar to that of the *begbe* described by Schebesta (1952, 133 ff.) but with the notable absence of the leadership of an "elder." The decision as to when and where to hunt is made during the evening preceding the hunt, in conversation among all the hunters around the campfire. Whereas rain puts an end to both net hunting and tracking, lack of rain (causing dry leaves to crackle underfoot) is disadvantageous only to trackers. Like the beat hunt, net hunting relies on the *amount* of noise that can be made. 224 184

The net hunt calls for a minimum of seven nets, each married man owning a net. Unmarried men may also own nets if they have proved their prowess as hunters. It is usual in a normal camp of about 17 huts for the majority of men, women, and children to join the hunt. If the camp is large, some members stay behind and perform their various subsidiary chores such as the repair of nets, the manufacture of barkcloth and twine, gathering, and so forth. The women joining the hunt carry their babies on their backs; boys and young men are armed with bows and arrows or spears; and the heads of families carry their nets and spears. Various 224 [422] [512] [854]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 203-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

In the left hand they carry a smouldering log end wrapped in a phrynium leaf, and they may also carry a baby on the left hip in a sling. Special utensils of Mbuti origin include a bark container (Fig. 32a) sealed with *kasuku* resin, and a fragile vine basket lined with leaves (Fig. 43b). Hardwood rhythm sticks, *ngbengbe* (Fig. 43c), are cut and used during the honey season. 222 [372] [854] [415] [534]

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

The information available is exactly the same as that given by Schebesta for the archers. Pipestems and bowls are borrowed from vil- [184]

[P 210-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old 597
enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and 85
adoption may also take place if a mother is without milk, or if one woman is childless and a baby is born to a friend or relative who already has a large family.

Twins

There is no information available, except 845
that twins have been born and survived, and that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is known. It is believed that to separate them is to kill them.

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net 854
hunters are given every care and attention. [84]
They are breast-fed until after they can walk [853]
and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of this group are much more prone than the archer women to leave their children with sisters or close friends for short periods. A great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and trying to climb trees before it can walk. When a camp is moved, an infant is carried either on the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide sling (Fig. 44) across the hip.

The children, as they grow older, tend to 857
play together, frequently away from the camp.

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

• 854
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[P.214-C]

FIG. 44. Baby-carrying sling, *koko*, net hunters, Epulu District, Central Ituri. The sling is used relatively rarely and usually only on long treks on which the women will also be carrying loads. Otherwise, the baby is sat on the hip and is held loosely by one arm.

[NET HUNTERS]

854 304 757 Newborn infants are scarified on the stomach, chest, and leg, and the wounds are treated with herbs, often mixed with goat manure if the net hunters are near a village.

757 The Mbuti in this area claim to have a method which they have practiced for a long time for the treatment of paralysis. Examples given, however, describe this treatment as being given to villager or Pygmy children by villagers. The treatment can also be given to an adult. For paralysis of the legs, it consists essentially of standing the patient in a pit, filling it, and stamping the earth down hard. Only the upper part of the patient's body, which is continually washed with warm water, is left above ground. The stem of the *atumba* (a small plant resembling a dandelion) is cut and cooked with manioc and rubbed into a light incision in the affected limb. The patient may be kept in the pit for four hours a day for a week; each time he is taken out he is washed with warm water. It is claimed that after this treatment the patient will be able to walk, however crippled he was beforehand.

A similar treatment is reported for sprained back or arm. The patient is laid flat in a shallow pit. He is covered from knees to chest with a mixture of earth and leaves, about one

[P 232-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 27 1/A

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

888 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and
301 affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift
177 from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.

• 854 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding, fondling, and even nursing the child.

1/A/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P 286]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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/Plate 27-B/

/Caption appears on p. 286/

[P. 287-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 108-E]

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5. Mbuti women and girls rest as they bring roofing leaves into village for village houses.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one
264 person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to
[576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even
[868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness derives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

• [854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 732 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P. 156-C]

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[164]

19. In one of Cephu's camps, Aberi talks to his family. His wife, her face ravaged by yaws, holds their youngest child in a sling of fresh-painted bark cloth.

595 feigned to run into a tree and fall unconscious. She was carried into
578 Cephu's hut, where she stayed until the next day. Then, in a very
304 matter-of-fact way, she emerged, went over to Ekianga's hut and picked up the sick boy. In front of the few who cared to look she made a few incisions with an arrow tip. The boy seemed better, and Loku happily played with him. Ekianga came and inquired how her head was where she hit the tree, and persuaded her to go and lie down. They disappeared into the hut together and that settled the matter. Manyalibo pointed to the hut and observed that it was shaking somewhat. "Sorcery, indeed!" was his comment as he turned his back to go into his own hut.

595 Ekianga settled down, from then onward dividing his attentions equally among his three wives, though seldom again was there a camp when all three were with him at the same time.

578 DISPUTES CONCERNING TERRITORY

[593] 21. There were only four such disputes that I recorded during an entire year, all of them slight and apparently indicative of marital disagreements; that is, excluding discussions as to whether or not to break camp and go to the village, a stock suggestion and a good arguing point whenever another issue turns up that is better avoided.
578 Once, however, when such a suggestion was seriously made and the
621 general opinion seemed to be that it was time for a move to the vil-
166 lage, an elderly widow, Nakwanji, came out of her hut and harangued
• 854 the band from midcamp. She said that a child had been born in that camp and that the child was well. Its food was there, in that camp and in that part of the forest, and it should not be taken from its food. Everyone agreed except Tungana, who said perhaps they could compromise and go halfway to the village and make a new camp there. Nakwanji was insistent and said no, this was the child's forest and this was where it must stay as long as it remained well and happy.

621 22. During the big rift in the honey season, Moké was up in the
593 northern part of the territory with Ekianga and Manyalibo. Isa, his
578 son, and Isa's wife, Pikenasona, were at Masisi's camp staying with
602 Njobo's wife. Partly because of the noise Masisi made every evening, and partly because he wanted to be with his father, Isa kept insisting that Pikenasona leave and journey with him to the north. His wife, Njobo's niece, and therefore much at home in Masisi's camp, refused to go. Asofalinda, Ekianga's sister, told Isa it would be bad to go, as it

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-D]

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25. Akidinimba celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage during an elima dance.

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26. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to fondle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

uals acquire the reputation of possessing the necessary skills. The doctors in particular possess such skills as part of their profession as diviners and curers, but even they recognize manipulative power in others, and do not try to effect a monopoly.

If the magic fails, it is considered that the manipulation was faulty and will be tried again. Several successive failures will be attributed to the intervention of supernatural forces, and will then involve witchcraft or sorcery.

As shown earlier (p. 54 *seq.*), village magic, even regarded as it should be, in context—as scientifically valid—has little to offer the Mbuti. It may nominally impinge upon their world, for there are, for instance, divers forms of magic to protect plantations against Mbuti raiders. But the Mbuti attitude to magic is different, for they recognize village magic as a mere attempt to control a situation, and not as a scientifically valid process. Brought face to face with such magic they may be wary, but primarily they are skeptical.

In their own world the unknowns are far fewer, and the need for control over events scientifically beyond their control is far less keenly felt. Such actions as may be described as magical, pertaining to health, weather or the hunt, involve an identification with the forest, being forms of sympathetic magic. In this respect, then, they are in a sense religious acts, for the forest is regarded as their protector. It would be difficult to determine whether the hunting fire is meant to placate or propitiate the forest, thus being a religious act involving a belief in a spiritual force, or whether it is thought to actively and directly affect the forest game, luring it into the nets. Mbuti attitudes, both expressed and observable, are mixed; the elements of religious belief, however, are never entirely absent.

The protective "magic" used to secure good health for a newborn baby, a vine bracelet and wooden charm, equally involves in a very real sense a religious belief in the power and strength and protectiveness of the forest, as well as making a more truly "magical" connection between the physical strength of the forest vine and trees and the weakness of the newborn baby, using the charms as a medium through which this strength can flow.

All this makes honey magic all the more outstanding, for it accords honey gathering far more ritual attention than is accorded to the economically incomparably more important activities of hunting and gathering. Some of the magic is slight and individual—a piece of bark cloth belonging to a girl or a woman is put in a cleft stick with a piece

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[P276-B]

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28. Moké, an elder and a peacemaker, with two of his adopted families. It is considered no shame for an Mbuti male to fondle and care for the needs of even the youngest children.

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks themselves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Opposite: A Pygmy woman (right) helps a villager pound locally grown rice.

Old Moke (in a sloth-skin hat) listens as Cephu tells a legend.

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[P.72-L]

heard such a Beautiful Song that he had to go and see who was sing- 765
ing. When he found the Bird he brought it back to the camp to feed 533
it. His father was annoyed at having to give food to the Bird, but 539
the son pleaded and the Bird was fed. The next day the Bird sang 825
again; it sang the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and again the boy went to it and brought it back to feed it. This time the father was even more angered, but once again he gave in and fed the Bird. The third day (most Pygmy stories repeat themselves at least three times) the same thing happened. But this time the father took the Bird from his son and told his son to go away. When his son had left, the father killed the Bird, the Bird with the Most Beautiful Song in the Forest, and with the Bird he killed the Song, and with the Song he killed himself and he dropped dead, completely dead, dead for ever.

There are other legends about song, all telling how important 765
it is, and I wondered just why. I looked at the others sitting with me 533
around the kumamolimo. The flames from the fire flickered, lighting up the serious faces, shining brightly in their large, honest eyes. Some gazed straight into the fire, others leaned back and looked up into the trees as they sang. A few lay down on their hunting nets, but they were awake and they sang with the rest. Then I saw that [854] •
Makubasi had his infant son on his lap, holding the boy tightly against him, wrapped in his powerful arms, rocking backward and forward. He was singing quietly, with his mouth up against his son's ear. The words of the song, like the words of most molimo songs, were few. They simply said, "The Forest is Good."

The Pygmies seemed bound by few set rules. There was a general 765
pattern of behavior to which everyone more or less conformed, but [183]
with great latitude given and taken. Even on this occasion, when all [854]
women and children were supposed to be abed, if Makubasi felt like getting his son and singing to him at the kumamolimo, nobody objected or thought anything of it. Possibly this was because the [533]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

224 621 their activities and in their social organization in particular, since the degree to which cooperation is required in hunting, and the numbers of people involved, are the principal factors in determining the composition of the band.

224 **Net hunting.**—The technique of net hunting can best be described by going through the chronological events of a single day. The details of where and how to hunt are decided during the usual evening conversation period the night before. The chief argument lies in the weather; if it is going to be dry it will be better for net hunting. Since it will sometimes rain for three days, then go two days without rain, it is a matter of some speculation and prediction whether or not it will rain on a given afternoon. In general the weather permits net hunting, for it usually does not begin to rain until 4:00 P.M., and by that time the pygmies often have enough game to make the day's work profitable. The season is also important, for during the dry season the fallen leaves crackling underfoot make such a noise that stalking is hard even for a tracker so expert as the pygmy. However, this condition is good for net hunting, since it is necessary that the game hear the hunters.

224 283 286 [482] [854] The men, women, and children start out early in the morning, and the women carry their babies on their backs. The men carry the nets. These are made of cordage, about the same width as tennis nets, but a little longer. Since the length of the net is functional in the hunting, the pygmies keep it fairly constant. As one end rots away they add onto the other end, until an old net may eventually be largely replaced by these additions. However, [177] [439] the pygmies prefer new nets made by the Negroes and, furthermore, there are rarely enough nets to go around. Hence they frequently beg their hosts for more.

[P. 328-B]

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
amulets attached to its elbow and wrist. It is [853]
fed whenever it cries. When the mother does
leave her hut, carrying the infant on her back,
she protects it from the sun by covering it with
a leaf. When it is bigger she carries it without a
supporting sling, either on her hip or on her
back. The child is always with her, and she
devotes her spare time to playing with it and
singing to it. Even when dancing she may carry [535]
it in a sling at her side.

The child is taught to walk almost as soon as 856
it is big enough to be allowed on the ground
alone. This process is sometimes hastened by [825]
scratching its knee and placing a fast-moving
beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
it to run away. Soon, the mother believes, her
child will be running as fast as the beetle.

Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
sometimes a child continues to be breast fed
while it is able to run about the camp. But from
a few weeks after its birth it is introduced grad-
ually to vegetable foods.

Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[P. 178-D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 28 1/

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

855 851 a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

882 885 202 b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married. Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

1/ /Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 28-A/

/Caption appears on p. 288/

[P.289-A]

855 There is a
997 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister
[269] will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta[8] describes one of the lat-
628 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

582 stated and observed rule of incest, and although genealogical mem-
835 ories are short, never rising further than two above ego, it is adequate
611 in preventing the marriage of first cousins.[7] This seems to be about the limit of the intended restriction, as at this level flirtation, accompanied by sexual intercourse, may take place with only nominal disapproval. The disapproval becomes more loudly voiced if the young couple seem to be forming too strong an affection for each other, such as would normally lead to marriage.

835 There is some expressed disapproval, of about the same degree of
[832] seriousness, if children of the same social mother, but not of the same stomach, flirt with each other, but such flirtations happen.

I found it impossible to discover a single admitted instance of incest closer than between first cousins, but there is some evident restraint between brothers and sisters, none between mothers and sons, little between fathers and daughters. To swear at someone by accusing
[578] them of having sex with their parent is mild; it is more serious to accuse them of having sex with their sibling of one stomach. Worst of all is to accuse someone of having sex with her or his spouse.
[755] (The degree of freedom between sons and mothers may be seen in the
• [855] fact that a mother gives strength to her children, if they are ill, by sleeping in the same bed with them. This is sometimes done between a mother and her adult son, so long as he is unmarried, without occasioning any comment.)

601 Together with this lack of emphasis on the biological aspects of
[601] kinship and the accompanying generational system of terminology goes a lack of formal restrictions on behavior between different kin categories, and a marked unwillingness to clearly define kin relation-
[611] ships between individuals. One suspects at times that the apparent shortness of genealogical memory is almost deliberate, for not only would such memory have no use, it would, in fact, undermine the whole delicate balance of social relationships among the Mbuti.

561 AGE GROUPS

601 Table 6[A] *shows quite clearly the effective difference* between the village system[A] and the system of the Mbuti, granting that they both share the same terminology. The fact that among the Mbuti all mem-

[582] [7] It is often stated generally that one marries nobody related through either the father's or the mother's line, but in special situations the restriction is narrowed down as given here.

[A] [see page 228 -- Analysis]

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

512 of youths, will be left in charge of the camp and of any children that
224 elect to stay behind. Any child old enough to make the decision does
561 so himself. If his parents do not want to be bothered with him he
[855] has a wide range of classificatory mothers and fathers to call on, or if
he is old enough he will simply join his own age group and set off
[462] with them. Girls always go with the women; boys go with their fathers, youths may go with their fathers or on their own. If a father has a particularly long net he may welcome an extra spear or bow and arrow nearby, and his adolescent sons serve in this capacity.

224 The hunt is described more fully in Chapter Ten. Here it is only
561 necessary to point out that among the net-hunters, where a net is
476 owned by married men or by extremely rare, gifted bachelor hunters
422 (youths), the hunt effectively divides itself into nuclear family groups
[594] but not into nuclear families, for each family, during the hunt, is itself divided by age and sex. The family-owned nets stretch out in a long semicircle, end to end, and the women act as beaters, forming a corresponding semicircle opposite. But each net is utterly dependent on the others, as is each beater, and it is the co-operative aspect of the age group that is emphasized, rather than the distinctness of each family. The division of spoils similarly stresses band rather than family values, and the hunting songs and dances that take place after, and sometimes before, the hunt further illustrate that the hunt is considered an affair of the band as a whole.

224 When the hunt returns to camp there is immediate excitement as
183 those who stayed behind crowd around for tales of all that happened, and maybe for a few tidbits of raw meat. In the confusion, men and women alike, but particularly women, may be seen furtively concealing some of their spoils under the leaves of their roofs, or in empty pots nearby. For although there will have been some sharing on the scene, there is always more back in the camp, and family loyalty is not that subject to band loyalty that there is no cheating.

224 The food is prepared and cooked right away, and while this is be-
535 ing done a hunting dance may take place, in which men and women
[252] and children all take part. This dance is frequently imitative of hunting activities, with older people taking the part of the animals hunted.
224 Any unusual event of the day's hunt may be reenacted, and this is
535 also an occasion where the sanction of ridicule may be applied to any
626 hunter, male or female, who is considered to have been unsatisfactory. It is not uncommon for a husband to lead a dance ridiculing a wife who, through her laziness as a beater, spoiled his chances.

work. Then she took the leaves we had collected and slit the stalks 342
toward the end, like clothespins, hooking two or three of them together. When she had enough she started hanging them on the framework like tiles, overlapping each other and forming a waterproof covering. There were leaves left over when she had finished, so she let other women take them for their houses.

Everyone was working at something, and all were chattering and 342
making fun of the late-comers who had not yet finished leafing their 476
huts, saying how wet they were going to get when the rain came. But [522]
I noticed that those who had already finished, like Masamba, even went back to the forest to cut more wood and leaves to help the lazy stragglers who had spent too much time gathering food and eating it on the way in. Sometimes there were as many as four women working on one hut, some hanging leaves from the outside, working upward, others preferring to work from the inside, pushing the leaves through the lattice and working from the top down. Once in a while [855] •
there was a loud wail as some playful child got in the way and was soundly slapped by his mother.

Just before dusk there was a sudden darkening and a wind swept 132
through the tree tops making leaves and small branches fall to the ground, spinning and fluttering lightly. Then with a sudden hissing sound, loud and ominous, the sky seemed to open and the rain came pouring down. In the villages, the rain comes down so hard that it can almost hurt you, stinging the skin and blowing into the eyes and nose and mouth, but in the forest its fall is broken by the trees and by the time it reaches the ground it has spent its energy.

There were angry shouts from the men as the lightning flashed [821]
and the thunder rumbled on and on, and they peered anxiously from the tiny entrances to their huts to see when it was going to end. If it went on too long it would spoil the hunting for tomorrow. My hut 122
was filled with the bachelors, all of whom Kenge had grandly invited 132
in. He explained that they were too old to sleep with their parents 589

[ARCHERS]

After giving birth, the mother keeps her infant 846
in the shade of her hut for three or four days,
receiving visits from admiring neighbors. The 854
infant is protected by various charms and [789]
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beetle (*pakalakala*) in the blood, then allowing
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Breast feeding is continued for about a year; 853
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Fathers, although Schebesta writes that they 854
do not like to be bothered with infants, help 855
their wives in the care of children and even 593
attend to their personal needs.

[p. 178-D]

846 juice that when cut they have to be bent, with both ends upward so
751 that the liquid will not be lost. Sometimes they are cut into chunks and soaked in water that is used for washing the infant.

856 A third precaution that is taken is to tie a vine bracelet around one of the infant's wrists, or around his waist. A small piece of wood may be roughly threaded to the vine, and the stated function is again to give the infant strength, except that with specific reference to the wood, it is frequently said that it "gives the child the strength of the forest."

844 With regard to preferences among the women as to where they
845 give birth, it varies. But there is unanimity that if there is any dif-
778 ficulty at all, then the right thing to do is to go off away from the camp and into the forest, which will "help." The forest appears quite
778 clearly as helper and protector in the vine and wooden medicines and
755 charms, and in the scarification that will take place at the first sign
751 of sickness. Even with adults this is done: the skin is cut in a number
[856] of small slits with an arrow, and some of the flesh is gouged out. The ashes prepared from forest woods and plants are made into a paste with spittle and rubbed into the wounds. When the skin grows back, the black ash is still visible beneath, and is regarded as a source of the strength and health and happiness that derive from the forest.

846 Both parents are under food restrictions until the baby is old enough to crawl, the main one and the only general one being that they must not eat meat. The father may go hunting, but any meat that falls into his net is divided among the others. More often he stays away from the hunt, sending his net out with some youth. However, somewhere between one and two months after birth, and when the family net has made a particularly successful catch, the father will usually announce that he is eating meat again.

853 The only other restriction placed on the nuclear family by the crisis of birth is the restraint placed on the father, who is forbidden to have sexual intercourse with the mother as long as she is breast-feeding
853 the child. The restriction is quite definitely linked by the Mbuti to
845 the supply of milk, which is also given as the reason for their rather mild aversion to twins. I know of no record of twins who both survived into adulthood, and it is stated that one of them invariably
[847] dies. It is also stated that no woman would feed a child at each breast, and I understand that if twins are born, one is simply not fed by the mother, and is taken away and buried by her friends. But there is no fear of twins, and no ritual in connection with their birth or death.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Finally it may be remarked that whereas in many African societies, 851
including those of the neighboring villagers, birth fixes the social [17]
position of an individual through the structural ramifications of kinship, among the Mbuti it achieves the same end, to a less fixed degree, by placing the individual in a specific age group and relating the infant to a specific locality. The child might not be reared in that locality, but the fact will remain valid as a claim to band membership throughout his or her life. Adoption is often agreed upon in order that a child, or even an adult, may return to his natal band, [597]
regardless of what kin remain to him there.[1]

It will also be noticed that in the absence of the magical and supernatural protections that are sought for a newly born child among 856 854
the villagers nearby, there is a lack of concern with the possibility of disaster, and only a concern that the child should be strong. Insofar [751]
as this strength is conveyed by washing the baby with the juice of [778]
forest vines, tattooing it with forest ashes, and binding it with forest symbols, this may be regarded as sympathetic magic. But it is better regarded as the beginning of a lifetime of close intimacy between the Mbuti and the forest, an intimacy that may or may not give the physical strength it is believed to convey, but that is undoubtedly responsible for the cohesive social strength found in this one omnipresent, omnipotent symbol of Mbuti unity, the forest.

The absence of formal ritual protection and of the invocation of 844
supernatural aid and attention at birth is the first clear indication [782]
that for the Mbuti the norm is the good, and that this goodness de- [778]
rives directly from the forest, physically and spiritually. Although [694]
birth is primarily the affair of the nuclear family, all members of the [621]
band share the pleasure and the pride of the parents, concern themselves with the welfare and education of the child according to the functions of the different age groups, but they do not see that it is necessary to make of birth what we might here call a "spiritual" occasion. In referring to childbirth the men and women alike say, simply, that "it is the work of women, it is what they are for." There is nothing abnormal about the event, nor is there any expectancy of danger or complication, and so the band does not see that it is necessary to intervene with a formal religious festival.

[1] See Table 11 for examples of adoptions of boys and girls among net-hunters.

[ARCHERS]

222 a honey ax, and probably some liana to assist in the climbing of the tree where the bees have been found. The Pygmies smoke out the bees by thrusting glowing embers, wrapped in a leaf, into the hive. Then the hole is enlarged with the ax until the Pygmy can thrust in his hand and arm and take out the honey. Schebesta says [776] that the honey gatherer throws some to the God [782] of the Forest before he or anyone else is allowed to taste it. (A similar practice is attributed to [462] archers when they divide the game.) If the bees are the kind that construct a hive in a hole in the ground, then the honey is collected by women. This kind of bee does not sting, but the tree bee does. The honey is distributed by the woman to members of the local band as she thinks fit, the children receiving the largest share.

• 857 22 The direct contribution of the children to the food quest is mediocre. Apart from such help as they give their parents in hunting and gathering activities, the children amuse themselves by hunting forest rats and mice with miniature bows and arrows. Anything they catch in this

[P.175-B]

[ARCHERS]

[P. 175-C]

way is theirs to cook and eat without having to be shared. 852 22

Drinks, Narcotics, and Stimulants 276

As stimulants Schebesta mentions *bangi* (hemp), its counterpart from the forest plant *medeaka*, and the kola nut. Palm wine, banana wine, and tobacco are available only from the villagers' plantations.

Food Restriction

Clan totems (nearly always animal, rarely vegetable) are always taboo; even indirect contact must be avoided. There are other ta- 262

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 176-A]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 209-B]

the use of poison for catching fish. The poison 226
(KiBira: *matungu*) is prepared from the bark of [278]
the *atungo* tree, and has been known to blind
people who get it in the eyes. Fish caught by 252
the children are placed by them in leaves with 857
salt and roasted on fire embers. Salt is obtained 263
either from plantain skins, or in the *ido*, which
are open, well-watered clearings found in the
forest. Children also hunt rats and mice with 857
their miniature bows and arrows. 224

Gathering

As with the archers, gathering is mostly the 222
province of women and children (mainly wo- 462
men), though men will gather any edible food 857
they happen to pass. Gathering is an individual
rather than a collective activity. Gathering activities that require the climbing of high trees, such as the collection of most nuts, are undertaken by men, who also collect termites, silkworms, and honey. The contribution of children, though not organized, is appreciable.

The foods available are the same as those de- 222
scribed by Schebesta. It appears that the net hunters make much fuller use of forest products, the most important of which are nuts, edible fungus, and edible roots, each of which can be subdivided into a number of different species, not only insuring a supply at all seasons, for each species has its own season, but also variety.

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 209-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P 212-C] DAILY LIFE

The food quest, as with the archers, is the pri- 512
mary concern of daily life among the net hunt- 22
ers. The net hunt is considerably more reward-
ing than the other form of hunt, although it
probably occupies as much time. Care and [286]
maintenance of the nets are also laborious and
time-consuming. Women gather not only as
they accompany the hunt, but also on those
days when the hunt stays behind in the camp.
The children make a not inconsiderable contri- [857]
bution to the family food quest. A common 512
occupation on a non-hunting day is for men and 283
women to assist each other in the making of
twine from *nkusa* vine. This twine is used pri-
marily in the repair of hunting nets.

As with the archers, elimination takes place 364
not far from the camp. Refuse is never carried 514
away; it is merely thrown behind the huts. [184]
These practices not merely create an unpleas-
ant smell after some weeks, but also attract
armies of ants. The Mbuti themselves, how- 515
ever, keep their bodies scrupulously clean, and
the favorite recreation of the children is playing
about in the shallow streams. The men assert [481]
that they can all swim but are never seen doing [823]
so; they are certainly much afraid of deep wa-
ter.

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 214-B]

looks after the boys as soon as they are old 597
enough to join him on the hunt. Fostering and 85
adoption may also take place if a mother is without milk, or if one woman is childless and a baby is born to a friend or relative who already has a large family.

Twins

There is no information available, except 845
that twins have been born and survived, and that the phenomenon of Siamese twins is known. It is believed that to separate them is to kill them.

Postnatal Care and Adolescence

As with the archers, infants among net 854
hunters are given every care and attention. [84]
They are breast-fed until after they can walk [853]
and talk. It seems, however, that mothers of this group are much more prone than the archer women to leave their children with sisters or close friends for short periods. A great deal of freedom is allowed the infant when it begins to crawl, and it may well be playing with sharp knives, bows and arrows, and trying to climb trees before it can walk. When a camp is moved, an infant is carried either on the hip of its mother or older sister or in a hide sling (Fig. 44) across the hip.

The children, as they grow older, tend to 857
play together, frequently away from the camp.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P-216-A]

• 857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp. 881 Even at this age, however, and after under- 882 going the *nkumòi* initiation, they are still under 593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumòi*.

868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

Ia Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

177 186 881 Similarly any subordination on the part of the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant, though they lost no opportunity for maintaining their individuality when their feelings clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the latter, they had no interest in the *nkumbi* as such. This lack of interest was manifest from the outset, when the village was in a state of festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony, and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack of interest was frequently manifest as total disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such touch and food taboos as were imposed by villager custom, and the general burlesquing among the *gawa* as described in the account, there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti band—notably the women and children. The [851] young children in their forest camp found a new game to play. They were the *gawa*, imitating all

[P 253-B]

[p. 253-c]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, including some of the ordeals. They not only knew the initiation songs, but were taught them by their mothers, who even more than their uninitiated male children were supposed to be in complete ignorance of such matters. 177 186 881 [857].

When the *gawa* moved to the forest, the instructors did not come with them, and the *gawa* had only occasional visits from one villager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting camp. There were no ordeals during this time, no singing except when visited by the solitary villager, and no other form of instruction by the Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to be, for both children and the adult members of the *gawa*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors of the initiation school. 177 881 [527]

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, they could scarcely avoid respecting the physical discipline imposed by the various ordeals they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic 177 861 881

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net-hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

594 621 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsibility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 86 The age group functions as a major institution of education, instructing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 857 883 [476] As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Children scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trapping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 626 627 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its members, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Further, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order. [965]

512 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one
264 person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to
[576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even
[868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

• 857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pretending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the ensnarement of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the villagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry. 857 224 868 [231]

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision. 857 868

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out at 857 571 561 857 868

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [213] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 732 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women 224
were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed 46
behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they 626
had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game 578
was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not [535]
go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and [482]
the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of gen- 578
eral shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and [261]
are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will [357]
find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on [383]
the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but 626
these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen 578
such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The 224
only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

to cook the morning meal. Back in the camp they sat outside their huts, legs straight out in front of them in what seemed the most uncomfortable position possible. From there they prepared the family repast, placing green plantains in the hot ashes to roast, or concocting a stew of mushrooms and chopped leaves with whatever meat was left over from the day before, covering the pot with large leaves to trap the steam and to keep out ashes and dirt. Any little chores that had to be done were done by their daughters, who scurried around collecting dry twigs to heat the fire up more quickly, or sat over the fire with their baby brothers, carefully guarding the pot and making sure it did not upset when the burning wood subsided. The younger women, freed in this way, relaxed and set to work making themselves beautiful. They sat in full view of the camp, unashamedly painting their bodies with black paste, calling their friends over to help with the more inaccessible regions. The buttocks in particular they found difficult to paint themselves, and rather than waste such an expansive area they would either bend over in front of a friend, or lie across her lap.

The men combined business with pleasure too, usually meeting at the kumamolimo to drink from a steaming bowl of liko. The young bachelors mostly cooked their own simple breakfast here, and together they all discussed the day ahead of them—where they should go to hunt, what they might expect to find. Cephu never came over from his little camp at such times. He merely waited until all the others set off for the hunt, then he joined them.

The men also had to prepare their nets. Helping one another, they uncoiled long lengths of knotted twine, sometimes stretching for three hundred feet, inspecting every section with care. Then, standing upright, the assistant holding the net off the ground, each man coiled his net again so that it hung from one shoulder to within a few inches of his ankle. With a loose length of twine he deftly bound the coils together, gave the net a final shake and hung it from

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857] •
by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593]
burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 202
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] [593]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602]
the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

St Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the 361
village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village.

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little 857 •
groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest 152
nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the 883
village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pyg- 177
mies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the 152
tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake.

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, 883
particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were 177
silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate 521
with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers 273
and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And [836]
not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine

1: Turnbull E-4. S (1951-1955) 1955 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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[ARCHERS]

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

• 858 Only when children approach the age of
593 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the
[861] same age (and older). During this period there is no formal training (Schebesta, 1948, 415 ff.), but boys and girls alike learn all there is to be learned by simple emulation and by assisting their parents and elders in various tasks.

882 At puberty the boys break completely away
883 from their mothers who have no more to do with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[p.184-c]

society is to take place, any raiding of the plantations of village women that is proposed is made known to the villagers in advance, and meat is offered in exchange. P 575

Schebesta (1948, 501 ff.) gives a detailed description of a joint village-Mbuti *toré* ceremony. At about 10 o'clock at night, announced by blasts on the trumpet, a procession of some 20 men, villagers, and Mbuti, entered the village, dancing wildly. The Pygmies (as always) were the musicians and blew into three sonorous clay pots of different sizes, the largest being called "mother" and the others "children." The largest pot contained just enough water to cover the bottom, into which a pipe was thrust. Some sang; others made weird noises by holding their noses.[1] In the morning the procession left for the Pygmy camp, two hours away. Before they passed through small village hamlets, someone was sent ahead to warn the inhabitants who had not heard the approaching blasts of the long wooden horn; women and children fled to the shelter of their huts as the procession went by. In one village a woman who remained in sight was threatened and made to give a chicken in payment for her release. On nearing the Pygmy camp, the trumpet was hidden in the brush, and the musicians took another path. The main procession entered the camp, where there were only a few old men and their wives.

Z P 575 596 534 [535] P Z [533] P Z [562] [858]

The primary purpose of the *molimo* for the 575
Pygmies is to maintain and to restore normality 796
in the forest. (We must ignore its possible social 182
function at the moment because of insufficient 533
information.) It fulfills its purpose through song 534
and by the use of the *molimo* horn. The associa- [778]
tion may meet informally any evening as the
men sit around the main campfire. They may
sing *molimo* songs as well as hunting songs, but
the horn will not be heard. Women and children [562]
are not excluded from the group, though, as is [858]
their normal habit, they usually keep to their
own individual firesides. The association meets
formally following any crisis such as death,
serious illness, or exceptionally poor hunting.
Women and children are then rigidly excluded, [562]
and the *molimo* horn is used. These formal occa- [858]
sions compel the attendance of all members.
Adult members of the hunting band who are
away come back; adult male visitors to the
camp take part.

There is no formal body of magical belief and 789
practice among the net hunters, nor, according
to Schebesta (1952, 337), among the archers.
[p. 256-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
[258] seem to be the non-participation of women and
[885] children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
[533] bers of the band, the use of special songs and
the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

796 If this is magic, it is totally different from the
776 kind of magic practiced by the villagers, for
778 which the Mbuti reserve an attitude of skepti-
772 cal amusement. Whatever it is, it shows a very
575 different attitude to the forest from that of the
[829] villagers. My interpretation of the *molimo*, from the meetings I have attended and the conversations I have overheard, is that it is an association of hunters that has the power of making itself heard by the God of the Forest. This God is referred to by many different names, even within the same band, and, as frequently as not, is simply referred to as "The Forest," also, though less often, as "Father" and "Grandfather." The association must ful-
[533] fill the conditions listed above in order to make
[538] itself heard; the *molimo* horn used in conjunction with song is the focal point of the meetings.
[562] Women and children are presumably excluded,
[858] because hunting, the most important of all activities to the Mbuti and regarded by him as such, is primarily the province of men, and the God of the Forest is also God of the Hunt.[1] The dominant note of the meetings is unanimity and insistence. All hunters must attend. They sit in a tight group around the fire as if by this

[1] It might be expected that, as the net hunt involves cooperation between both sexes, the women would have some part to play in the *molimo* among net hunters, at least.

[P 257-B]

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women are members, and participation is compulsory in one's own camp or when visiting another. Communication with the forest God is again established by means of songs, special and sacred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The exception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the initiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[p. 257-0]

765 more. The men continued singing for about another hour, but as
533 by then Cephu and the rest of his family had gone inside their huts,
[534] they stopped abruptly and returned to the main camp.

The next evening the singing was around a fire in the middle of the main camp. After all, the molimo was Njobo's, and Cephu just went to sleep, so why should we go to his camp? A few men from Cephu's family came over, but not Cephu. The singing went on for about four hours, but the molimo did not appear again. The third night it was the same, except that nobody turned up from Cephu's camp.

• [858] I thought this a little strange and asked Moke about it. He said that normally one would not call out the molimo for a child; that was why nobody was really enthusiastic, but Cephu had insisted. Besides, the molimo should only be in the forest, not so close to a Negro village. It was all right to sing molimo songs as long as there were no Negroes about, but even then it was not good to sing them
[892] near a village. The molimo itself, however, should come out only in the forest, where it belonged, and there was a lot of work attached, as it had to be given food to eat, water to drink, and fire to keep it warm. He stopped there and could not be persuaded to go any further. He just waved his hands in the air and said emphatically that this molimo was empty, meaningless, a farce.

765 At the end of a week the mourning period prescribed by the Ne-
177 groes was over; the women, who were meant to wail at sunrise, noon
186 and sunset, stopped wailing. A relative of Cephu's Negro "master" had come over to the village the night before, and the men had had a final burst of singing for him, but with their tongues in their cheeks. Moke told me not to think that this was a real molimo; it was what they did for the villagers to make them think their molimo was the same as the Pygmies'. The villagers also make use of a musical instrument called the *molimo*, but it is meant to represent the

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko*, a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

765 long trumpet, with Madyadya holding the front on his shoulder,
534 pointing it over the river toward the camp. Once again the night
765 was shattered as though there were a whole herd of elephants trumpet-
534 ing shrilly all around us. When the echoes died away, the camp
533 across the river had fallen silent. Ausu blew into the trumpet again,
825 and this time it was as if a leopard were growling angrily nearby.
[201] One of the youths clapped himself under the armpit, as Pygmies frequently do, and said to himself, "That is its voice, just exactly." He clapped himself again with delight, and gave a little growl of his own.

765 Little more than a minute had passed when Amabosu, the great
533 singer, appeared from the shadows below us. He looked at us without
156 saying anything, without smiling or making any greeting. His eyes
781 had the strange look they often took on when he was singing or
534 playing the drums in a dance in the village. They seemed to be seeing something quite different from what was going on in front of
[825] them. He went up to Ausu and took the molimo from him and gently filled the forest with strange sounds—the rumblings and growls of buffalos and leopards, the mighty call of the elephant, the plaintive cooing of the dove. Interspersed were snatches of song, transformed by the trumpet into a sound quite unlike the song of men—richer, softer, more distant and unapproachable.

765 He continued blowing as we moved off, down the slope and to
534 the bank of the river, but when we plunged into the water and
123 waded across, the two trumpets left us and were carried upstream.
[533] They growled and bellowed somewhere behind us as we made our
765 way along the path to the camp. In the clearing the men were stand-
562 ing up to see us arrive, and the women were hurrying about doing what they had to do before shutting themselves up in their huts. The
• [858] voice of the molimo had warned them that it was time to retire. The children had all been chased inside. One by one leaf doors were

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

224 156 626 681 law Cephu had been firmly put in his place, and it was unlikely he would do the same thing again in a hurry.

181 This was typical of all Pygmy life, on the surface at least. There was a confusing, seductive informality about everything they did. [157] Whether it was a birth, a wedding, or a funeral, in a Pygmy hunting camp or in a Negro village, there was always an unexpectedly casual, [621] almost carefree attitude. There was, for instance, little apparent specialization; everyone took part in everything. Children had little or [358] no voice in adult affairs, but the only adult activities from which they seemed to be rigidly excluded were certain songs, and of course the [462] molimo. Between men and women there was also a certain degree of specialization, but little that could be called exclusive.

621 627 There were no chiefs, no formal councils. In each aspect of Pygmy life there might be one or two men or women who were more prominent than others, but usually for good practical reasons. This showed up most clearly of all in the settling of disputes. There was no judge, [69] no jury, no court. The Negro tribes all around had their tribunals, but not the Pygmies. Each dispute was settled as it arose, according to its nature.

627 681 Roughly, there were four ways of punishing offenses, each operating as an efficient deterrent but without necessitating any system of outright punishment. In a small and co-operative group no individual would want the job either of passing judgment or of administering punishment, so like everything else in Pygmy life the maintenance of law was a co-operative affair. Certain offenses, rarely committed, were considered so terrible that they would of themselves bring some form of supernatural retribution. Others became the affair of the molimo, which in its morning rampages showed public disapproval by attacking the hut of the culprit, possibly the culprit himself. Both these types of crime were extremely rare. The more serious of the [685] other crimes, such as theft, were dealt with by a sound thrashing which was administered co-operatively by all who felt inclined to

594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
• 86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[765] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to wider the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

[ARCHERS]

593 Both parents have an equal responsibility in
861 the upbringing of their children—a frequent source of conjugal dispute. Children are expected to respect their parents and are severely criticized, or even ostracized, if they do not conform. Schebesta (1948, 323) quotes the case of a son who lifted his hand against his father who drew his bow and arrow and threatened to kill him; the group forced the son to leave the camp with his family.

606 Restrictions on relations between affines such as a mother-in-law and her son-in-law, or a father-in-law and daughter-in-law, are known to the archers, and practiced to a certain extent among those in the north, but are largely ignored by others in the southeast. The restrictions may amount to total avoidance.

Daily Life

512 The main essence of the daily routine has already been covered. It is primarily concerned with food. The archer women and men are allotted to gathering and hunting, respectively,
514 which occupy most of their time. Refuse from
264 the food is thrown behind the hut, and elimina-
361 tion takes place close by, two factors favoring the frequent moving of camp.

[P. 177-B]

(ARCHERS)

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

858 Only when children approach the age of
573 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the
[864] same age (and older). During this period there is no formal training (Schebesta, 1948, 415 ff.), but boys and girls alike learn all there is to be learned by simple emulation and by assisting their parents and elders in various tasks.

882 At puberty the boys break completely away
883 from their mothers who have no more to do with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
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[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were made to move about continually by the villager instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present at all times, frequently comforted their sons, apparently to the annoyance of the villagers. There was, however, no question of the savagery implied by Schebesta. During the following two months the boys were strictly disciplined. There was a process of physical training that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only one of the major purposes of the *nkumbi*, namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti fathers, however, obviously had different ideas as to how far this discipline should be carried and criticized the villagers when they carried it too far. Further, when there were no villagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite openly and showed by their speech and their behavior that they had no respect for the taboos associated with the festival. It seemed quite evident that they consciously underwent the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious significance, but because it gave them status in villager society, in which any uncircumcised youth is a laughing stock. The important thing, then, was the circumcision, for this specific purpose.

P Z 881 177
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[p. 253-c]

the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, 177
including some of the ordeals. They not only 186
knew the initiation songs, but were taught them 881
by their mothers, who even more than their [857]
uninitiated male children were supposed to be
in complete ignorance of such matters.

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the 177
instructors did not come with them, and the 881
ganza had only occasional visits from one vil-
lager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting
camp. There were no ordeals during this time,
no singing except when visited by the solitary
villager, and no other form of instruction by the
Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The
boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to [527]
be, for both children and the adult members of
the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors
of the initiation school.

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the 177
ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, 861
they could scarcely avoid respecting the physi- 881
cal discipline imposed by the various ordeals
they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic

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of conversation. Both by their conversation and their behavior they showed that they were well aware of the benefit of this training for the children. The older men talked of ordeals that their "fathers" had experienced (apparently without reference to any villager *nkumbi*) in order to make them into men and hunters (both terms were used). They were always critical of any sign of excessive harshness on the part of the villager instructors and protected their children from it. But, on the other hand, the fathers showed no sympathy for a boy who could not endure the normal rigors of camp life and accept the routine ordeals without complaint, and it will be remembered that the boy who became ill himself insisted on returning to his place among the other boys before he had completely recovered (Turnbull, 1957). 177 86 88

It is, at the moment, an open question whether the Mbuti respect the physical discipline of the *nkumbi* because of its effect on the boys, or because of the status it gives their children in the eyes of the villagers, under normal circumstances equating the Mbuti (at least in terms of manliness) with their fellow villager initiates. The fact that no ordeals were practiced in the forest camp is perhaps an indication that the Mbuti do not lay very much stress on the physical and mental training aspect of the *nkumbi*. These are, in any case, benefits that [554]

[p. 253 - D]

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P 177 881 • 861 Z [563]

[P.254-A]

they could quite well achieve in their own way. Such practical benefits as there may be do not demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

P Z 181 182 881

This hiatus becomes even more evident when we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*, as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus not only between two ways of living but between two ways of thinking, and it shows that we are dealing with two totally different sets of values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

THE GIVER OF THE LAW

One of the huts was in flames, and people were standing all 684
around, either crying or shouting. There was a lot of struggling go- 835
ing on among a small group of men, and women were brandishing 627
fists in each other's faces. We decided to go back to the main camp, which by then was filled with clusters of men and women standing about discussing the affair. Not long afterward a contingent from Cephu's group came over. They swore at the children, who, delighted [857] by the whole thing, were imitating the epic flight and pursuit of Kelemoke. The adults, in no joking frame of mind, sat down to have a discussion. But the talking did not center around Kelemoke's act so much as around the burning of the hut. Almost everyone seemed to dismiss the act of incest. One of Kelemoke's uncles, Masalito, with whom he had been staying since his father died, had great tears rolling down his cheeks. He said, "Kelemoke only did what any youth would do, and he has been caught and driven to the forest. The forest will kill him. That is finished. But my own brother has [593] burned down my hut and I have nowhere to sleep. I shall be cold. And what if it rains? I shall die of cold and rain at the hands of my brother."

The brother, Aberi, instead of taking up the point that Kelemoke 835
had dishonored his daughter, made a feeble protestation that he had 684
been insulted. Kelemoke should have taken more care. And Masalito 578
should have taught him better. This started the argument off on 602
different lines, and both families quarreled bitterly, accusing each [861] [593]
other for more than an hour. Then the elders began to yawn and say they were tired; they wanted to go to sleep; we would settle it the next day.

For a long time that night the camp was alive with whispered 835
remarks, and not a few rude jokes were thrown about from one hut 684
to another. The next day I went over to Cephu's camp and found [602] the girl's mother busy helping to rebuild Masalito's hut; the two men were sitting down and talking as though nothing much had happened.

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The Play World of the BaMbuti

181 IN THE FOREST life appears to be free and easy, happy-go-lucky, with a certain amount of perpetual disorder as a result. But in fact, beneath all that there *is* order and reason; reaching everywhere is the firm, controlling hand of the forest itself.

84 If individual responsibility and authority are shunned and dis-
561 persed in other aspects of Pygmy life, as in the maintenance of law
601 and order, a similar pattern appears in the upbringing of children. It is no accident that a child calls everyone in the same age group as his parents "father" or "mother"; those still older are called "grandparent." Those of the same age as himself he refers to by a

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Mbuti

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

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Mbuti

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512

though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

The girl enters seclusion, but not the seclusion of the village girl. She takes with her all her young friends, those who have not yet reached maturity, and some older ones.

In the house of the elima the girls celebrate the happy event together. Together they are taught the arts and crafts of motherhood by an old and respected relative. They learn not only how to live like adults, but how to sing the songs of adult women. Day after day, night after night, the elima house resounds with the throaty contralto of the older women and the high, piping voices of the youngest. It is a time of gladness and happiness, not for the women alone but for the whole people. Pygmies from all around come to pay their respects, the young men standing or sitting about outside the elima house in the hopes of a glimpse of the young beauties inside. And there are special elima songs which they sing to one another, the girls singing a light, cascading melody in intricate harmony, the men replying with a rich, vital chorus. For the Pygmies the elima is one of the happiest, most joyful occasions in their lives.

And so it was with happiness that we all heard that not one but two girls in our camp had been blessed by the moon.

At first it was just Akidinimba, daughter of Manyalibo's sister. Akidinimba was a notorious flirt who considered herself the most beautiful girl in the world. She was just sufficiently plump to be envied by less well-endowed girls, but not so plump that her maidenly

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

During the succeeding months—usually two or three now instead of the former six or even twelve—the boys are subjected to one form of mild torture after another. The torture is sometimes mental rather than physical. For instance, one boy, whose father refused point blank to have anything to do with what he called "an empty, savage custom" but allowed his son to enter, was made to ridicule his father almost every daylight hour. The gentle little Sansiwake, who insisted on getting up from the hard wooden bed to rejoin his companions long before he was completely well, was made to pretend that he was big and strong, carrying heavy loads and imitating the performance of acts degrading to any Pygmy, but particularly so to this sensitive child. Each boy was put through some torture of this nature.

The physical ordeals sometimes start out as games but develop into cruel tests of physical endurance. A crouching dance that might be fun for a few minutes becomes agony after half an hour. A mild switching on the underside of the arm with light sticks is of no concern until, after several days, the skin becomes raw. And then the villagers notch the sticks so that they fold over and pinch the skin sharply, often drawing blood. When the boys have become used to being beaten with leafy branches, thorny bushes are substituted.

To the Pygmies this all seems harsh and unnecessary, and as far as their own children are concerned they keep a strict watch over them to see that the villagers do not go to the length that they sometimes do with village children, even if this brings them into some contempt. But to the villager this toughening-up process is essential and does not come naturally in the course of village life. The child has to be fitted for adult life, and this is what the nkumbi sets out to achieve. In a few months a boy becomes a man, tough and strong, physically and mentally. The process is not a pleasant one, but it is the only way in which, under tribal conditions, the goal can be achieved.

The Pygmy can understand and appreciate this, but the very nature of his own nomadic hunting and gathering existence provides

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles develop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games. Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

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The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

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There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence toward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

789 especially those taken from a wild pep-
821 per plant, to stop storms; and the light-
ing of smoky fires in the forest, by the women in some camps, during the early or mid-day to keep the weather clear for hunting.[3] I have not witnessed these particular practices. My own experience with weather magic has been that on a number of occasions I was prevented from performing seemingly harmless actions. Once I started to pick a beautiful red hemanthus flower and was told, "Don't do that, master, or it will rain before we get back to camp." Again, I was about to drop a stone into a brook and was told the same thing. The pygmy attitude
[811] seemed to involve a simple cause and effect relationship between the human action and the weather. All the magic which I personally observed is designed to avoid making it rain.

224 **Hunting magic.**—Hunting magic is
789 usually a simple business. During the division of meat, the elder who is cutting it cuts a small piece off the heart and tosses it into the forest, before he gives the heart, the hunter's portion, to the hunter. In some regions hunters rub ashes obtained from burning a certain leaf around their eyes, to make them see the game better.[4] Another trick is to take the leaves of a certain species, on which a certain kind of animal feeds, and drape them on the hunter's bow; he may also burn them and rub the ashes on his body.

844 **Life cycle and rites of passage.**—
There appears to be no ritual recognition of the birth of a child. If a woman is out on the trail, and feels her time arriving, she will stop and bear her child, then go on. If she is in camp, which is usually the case, other women
862 will help her. The women nurse their children a long while, well after they
000 are able to walk and talk. There is a

[3] *Op. cit.*, p. 157.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 157.

[P.339-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 an injunction against eating meat, and this seems to be when the *elima* activities are affecting the hunt and the supply of game.

The rest of the *bamelima* are merely expected to be in attendance, and come and go as they please.

In the very lack of restrictions we can see that the Mbuti do not regard the *bamelima* to be in any ritual condition of danger or impurity. At such times as they are free to be among other band members in the camp they behave perfectly normally, playing with young children, fondling babies, sitting by family hearths, and so forth. But they eat separately and wash separately, so we might say that at least they are in a condition of ritual respect.

881 To begin with, the *bamelima* spend most of their time either inside
• 864 the hut or else off with an instructress, in the forest. Inside the hut
867 they are taught the songs of the *elima* by any older women who care to take part in the instruction. In the forest, I was told by a number of women, young and old, the girls are instructed in the arts of motherhood. This presumably includes such aspects of sexual life as are still unknown to them, which are probably few, but also use of the various herbs and treatments that a woman must know to insure fertility, an abundance of milk, easy childbirth, and abortion if necessary.

881 Girls say that certain of the *elima* songs are taught them in the
533 forest rather than in the hut, and as the festival progresses less and less time is spent in the hut, and more in the forest. For the festival is said "to rejoice the forest," to make it happy and glad. If the girls are not singing well they are told the forest will be displeased. If they are dejected they are asked if they want the forest to be sad. Everyone is expected to be happy, and as the *bamelima* go through the forest they sing to it. As with so many of the other songs of the Mbuti, the *elima* songs are either wordless, being just plays on vowel sounds, or else the words are slight and without any evident significance, such as "Ibu is a dog," "Let's get leaves," and "Oh, the mud!" Other songs sung by the *bamelima* toward the end of the festival, when they sing in public in the camp, are rather different, making rather more sense and being distinctly spicy in nature.

But the songs that are considered as true *elima* songs and which conform to a musical style of their own, are evidently sacred. When they are sung in the forest, they are sung *to* the forest. A phrase is cast at the forest and an echo is awaited before the girls continue. Even an individual girl, usually the one with blood, will sing in this

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, 881
for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of 86
and sleeping with lovers. 561

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, 881
but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social hori- 864
zons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental 867
and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are [836]
also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit 881
neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for 836
several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It [574]
is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by
a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her [835]
father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

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way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sansiwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

During the succeeding months—usually two or three now instead of the former six or even twelve—the boys are subjected to one form of mild torture after another. The torture is sometimes mental rather than physical. For instance, one boy, whose father refused point blank to have anything to do with what he called "an empty, savage custom" but allowed his son to enter, was made to ridicule his father almost every daylight hour. The gentle little Sansiwake, who insisted on getting up from the hard wooden bed to rejoin his companions long before he was completely well, was made to pretend that he was big and strong, carrying heavy loads and imitating the performance of acts degrading to any Pygmy, but particularly so to this sensitive child. Each boy was put through some torture of this nature.

The physical ordeals sometimes start out as games but develop into cruel tests of physical endurance. A crouching dance that might be fun for a few minutes becomes agony after half an hour. A mild switching on the underside of the arm with light sticks is of no concern until, after several days, the skin becomes raw. And then the villagers notch the sticks so that they fold over and pinch the skin sharply, often drawing blood. When the boys have become used to being beaten with leafy branches, thorny bushes are substituted.

To the Pygmies this all seems harsh and unnecessary, and as far as their own children are concerned they keep a strict watch over them to see that the villagers do not go to the length that they sometimes do with village children, even if this brings them into some contempt. But to the villager this toughening-up process is essential and does not come naturally in the course of village life. The child has to be fitted for adult life, and this is what the nkumbi sets out to achieve. In a few months a boy becomes a man, tough and strong, physically and mentally. The process is not a pleasant one, but it is the only way in which, under tribal conditions, the goal can be achieved.

The Pygmy can understand and appreciate this, but the very nature of his own nomadic hunting and gathering existence provides

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles develop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games. Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

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The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

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There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence toward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 an injunction against eating meat, and this seems to be when the *elima* activities are affecting the hunt and the supply of game.

The rest of the *bamelima* are merely expected to be in attendance, and come and go as they please.

In the very lack of restrictions we can see that the Mbuti do not regard the *bamelima* to be in any ritual condition of danger or impurity. At such times as they are free to be among other band members in the camp they behave perfectly normally, playing with young children, fondling babies, sitting by family hearths, and so forth. But they eat separately and wash separately, so we might say that at least they are in a condition of ritual respect.

881 To begin with, the *bamelima* spend most of their time either inside
864 the hut or else off with an instructress, in the forest. Inside the hut
867 they are taught the songs of the *elima* by any older women who care to take part in the instruction. In the forest, I was told by a number of women, young and old, the girls are instructed in the arts of motherhood. This presumably includes such aspects of sexual life as are still unknown to them, which are probably few, but also use of the various herbs and treatments that a woman must know to insure fertility, an abundance of milk, easy childbirth, and abortion if necessary.

881 Girls say that certain of the *elima* songs are taught them in the
533 forest rather than in the hut, and as the festival progresses less and less time is spent in the hut, and more in the forest. For the festival is said "to rejoice the forest," to make it happy and glad. If the girls are not singing well they are told the forest will be displeased. If they are dejected they are asked if they want the forest to be sad. Everyone is expected to be happy, and as the *bamelima* go through the forest they sing to it. As with so many of the other songs of the Mbuti, the *elima* songs are either wordless, being just plays on vowel sounds, or else the words are slight and without any evident significance, such as "Ibu is a dog," "Let's get leaves," and "Oh, the mud!" Other songs sung by the *bamelima* toward the end of the festival, when they sing in public in the camp, are rather different, making rather more sense and being distinctly spicy in nature.

But the songs that are considered as true *elima* songs and which conform to a musical style of their own, are evidently sacred. When they are sung in the forest, they are sung *to* the forest. A phrase is cast at the forest and an echo is awaited before the girls continue. Even an individual girl, usually the one with blood, will sing in this

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

term which could be translated as either "brother" or "sister," and anyone younger is "child," though more often they are just called by name. In this way a Pygmy camp is much less formal than most African societies, where there are not only different terms of address and reference for different degrees of relationship, but also correspondingly different modes of behavior that are enforced at all times.

During the day one Pygmy camp looks much like another. The sun filters down through the trees and brightens the camp with shafts of spiraling light as it catches the columns of smoke drifting lazily upward. This is what makes a camp look so full of life at midday, even when most people are out on the hunt and those that have stayed behind are dozing in the shade of their little leaf huts. The light has a life of its own, and after it has danced down the coils of blue smoke it seems to leap from place to place on the leafy floor of the camp as the trees sway in the breeze high above. And when you listen you hear life in myriad forms all around—birds, monkeys, bees; the rustling of a nearby stream and the never-ending voice of the forest itself. It continually whispers assurances that all is well, that the forest is looking after its children.

In a village the heat of day is unbearably, suffocatingly oppressive, but in the forest it is just warm enough to make you want to stretch out and bask in the dancing, shady sunlight, like other living creatures. But the Pygmies have learned from the animals around them to doze with one eye open, and a sleepy midday camp can become filled in a minute with shouts and yells and tearful protestations as a baby, crawling around this warm, friendly world, gets into a bed of hot ashes, or a column of army ants. In a moment he will be surrounded by angry adults and given a sound slapping, then carried unceremoniously back to the safety of a hut. It does not matter much which hut, because as far as the child is concerned all adults are his parents or grandparents. They are all equally likely to slap him for doing

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 216-A]

857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp. 881 Even at this age, however, and after under- 882 going the *nkumbi* initiation, they are still under 593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumbi*.

• 868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

important, for both net hunters and archers, that a hunter should know well the habits of those who are near him on the hunt. Insofar as children learn to hunt mostly but by no means entirely from their fathers, it is obvious that brothers are likely to be most familiar with each other's hunting techniques, and will thus make the best hunting partners. But against this work many other practices, such as communal hunting games for all children, regardless of relationship, and the frequency of adoption, and of assimilation of adult strangers into the band.

If we cannot find any explanation for the flux and instability that seem characteristic of the band in terms of kinship or economy, or indeed in terms of any aspect of forest life, both become immediately meaningful in considering the relationship between the band and the village. Without going into this in detail at the moment, it must already be evident that the system, or lack of it, must be unhappily confusing for the patrilineal patrilocal villagers, who claim both lineal and territorial rights over Mbuti bands. For as we have seen, a band does not maintain any kind of unilineal integrity even within a single camp, let alone from one camp to the next. And owing to the wider flux, caused by the constant process of fission and fusion, the band has merely territorial reference and cannot be said to apply to specific individuals or lineages. A lineage such as Cephu's may be in the Epulu territory one month and in Ebiani the next. So with every lineage, as with every individual, there is an infinity of territories to which he may move if it pleases him, and the system, such as it is, encourages such movement to the point that no villager can ever be sure of what Mbuti lineages are hunting in "his" territory. Let us leave it for the moment, then, that at least one possible structural result of the combination of the nonlineal nature of the band and its tendency to flux is the counteraction of the village system, rendering the villagers' lineal and territorial claims impractical of assertion.

THE FAMILY

It would of course, be ridiculous to deny that there is any system of kinship, but it is certain that the kinship system does not have the same importance as a focal point of social control as it may in other African societies. To my mind this is undeniably linked to the ad hoc nature of the society, with its almost complete lack of concern for the past, as for the future. This is something we shall discover in

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

512 eat there with their fellows. There is no set mealtime, and any one
264 person eating alone is likely to attract his friends, who will expect to
[576] share his food. Only if a family is eating together by their hearth will they be undisturbed.

854 Infants are allowed to crawl all over the camp, and will be picked up and fondled by anyone, and even fed, if old enough. If they get in the way, or crawl into a fire, they are picked up roughly by an arm or a leg, slapped hard and brought back to their mother's hut. Even
• [868] at this age their education begins, a concentrated effort being made to teach them erotic dancing before they can properly walk.

857 Children have a *bopi* (playground) of their own, separated from the camp by a short trail. It is frequently by a stream in which the youngsters can splash and swim. If they make too much noise, however, they are severely criticized, and it is not thought good for them to spend too much time in the water. They have a number of games that are mainly for amusement, such as spinning tops, swinging on vines, and climbing on trees until they bend to the ground, then jumping off. But even these games teach quickness of reaction and body control. Other games are more strictly imitative of adult activities, and are a primary means of educating the children. They may be played alone or with the help of youths or elders, occasionally of the hunters. Generally, however, parents fondle their children rather than play with them.

From the time they can walk both girls and boys play "house." They wander off from the camp, though never out of earshot, collect the necessary saplings and leaves, and return making the pretense of carrying a heavy load. The girl then goes through the motions of preparing the leaves and sharpening the ends of the saplings while the boy, with a tiny bow and arrow, goes off hunting. While his "wife," as he calls her, sticks the saplings in the ground and makes a rather crude imitation of a hut frame, then covering it with the leaves, the "husband" is busy catching some kind of food—either a rat, if he is skillful enough with his bow, or else some slow game such as snails and grubs. If he is unsuccessful the two may go off together and, unlike adults, fish. If this is unsuccessful the boy will say he is going to "the village" and that they will "eat the villagers." He then creeps into the camp and steals a morsel of village food, a banana or manioc root, from wherever he can find it. The food is cooked and eaten together, and the young couple lie down together and pretend to make love.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Another important imitative game is the hunt, in which a youth or an elder pretends to be an antelope, sometimes with another pretending to be a leopard. An old piece of a real hunting net is used, and once again every action is gone through in almost exact imitation of a real hunt. The antelope and the leopard move erratically and unexpectedly to test the reactions of the children, and any child who fails to react properly is laughed out of the game. The game continues up to the ensnarement of the antelope in the net, then abruptly ends and starts again. Different localities in or around the camp are chosen for these mock hunts, to show the necessity for varying the hunting technique. If any Mbuti are keeping chickens for the villagers (this is often done when a camp is near a village, as the villagers have reasons for wishing to conceal their wealth), the chickens often become the quarry. 857 224 868 [231]

Girls imitate their mothers by carrying a stick of rough wood as a baby, perhaps in a tiny hide sling. Any girls large enough to carry a real baby do so. They make miniature carrying baskets and go off with other girls on gathering expeditions, always returning with some real food either found in the forest or begged or stolen from the camp. With their hunting and fishing activities as well as this gathering, the children make a small contribution to the food economy even at this age. They also learn not only to rely on their fellow age mates for help in food-getting activities, but to share with them. The sharing is largely left to the girl's decision. 857 868

The boys also learn to live and work with their fellows of different families rather than with their nuclear family, and will often be far more intimate with an unrelated boy of the same age than with a brother much older or younger. They play many games that develop quickness of eye and co-ordination of the body, such as the spear practice, where one boy stands in the middle with a large forest fruit at the end of a six foot vine which he swings around him, trailing the fruit about twelve inches above the ground. The other boys stand in a circle around him, their fire-hardened spears poised. As the fruit passes them they throw their spears at it. If they miss they have to dash in to retrieve their spears while the fruit continues to swing around, and other spears continue to be thrown. If a spear hits its mark and holds firm, the boy in the center tries to dislodge it by bouncing the fruit on the ground as he swings it around. This is an additional hazard for the others, as the spear may come flying out at 857 571 561 857 868

857 868 [883] them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

883 561 868 882 Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

882 As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense [832] of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although [836] they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor [584] by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

224 884 885 561 [422] [581] After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern 88 the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to 561 say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

262 out the liquid that drains from it (*kombo*) is caught in leaf cups and
252 drunk. Never is any honey wasted, never is it kept or used in the preparation of other foods; what is not consumed on the spot is eaten or drunk the moment it is brought back into camp.

261 There is a craving for honey during the season that never seems to
262 be satisfied. No amount of alternative foods, even meat, can reduce
222 this passion for honey. Each band has its own way of listening for
[825] the telltale sound of bees swarming. Among some, a leaf is rubbed between the hands, which are then rubbed across the forehead to enable the hunter to see the bees high up in their hives. I found this practice among the eastern archers. Elsewhere, throughout the net-hunting
[184] region and also among the western archers, at least, the chameleon
[825] (*ameuli*) is believed to lead the Mbuti to honey by uttering a long-drawn-out throaty cry. Chameleons, however, are not known to be
[136] capable of making any such noise, and the noted ornithologist Dr. James Chapin claims to have tracked this weird sound down to the *Sarothrura elegans*, a bird with a skinny pouch in its neck that enables it to give an unbroken wail lasting fifteen seconds or more.

221 But most noticeable among a people who take the success of
222 hunting and gathering so much for granted is the presence of honey-
53 collecting magic, and an inordinate emphasis on song and dance,
789 legend-telling and other recreational activities. There is no doubt that whatever else it may be, the honey season is also a festive season where celebration is the order of the day, even at the cost of a relatively empty stomach.

221 Some activities are purely recreational, such as spinning tops made
222 of nut sections, and gambling with dried seeds thrown on the ground
524 to make up a total number that is a multiple of four. Others are edu-
[525] cational, and in particular the honey swing is for training youngsters
[868] in agility at heights, as are the informal contests at climbing dangling vines. The honey swing is suspended from two high branches, so that it has a long, powerful arc. The youths line up and one jumps into the bend of the vine that forms the seat and sets the swing in motion. As the swing moves backwards, a youth runs forward, catching onto the side of the vine, giving it added momentum. As it carries him off the ground, he throws his legs forward and up over his head and into the swing just as the previous occupant jumps to the ground.

The younger children also play with smaller swings, and they have their own game of climbing saplings until there are so many of them that the young tree bends to the ground. The children then leap to

854 wrong, or fondle him and feed him with delicacies if he is quiet and
861 gives them no trouble. He knows his real mother and father, of
867 course, and has a special affection for them and they for him, but from an early age he learns that he is the child of them all, for they are all children of the forest.

857 When a hunting party goes off there are always people left in the
[512] camp—usually some of the older men and women, some children, and perhaps one or two younger men and women. The children
[367] always have their own playground, called *bopi*, a few yards off from
[192] the main camp. At Apa Lelo it was on the shore where the river twisted around an island and one branch of it cut in almost between Cephu's camp and the main camp. The water was fairly shallow there, and all day long the children splashed and wallowed about to their heart's content. If they tired of that, they had a couple of vine swings in their bopi; one was a small one for younger children, and the other was hung from two tall trees. Infants watched with envy as the older children swung wildly about, climbing high up on the vine strands and performing all sorts of acrobatics.

There were always trees for the youngsters to climb, and this is one of the main sports even for those not yet old enough to walk properly. The great game is for half a dozen or more children to climb to the top of a young tree, bending it down until its top touches the ground. Then they all leap off at once, and if anyone is too slow he goes flying back upward as the tree springs upright, to the jeers and laughter of his friends.

861 Like children everywhere, Pygmy children love to imitate their
• 868 adult idols. This is the beginning of their schooling, for the adults will always encourage and help them. What else is there for them to
[524] learn except to grow into good adults? So a fond father will make a tiny bow for his son, and arrows of soft wood with blunt points. He
[285] may also give him a strip of a hunting net. A mother will delight
000 herself and her daughter by weaving a miniature carrying basket. At

[NET HUNTERS]

[p. 224-C]

Unlike the *molimo*, however, the *elima* usually calls for the joint participation of men and women both in song and in dance, which in this context are essentially means of religious expression. This joint participation is in no way connected with that aspect of the *elima* that involves the formal deflowering of the young maiden. 575 533 535 781

The *molimo*, as practiced by the net hunters, both from the Putnam material and from my own field notes, is strikingly different in manifestation from the description given by Schebesta (1952, 278) of the archers' *toré* association. I mention above the fact that the Putnam material places far more weight on the religious than on the social function of the *molimo*. We have also seen that participation in the *nkumbi* does not necessarily entitle the young Mbuti to take part in the *molimo* proceedings. The *molimo* is essentially an association of adult males; an adult male is a hunter, and one does not become a hunter by being circumcised and learning a number of village songs and dances. 575 184 575 561 88

[NET HUNTERS]

The physical discipline and training in the *nkumbi* camp undoubtedly toughen the body, and the boy emerges, even after a short *nkumbi* of two months' duration, very much more adult than on his entry (see my separate account, 1957, of the *nkumbi*). But as far as the Mbuti are concerned, he is still a child, until he has proved himself a hunter. As he grows older, he is allowed to sit with the men in the evenings and gradually to take part in their conversation and some of their activities. He may even be allowed to sit nearby as they sing songs of the *molimo*, but not to take full part. Mrs. Putnam, however, believes that the *nkumbi* does entitle the boy to partial membership, at least, in the *molimo*. She holds this opinion because of her personal knowledge that certain boys who previously were secluded with the womenfolk in their huts during *molimo* proceedings, as she was herself, were not secluded following their *nkumbi* initiation. As a woman, however, she was unable to witness the *molimo* itself, except for some dances she caught sight of by chance. My own material indicates that anyone who has been acclaimed as a hunter is allowed to take full part in the association's proceedings and that there are *nkumbi* initiates who are not considered as hunters and who are definitely barred from full participation. The Putnam material demonstrates the close relation of hunting skill

575 561 88 [554] [224]

[P. 224-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 225-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

575 to status in the band and the fact that young
561 men, as yet unmarried, who have displayed
• 88 particular prowess as hunters may take a prom-
[554] inent part in *molimo* activities. In the absence
[224] of any detailed information on formal initiation
into the *molimo*, we can at least say with some
certainty, from the available material, that
among the net hunters membership is associa-
ted primarily with hunting skill.

575 With regard to the proceedings of the associ-
796 ation, all reports from this district indicate that
the *molimo* is held only on occasions of the
greatest importance to the community: various
crises, and particularly death. A fuller account
is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1960b, 307–340);
a summary is given here.

534 The word *molimo* is used to denote the asso-
[192] ciation, its proceedings, and a musical instru-
ment. Only one instrument is reported by the
Putnams as being used—the *molimo* trumpet.
But Anne Putnam, in her notes, mentions hav-
ing heard the trumpet one night and thinking
that it sounded very different from the one she
had heard some months previously. It is possi-

[P. 225-B]

857 868 [883] them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

883 561 868 882 Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

882 As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense [832] of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although [836] they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor [584] by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

224 884 885 561 [422] [581] After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern 88 the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to 561 say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders. 88 561

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men. 88 561 627 554 [562]

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the 888 [157] 888 627 578 [885]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Despite all of which, and the lack of structurally significant rules of inheritance of property or status (names sometimes being handed on down to alternate generations, but not necessarily so), and with no apparent concomitant inheritance of status, certainly not of property, there is a recognition of the patrilineage, and a tendency toward patrilocality.[3]

2. AGE is the prime factor in dividing the band into significant units, the significance being seen in terms of domestic, economic, legal and governmental responsibilities. Each age level has a distinct role that contributes to the total social order, and in all these aspects of life it is consistently of greater import than kinship. The consistency still remains as firm in religious life, and following the ultimate crisis of death. The dead belong, as it were, to yet another age level, and one that is almost dissociated from the four levels of the living. Thus after death there is no familial concern for the dead, as seen in the complete lack of concern with ancestral ghosts. Far from disclaiming the dead relatives through fear[4], the Mbuti continue to regard them with affection insofar as they regard them at all. Their preference for forgetting the dead reflects an attitude toward death, not to the individual dead.

Each age level has its own way of earning the respect of the band as a whole, by fulfilling what is referred to as its "duty." Thus the duty of children is to grow up in good health. The duty of youths is to sing, flirt and play—and help the parental level. The duty of the hunters is to hunt and, oddly enough, to create *akami*, or noise, and the duty of

[3] We have to assert that there is, for the moment, no evidence that the territorial band is a product of special considerations, as suggested by Steward and Service (in whose terminology the band is "composite"). In particular we must reject, for the Mbuti, the assertion of Service (1962, p. 49) so convenient to his argument for virilocality, that all such societies were, before they were "so thoroughly subjugated," characterized by fighting between "unrelated groups," resulting in "fears, dangers and enmities." Also it is necessary to deny his assertion that such societies are "enclaved among more powerful neighbours—and cannot but lose or be heavily punished for any breach of the peace." If anything, in the Ituri, it is the villages that are enclaved. Further gross misrepresentation, perhaps owing to paucity of reliable material, is offered by Service (1962, p. 108) in the bald statement: "The composite band, on the other hand, is obviously a product of the near-destruction of aboriginal bands after contact with civilization. In all cases there is conclusive evidence of rapid depopulation by disease which, when combined with ending of hostilities among the aborigines themselves under the dominance of the common enemy, resulted in the merging of previously unrelated peoples." The evidence now available, while not denying the possible validity of such historical reconstruction, in no way supports it. Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary.

[4] For an example of precisely the opposite situation, see Beattie (1960, p. 76), where concern for kinship obligations during life is continued after death, resulting in a desire to disavow relationships.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

561 the elders is to restore *ekimi*, or quietness, and also, following their
• 88 alternate generation, to play and sing, if in a somewhat different manner. The elders may also flirt.

Above all, each age level has its own responsibility in the total band economy.

621 3. TERRITORY is the principle by which the band, divided hori-
561 zontally by age, sees its unity vertically, through all four generational
[594] levels. Territory, represented by the hearth, recognizes the divisions of the band from the nuclear family, represented by the family hearth, to the four age levels, represented by the different hearths at the *kumamolimo*, for youths, hunters and elders (children remaining by
621 the family hearths). Territory, represented by an area enclosed by
131 recognizable boundaries, defines and is the symbol of unity of the band. In its widest extension, the forest itself, territory forms the basis for the unity of all Mbuti in their common opposition to the
[648] village world. The village world is frequently referred to as *indenji aku*,
[192] or in the lingua franca, KiNgwana, as *inchi ingina*—directly translated as "another territory." Each band has its own *indenji*, and intermarriage between noncontiguous bands is preferred because of the rights it conveys, each to the other's territory. The Mbuti themselves say it is good to have relatives (friends) in many camps, for then one
628 never "walks emptily" (*tamba bulé*). One of the great *molimo* songs
602 is "*me tamba bulé*"—"I am walking emptily." The importance lies not in the initial or future residence of the married couple, but in the exchange relationship established by their marriage, enabling individuals or families of each band to exchange visits with members of the other, never having to "walk emptily."

621 For the Mbuti territory in its widest aspect, as the forest, also rep-
778 resents the spiritual source of their entire being, and effectively operates as the ultimate sanction of social behavior.

822 4. NOISE, or *akami*, is another element of structural significance, and must be considered in relation to its counterpart, *ekimi*—quiet. Noise is recognized as having considerable practical significance, such as its effect in scaring away animals. This can be desirable or undesirable, depending on the situation, and so can noise be desirable or otherwise. Ultimately, however, noise kills, and so generally is to be avoided. It may be used in times of danger or crisis for protective purposes, and apart from shouting to frighten away wild animals while on the trail, the Mbuti also whistle to stop all human sound, in

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

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881
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Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[For information on the Molimo and Elima religious associations, see category 575.]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Z
P
• 881
179

Initiation

Schebesta (1948, 467 ff.; 1952, 265 ff.) gives no information concerning the initiation of girls among the archers. He does, however, describe at some length the initiation, accompanied by circumcision, of boys, according to the villager rite known as *nkumbi*. His earlier account, in "Die Bambuti Pygmäen vom Ituri," is, by his own admission, drawn largely from Mbuti and villager informants throughout the forest. He was able to have only fleeting glimpses ("*flüchtigen Einblicke*"; Schebesta, 1948, 475) of parts of *nkumbi* festivals among the Ngwana, Byeru, Bali, and forest Bira, but his observations, he says, confirmed what he had been told. In 1949 he had an opportunity to see more of a single *nkumbi*, details of which he records (Schebesta, 1952), but this was among net-hunting Mbuti. Consequently, we lack precise information concerning the *nkumbi* among archers. Opinion among different groups of Mbuti varies as to the origin of the custom; some claim to have practiced it before the villagers, some say that they have adopted it only recently. There are

[P 179-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

[P. 179-C]

even Mbuti groups in which apparently it is practiced among themselves but without circumcision. Z 881 177

The *nkumbi* takes place approximately every six years, says Schebesta, and each initiation has a specific name, usually connected with some outstanding incident connected with that particular occasion. It is inaugurated on the decision of the village lineage head who invites the Mbuti to take part. An essential feature of the *nkumbi* throughout the Ituri is this joint participation of Mbuti and villager. Z [613]

The *nkumbi* (Efe: *leku*) takes place in a special camp in the forest, some distance from the village. A large conical hut is built (Schebesta, 1948, here follows a description of a southern Lese initiation), on one side of which is the raised sleeping place of the initiates (Efe: *bemu*), and on the other, the fireplace and quarters of the elders who will guard and teach the boys. All the arrangements are in the hands of the villager lineage head (*avitiri*).

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

The candidates, Mbuti and villager, are led before the operator and are, if brave enough, circumcised standing up; otherwise, they are laid on the ground and held down. Next to every Lese youth stands a Pygmy boy, who is circumcised immediately after him. The two enter into a lasting bond of *karé* brotherhood. As the circumcision is completed, the Lese blows his signal horn, and the Mbuti his *segbe* pipe. The women in the village hear this and reply with a shout of joy at this sign that their sons have now become men. By this joint ceremony the *karé* stand in an even closer relationship to each other than do blood brothers.

Z P 881 177 608

Z P [534] [202]

Schebesta gives little account of the ensuing instruction, though he mentions the brutality with which he says the initiates are treated in the camp. Food is brought by the mothers and left nearby; the elders from the camp go to collect it. The boys are cut off from any comfort they might be given by their mothers. Instruction, "partly social, partly moral" (Schebesta, 1948, 481) may be given by the lineage head himself or by one of the other elders.

The major aspects of the *nkumbi*, from Schebesta's account, seem to be the formal transition from boyhood to manhood, the establishment of a *karé* relationship between Mbuti and villagers, and the introduction of all the initiates for the first time to a special trumpet that plays an important part in the men's secret

Z P 881 177 608 534

[P. 179-D]

[ARCHERS]

P [P, 180-A]
Z society. Schebesta also mentions other instru-
881 ments particularly associated with *nkumbi* (and
177 the secret society) among the south Lese,
608 namely: the bull-roarer (*pahudjuhudju* or
534 *hudjuhudju*); a flute (*likuru*); a singing pot (*pengi*); and the large wooden trumpet (*asa-*
Z *ragba*). The invitation to the Mbuti to take part
[563] in the *nkumbi* is one of the ways in which the villagers seek to maintain and extend their control over the Pygmies.

Z Schebesta concludes that we must distinguish
P two elements in the *nkumbi*: the villager ele-
881 ment of initiation associated with circumcision
177 and, quite distinct from it, the Pygmy element
P of initiation into the men's secret society (*toré*).
[578]

Marriage

P Schebesta (1948, 343) writes that it is difficult
581 to determine which is the stronger, the interests
584 of the hunting band or the interests and mutual
621 affection of the two individuals concerned.

[ARCHERS]

P Z 575 562 The society plays a part in social life by chastizing rebels, particularly women (Schebesta, 1948). All whom Schebesta (1937) questioned assured him that the primary object of the society was to keep the women in their place, mainly by stealing food from them for the society to feast upon. It is perhaps also worth mentioning that Schebesta (1937, 101) writes: "Nowadays in the main a *toré* meeting place is just a home for hen-pecked husbands. . . . It has no connection in any way with the ceremonial of tribal initiation."

P Z 575 881 177 114 He modified these views in his later work (Schebesta, 1948, 492 ff.) but used the same evidence. He finds a definite connection between the *toré* society and the *nkumbi* "circumcision initiation." The latter, he says, is founded on the same belief in *toré* but has taken a villager form. Circumcision above all is a villager custom and has nothing to do with Mbuti initiation. Originally, the Mbuti knew only the association of *toré*, which integrated the young men into the adult group of *toré* hunters.

P Z 575 182 [562] As far as can be seen from this material, the *toré* society has both social and magico-religious functions. Its primary social function is the control of the womenfolk of any one Mbuti band (who, it will be remembered, come from varied bands and do not have the same communal feeling as the menfolk). Schebesta mentions the fact that, when a meeting of the Mbuti *toré*

P 575 [P. 184-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[ARCHERS]

Costermans further agrees with Junker (1889–1891, vol. 3, 92) that many of the northern archers have recently themselves taken to a system of chieftainship. They lead their nomadic existence under the jurisdiction of a chief and in every way preserve their freedom under this jurisdiction. If there is any disagreement, however, they leave and place themselves under a neighboring chief. But not nearly enough information is given for any understanding of the structure of this "system."

P 622 184 178 621

Schebesta seems to stand between the two extremes with regard to the archers whom he studied. He stresses the economic dependency of the Mbuti on the villagers, and also, as does Putnam (1948), the personal aspect of the relationship. He does not agree with Costermans that the archers change their allegiance at the slightest provocation. He regards the *nkumbi*, with its creation of *karé* relationships between individual Mbuti and villagers, as a major factor in maintaining villager authority over the archers and rendering the latter dependent on their Lese neighbors.

P 2 439 177 571 [114]

P 2 [881] [608] •

[P. 185-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 216-A]

857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp.
• 881 Even at this age, however, and after under-
882 going the *nkumbi* initiation, they are still under
593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumbi*.

868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

[NET HUNTERS]

INITIATION: *elima*

881 [184] The first difference between Putnam's material and that of Schebesta regarding initiation is that among the net hunters there is a form of initiation of girls known as *elima*. Schebesta [114] believes this to be a village custom (*elimo*), but no details are available for comparison.

881 Data on the Mbuti *elima* come mainly from Anne Putnam's notes on several such festivals that she witnessed among the Epulu net hunters. She was unable to get full information, but states that the *elima* (her spelling: *alima*) is held as girls come to the age of puberty—either individually or jointly. At such time the girl, [346] with some of her companions (unmarried girls and those whose breasts had begun to form), enters the *elima* house, a special hut built in the camp in the usual way but larger and with a partition down the middle. The *elima* hut is in the care of one of the old women in the camp, who is also in charge of the instruction of the menstruating girl.

[301] The *elima* lasts about a month. During this [302] time the *elima* girls put on the vine circlets over their heads and under each shoulder (as worn by boy initiates) and paint their faces and bodies with white clay about twice a day, making designs on one another without, apparently, any particular convention. They go out of the camp together to collect vine and wood, also to collect roots and small pieces of wood that will make good ammunition. At

[P. 216-8]

[NET HUNTERS]

At [P. 216-C]
sundown they return to their hut, which they 881 •
enter, and start singing the special *elima* songs [533]
taught to the new initiates by the old woman in
charge. The women of the camp sit outside and
also sing, having armed themselves with whips
made from the vine brought by the girls.

The menstruating girl will have sent word to
her lover, who may be of the same band but [613]
must be of a different lineage. He must fight his
way into the hut, through the women armed
with whips and against the shower of missiles
hurled at him by the girls of the *elima*. In the
old days, say the Mbuti, the fighting used to be
serious, and sometimes people were killed. The 881
young man, if successful in gaining admission, 836
had to pay an ax for the privilege of deflowering
his maiden. He remained with her all night. The
next day he was bound with vine and kept a
prisoner in the *elima* hut until evening. He was
then washed and rubbed with ashes and allowed
to leave.

From then onward any eligible young man [831]
(i.e., not of the same lineage as the girl) could [613]
try his luck. If he happened to be the husband [837]
of one of the women guarding the hut, she could

[NET HUNTERS]

claim compensation from him. The women guardians also could make it easy or difficult for the candidates, according to their inclinations. Any man, having fought his way through, had to secure the girl's permission before he slept with her. But reliable Mbuti informants reported that a large number merely fought for the prestige acquired and sought no intercourse with the girls. Outwardly, there is no change, except that instead of firing arrows from their bows the men fire fruit peel, and the fighting is less severe than that described in the tales of olden times. Exactly what happens inside the hut is not known, but the festival is evidently an opportunity for young men to prove their valor, and for young maidens to prove their womanliness, each one attesting to his or her readiness for marriage. There is unfortunately no evidence as to how far the opening of the *elima* constitutes a betrothal, nor how frequently it is followed by marriage. 881 836 [554]

During the course of the *elima* the girls are under certain food restrictions, which include a prohibition on all meat. *Elima* singing goes on all night. Presumably, as with the *nkumbi* initiation of boys, this is a period of discipline as well as of education. Apart from the special *elima* songs, apparently special dances are 881 [533] [535]

[P 216-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.217-A]

881 taught to the *elima* initiates. In one such dance
[535] witnessed by Mrs. Putnam, the girls held arrows and cut one another, and the women struck them with whips.

There is no information from the Putnam material as to any particular ceremony to mark the end of the *elima* (but see Turnbull, 1960a, 198 ff.).

INITIATION: *nkumbi*

Putnam's notes on the initiation of boys concern a net-hunting band and are particularly interesting, as they describe an initiation that occurred in the Bira village of Kokonyange in 1935, 14 years before Schebesta witnessed an initiation among the same group. It is significant that Putnam makes no mention of *karé*
881 608 brotherhood between Pygmy and village boys.

For male initiation among the particular Epulu net hunters we are dealing with, I have only my own field notes,[1] and here again there is no mention of *karé* brotherhood (Turnbull, 1957). The full details of the ceremony do not concern us, as they vary from one village to another. It is important, however, to compare
[184] the relationship between the net-hunting Mbuti and the Bira villagers with that between the archers and the Lese, with regard to initiation.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

881 The first *nkumbi* of which I saw something
114 was in 1951 at the village of Effundi Somali. I
608 saw only a part and the final closing ceremony. Although I may well have missed much detail, it is unlikely that I would have missed anything of the nature of a *karé* relationship had one existed. There was certainly no sign of it. The next *nkumbi*, which took place in 1954 at Camp Putnam, was exceptional in that no village boys of the right age were available, so only Mbuti boys were initiated. Thus, there was no question of *karé* relationship between them and villagers, but also, during the entire course of the *nkumbi*, I heard no mention of it. This, together with Putnam's own silence on the subject, would seem to indicate that this relationship is either not so widespread or not so important as Schebesta assumes.

881 The peculiar circumstances of the 1954 *nkumbi* are given briefly here. Though exceptional, they contain some interesting points for

[114] [1] These covered my visits to the Ituri in 1951 and 1954–1955 only.

[P. 217-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 217-C]

comparison with the *nkumbi* as described by Schebesta for the archers. P 881

In the Epulu region the *nkumbi* takes place every three years. It is organized and conducted throughout by the villagers, who invite the Mbuti to take part. The first part of the year, from the dry season onward, is considered most suitable. On this particular occasion there were no village boys of the right age, but the villagers (Bira and Ndaka) went ahead with the arrangements as usual. The fact that only Pygmy boys were to be initiated made no difference to the celebrations, which were conducted in the village with full enthusiasm, bringing villagers from as far as 50 miles away. Villagers allowed themselves to be beaten with long sapling whips (Fig. 46) "to give strength" to the Mbuti candidates. P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [411] [751]

After a week of preliminary festivities, on the day of the first circumcision, the *makata* sticks (a set of eight or nine resonant sticks tuned to a specific scale) were cut and sounded. The *makata* are heard only during a period of initiation and are destroyed simultaneously with the initiation camp at the end of the festival. Villagers and Pygmies joined in a dance with the *makata*, while others went into the forest a short distance to make a clearing for the initiation camp. P Z 534 881 177 P Z [535]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

ation camp. While some started erecting the hut, in the style of a bent-over windshield, others prepared a horizontal cross bar between two trees. Five boys were circumcised the first day, and three on separate days during the second week of the *nkumbi*. Not all were cut on the cross bar. Some were taken down to a stream. One was circumcised in the middle of the village; another, in a different place within the initiation camp. The cutting was done to the accompaniment of much drumming, while all the womenfolk of the village were shut up in their huts. No signal was given to indicate when a boy had been cut, though probably the change in the vigor of the drumming and *makata* beating served to notify the women. Only one boy was given a *segbe* pipe to blow, by a particularly superstitious father. The "doctor" wore a mask made of a thin strip of bark (Fig. 48a) and raffia armbands (Fig. 47a) which were thereafter left hanging from the roof of the initiation hut.

After the circumcision, the wounds were dressed, and the boys immediately were made to begin to learn the initiation songs. Far from

P Z 881 304 177 [346]

Z P [759] [301]

P Z 881 177

[P. 217-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 218-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
[NET HUNTERS]
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[P.218-A]

B
411
751
881
P
881
197
751

FIG. 46. Initiation whip, *mbeke*, Bira villagers, Central Ituri.

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 218-B]

being confined to their beds for three days, as mentioned by Schebesta (1952), they were made to move about continually by the villager instructors. The boys' fathers, who were present at all times, frequently comforted their sons, apparently to the annoyance of the villagers. There was, however, no question of the savagery implied by Schebesta. During the following two months the boys were strictly disciplined. There was a process of physical training that was undeniably tough, but it fulfilled only one of the major purposes of the *nkumbi*, namely, to fit boys for adult life. The Mbuti fathers, however, obviously had different ideas as to how far this discipline should be carried and criticized the villagers when they carried it too far. Further, when there were no villagers in the camp, the Mbuti talked quite openly and showed by their speech and their behavior that they had no respect for the taboos associated with the festival. It seemed quite evident that they consciously underwent the *nkumbi*, not because of any religious significance, but because it gave them status in villager society, in which any uncircumcised youth is a laughing stock. The important thing, then, was the circumcision, for this specific purpose.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

Further, unlike the initiation described by Schebesta, the *molimo* (Schebesta: *lusomba*) trumpet did not appear during the entire festival, nor was it mentioned. The initiation here seems to be almost completely dissociated from the men's religious association, at least as far as the Mbuti are concerned. The only instruments that were used were the *makata* sticks, small clappers used by the women in their dances during this period, and a bull-roarer (which the boys knew about, though in front of the villagers they pretended otherwise). There was nothing at any time in the ceremony itself, or in the instruction, to connect the *nkumbi* with the Mbuti *molimo* society. Toward the end of the initiation the boys were dressed in grass skirts (Fig. 47) and paraded through the village with leaf masks (Fig. 48b) held between their teeth to prevent them from talking to non-initiates. After the final cere-

Z P 881 534 [114] [575] Z P 881 Z P [532] [292] P 881

[P 218-C]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 219-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 219-A]

P
B
881
292
301

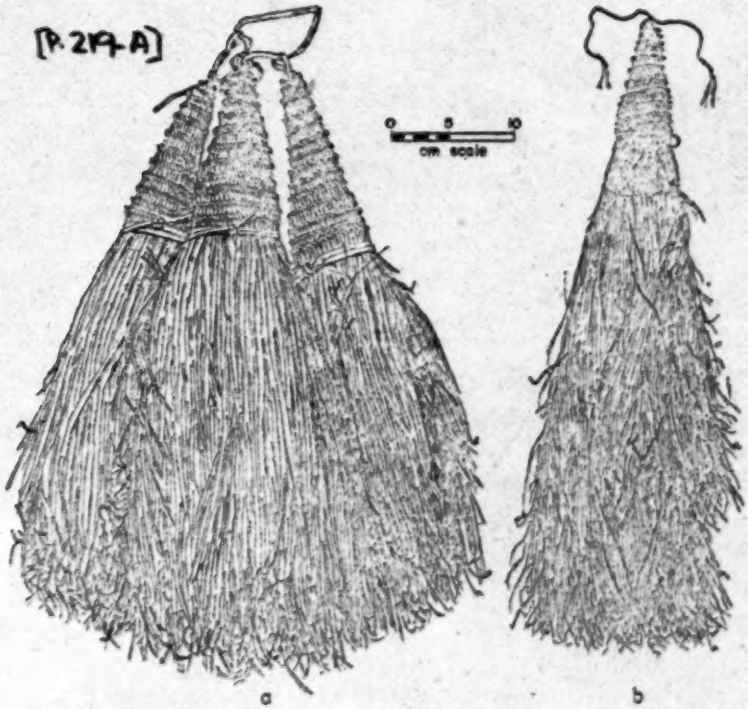

FIG. 47. Initiation items, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Raffia armbands, worn by "doctor" during *nkumbi* dances; at other times, hung from the roof of the initiation hut. b. Grass skirt, worn by initiates at final presentation dance.

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do not participate fully in the proceedings of the [575] *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and dancing. It may also be accompanied by the [304] cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkumbi* 177 serves merely to give status in villager society. 17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation into the religious associations of their own men [554] and women; the *molimo* and *elima*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

apart from the villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. 881 177 171

Marriage

Putnam is able to cite several cases of conflict over marriage, proposed or accomplished, and while such conflict may secondarily be between two lineages, it is primarily between the hunting band (whether it composes a single lineage or more than one) and the individual concerned. Putnam mentions neither arranged marriages nor the betrothal of infants, although there may be bands with whom marriage is preferred. The net-hunting Mbuti themselves simply say "the further away the better," referring to geographical distance. Kinship distance means little to them, though all cite general rules of bilateral lineage exogamy. 58 [578] [621] [613] [613]

Putnam says that the hunting band is meant to be an exogamous unit, but that in 58 621

[P. 219-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Bira FO11

[NET HUNTERS]

[P.220-A]

P
B
881
532

FIG. 48. Initiation masks, Bira villagers, Central Ituri. a. Bark mask, worn by Bira and Ndaka initiators during the preliminary *nkumbi* dances. b. Leaf mouth-mask, worn in mouth of initiates when paraded through village.

P
58
621

fact marriages within the band occur and are in fact often favored as they can be arranged without any ceremony. Ceremony occurs, he says, only when a marriage involves two different bands. Intra-band marriage is made possible, even within the bounds of lineage exogamy, by the practice of maintaining a number of "resident aliens." A net-hunting camp, always

P
58
628
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000

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 220-C]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[NET HUNTERS]

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

The relationship between the net-hunting band, or between individual members of it, and village patrons is dealt with separately. It has already been mentioned that Putnam speaks of its current foundation in trade, and of how the joint *nkumbi*, unlike that of the archers, seems not to have the same significance for villager and Mbuti. For the villager it is a tribal initiation in its usual sense and with its usual implications; for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is a means of acquiring status in an alien community. It does not seem to initiate both into identical social or religious associations, such as the *toré* society described by Schebesta (1952, 278).

Also, there is no evidence of blood brotherhood or of a *karé* relationship between villagers and net hunters. When we deal with religious associations among the net hunters, we deal with exclusively Mbuti associations. This is not to deny that a close relationship exists between an Mbuti and his villager patron, which, in fact, Putnam stresses; nor does it deny the fact that Mbuti may be invited to take part in the meetings of villager associations, and that villagers may conversely be invited to take part in the meetings of Mbuti associations (though information on joint meetings is lacking). All our material deals with exclusive meetings of the *elima* and *molimo*, as held by the Mbuti women and men, respectively.

Information on the *elima* is scant; there is no evidence of any ritual other than the singing of

[P. 223-D]

[TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 224-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

ter. During this time the food was being cooked, 765
and the women were still chattering, though 533
shut up in their huts. After eating, and when all the women were silent, the serious singing began.

Final mention should be made of the coinci- 575
dence of an *elima* initiation and a *molimo* meet- 881
ing, described by Anne Putnam. It is the cus- 796
tom of the *elima* to sing through the night, as do 533
the boys of the initiation during the *nkumbi*. When the women once found themselves rivaled by some men singing the "hunting" *molimo*, they competed but were sung down and finally gave up. As soon as the sounds of the *molimo* [534]
trumpet died into the distance, however, the women started up again. When it was a case of [765]
death, and serious *molimo* singing, the women offered no competition.

It is told by these Mbuti that in the old days 173
the *molimo* was an animal that belonged to the 534
women, and all the men had to run away every 325
time they saw it. But then the men caught the 562

[1] Subsequently I saw many more meetings of the *molimo* association (1960b, 1961) and its two different aspects were clarified and reconciled.

[P 227-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

The villagers, says Putnam (1948, 324), regard the Mbuti as a class of beings somewhere between humans and animals. They take Pygmy wives, however, because they are prolific and good to sleep with, and the children of such unions are considered as full human beings and are brought up as such. Further, the villagers think of the Mbuti as barbaric and uncultured, but this attitude does not affect their mutual affection.

There is some evidence that respect for the Mbuti, in some form, is not lacking among the villagers. Geluwe (1956) mentions the Bira custom of offering first fruits from the plantations to the Pygmies. Anne Putnam says that the villagers agree with the Pygmies and that the latter have the right to take what food they want from the plantations following the killing of an elephant. Possoz (1954, 2575) suggests that there are linguistic grounds for assuming that the villagers originally referred to the Mbuti by a term denoting respect for them because of their closer connection with the forest spirits.

Putnam mentions trade and the *nkumbi* as two of the major factors, apart from personal relations at an inter-familial level, in maintaining the Mbuti-villager relationship.

Another important factor in interaction is the dance. When the Mbuti stay near the vil-

[P. 229-B]

[p. 246-c]

Another very striking difference between the 184
archers and the net hunters concerns the initia- 177
tion of boys. As this is treated more fully below 881
(p. 252), we only indicate here the fact of the 608
total absence of any *karé* brotherhood between
Pygmy and villager initiates among the net
hunters. Schebesta, on the other hand, places [575]
great importance on this pact for his archers,
probably because of his insistence (1952, 281)
on the fact that the *nkumbi* initiation is an ini-
tiation into the religious association of *toré* for
both Mbuti and villagers. This is denied by [114]
Costermans (1938) for the archers and is con-
tradicted by my own experience among the net
hunters. In any case, if there is a difference be-
tween the two groups over the significance of
nkumbi initiation (and it may well be only a dif-
ference of interpretation rather than of fact), it
does not seem directly related to any difference
in hunting technique.

Similarly, with marriage, separation, death, 184
funerals, childbirth, and other occasions with 296
ritual connections, such difference as exists in 177
the two accounts seems to be associated more
directly with prevailing differences in villager
custom rather than with any inherent differ-
ences in the Mbuti communities. This, and the
nature and function of the closed associations,
are more properly the subject of discussion of
the Mbuti-villager relationship rather than the
difference between net hunters and archers,
which is our main concern here.

[p.247-A]

have taken part or not. With Schebesta's archers it seems that the lineage elder is the final authority, below which rank the family heads.

Whereas the status of men is related to hunting ability and to proficiency in the arts of mime, dance, and song, the factors involved in determining the status of women are not clear. Fertility is probably one factor, and, almost certainly, ability as a singer another, for a good singer takes a leading part in the *elima* celebrations. The *elima* itself may be connected with adult male status, since one of its main features is the battle between the young men seeking to gain admission to the *elima* hut and the women guarding it. Married men may and do take part in this battle, but there comes a point when a man has neither the incentive nor, possibly, the necessary stamina. Anne Putnam writes of one elderly Mbuti, still active as a hunter, who was seen to cry during an *elima* festival. In response to a question he answered: "I fought my way into many an Alima hut when I was younger. Now I have no desires. It saddens me" (Putnam, 1954, 218). A young man who does not take part in the *elima* is a subject for ridicule.

554 The fact that men go through the not inconsid-
• 881 erable beating inflicted on them by the women in order to gain admission, without ever taking advantage of the young maidens then available to them, is another indication of the function of the *elima* in determining male status.

555 Male status depends primarily on skill in the
224 hunt; this may be deliberately acquired by individual exploits such as elephant hunting.
[439] Among certain bands elephant hunting is a specialized profession, the ivory being used for trade. Among the Epulu net hunters it is not so. It is an exceptional occurrence and, as described by Anne Putnam (1954, 143 ff.), may be undertaken without any thought for the food or ivory, at times when the band has no need of extra meat or of trade with the villagers. On this occasion the Pygmy hunter admits that he was frightened. He describes how he killed the elephant simply because he felt compelled to do so. This compulsion may have arisen in part by
[825] virtue of his reputation as a great hunter, and in part from constant opposition between the human world and the animal world, and the constant effort of the Mbuti to assert the superiority of the former.

224 This latter aspect was also witnessed in the
825 ceremony described by Anne Putnam (1954,
[P. 247-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

In so far as individual magic is concerned, it seems that its practice among the Mbuti, when taken over from the villager, is of no more significance than our own superstitious crossing of the fingers, touching of wood, or avoidance of walking under ladders. When Pygmies call in villager specialists to perform magic for them, mainly to improve hunting, we have at least to consider the possibility of a mere political maneuver.

Dance and Festivity

Villagers and Pygmies associate frequently at festive seasons or occasions. Pygmies will attend any village festival, and when they have an occasion of their own (such as the killing of an elephant) they first celebrate in their forest camp, then break camp and continue their celebrations in the village.

Dance is an important feature of any celebration, villager or Pygmy, but in this the two never mix. They watch each other's dances with enjoyment, but take part only in fun. One ex-

[P. 250-D]

[P. 251-A]

ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held only during the *nkumbi*.

Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band is visiting a village, it may come down to the main meeting place in the evening and dance. The villagers expect it and regard it as one of their forms of entertainment, though they say they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

When the two groups meet on both festive and ordinary occasions they keep apart from each other. There is no leisure activity in which they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti camp beside the village, on the edge of the plantation where the forest begins. This physical disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P [P.252-A]
583 585 179 Z 563 585

local villager custom. The latter ceremony is conducted entirely by the villagers and at their expense. On these occasions the villager takes the leading part and carries out his own ritual, but the Pygmy does not let this supplant his own indigenous way of recognizing the event. The villager ceremony is something the Pygmy adds to his own.

P 177 • 881 575 Z 563 881 575

With initiation the situation may seem to be different. The Mbuti have not only adopted the villager custom of initiation accompanied by circumcision, known as *nkumbi*, but they attend the same initiation schools which are always run by villagers, never by Pygmies. Initiation is nothing if not entry into a very definite indigenous system of values, yet here we have the Mbuti placing themselves in a totally subordinate position. The *nkumbi*, according to Schebesta (1952, 281), initiates the youth, Pygmy or villager, into membership of the Lese *toré* association (for the archers) or its Bira equivalent, the *molimo* (for the net hunters). The function

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P 177 881 575 Z 563 881 575

of this association is not clear from his various accounts, but he is emphatic that it is closely connected with religious belief and practice. If so, then he would be perfectly justified in stating, as he does (Schebesta, 1952, 278), that nothing has made the Mbuti so dependent on the villager as the *nkumbi*. It would all fall neatly into the picture he gives, or tries to give, of a clear-cut symbiotic relationship between the two peoples.

P 177 881 Z 563 881 P Z [114] [608]

Schebesta (1952) describes initiation for the net hunters. All that he says would be confirmed by casual observation of the practice of *nkumbi* in the Epulu District, among the net hunters and their Bira neighbors. As may be seen in the survey, however, there is one striking difference between the account by Putnam and that by Schebesta, and that is the lack in Putnam's description of any institution such as *karé* brotherhood. Apart from this, from Putnam's detailed account of the 1935–1936 *nkumbi* at Kokonyange and from my own observations of the *nkumbi* at Effundi Somali's village (near Epulu) in 1951, there would be nothing to contradict Schebesta's fact or theory. The Pygmy boys appear to go through the *nkumbi* on equal terms with the villager boys, except that the ceremony, instruction, and the camp itself are run entirely by the villagers and according to a custom that is generally acknowledged to be of villager (probably Bira) origin.

[P 252-8]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[p. 252-C]

In the survey, in giving my own account of the next *nkumbi* (1954) that I witnessed in the Epulu District, I show how, under peculiar circumstances, when no villagers are present in the initiation camp, the Mbuti men and boys take the opportunity to mock both the villagers and their ceremony. This burlesque would not be enough in itself to indicate that the Mbuti completely rejected the *nkumbi* or, indeed, that they are doing any more than many individuals or groups do who occupy subordinate positions.[1] I suggest, however, in the survey, that there is such a rejection, and that the Mbuti undergo the *nkumbi* in order to acquire status in villager society; further, that the *nkumbi* for them is quite dissociated from initiation into the *molimo* association.

In order to follow this important point further, as it is one of the most significant pieces of information we have on the villager-Mbuti relationship, I must refer to a full account of the 1954 *nkumbi*, compiled from my field notes (Turnbull, 1957). From this we get sufficient indications to justify a rejection of Schebesta's analysis of Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

This analysis, in any case, could stand only by isolating the *nkumbi* or by relating it only to other villager institutions in the villager society. When we try to relate the *nkumbi* to Pygmy institutions, Schebesta's interpretation cannot hold.

In the 1954 *nkumbi* there was a very evident divorce between initiative and authority. The villagers took most of the initiative; they decided when the *nkumbi* should be held and made all the necessary arrangements. Villagers carried out the operations and gave all the instruction. But their authority over the Pygmy *ganza* (members of the *nkumbi*) was far from complete. The Pygmies decided which boys should take part, without reference to the villagers; though they made use of Effundi Somali, a village chief, to reinforce their own demand that a certain boy should take part (Turnbull, 1957, 197). During and following the operation, the Mbuti fathers acted contrary to villager custom and in the face of villager disapproval by comforting their children. Both fathers and children ignored the various taboos imposed by the vil-

[1] The burlesquing attitude of the Mbuti is significant but could possibly be interpreted merely as a psychological reaction to subordination. It is in the light of other facts that we think differently.

[P. 252-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P.253-A]
Z
563
881
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179
881
186

lagers when it suited them to do so. In the dispute over the visit of the *ganza* to the forest hunting camp, the villagers were quite unable to enforce their will or even to enforce the compromise they finally effected with the Mbuti. The villagers themselves made no major decisions concerning the arrangement or carrying out of the *nkumbi* without at least discussing the matter with the Pygmy fathers. No difference was observable in the preparations or the ceremony that could be attributed to the fact that Mbuti only were being initiated.

The account given shows not only the extent to which the villagers were unable to control the *ganza*, but also the thoroughness with which they attempted to dominate the initiation. Despite the fact that the *ganza* were entirely Pygmy, for the villagers the *nkumbi* was nonetheless sacred. They were interested in the *nkumbi* itself rather than in the individuals participating. Whether or not the villagers thought that by initiating the Mbuti they were subjecting them to tribal and supernatural authority is uncertain, though Schebesta (1952, 278; 1948, chap. 7) so suggests. The evidence considered here suggests that the villagers not only lacked control over the Pygmy *ganza*, but were not particularly rigorous in maintaining it, except in so far as any desecration of the initiation camp or the *nkumbi* itself was concerned. It seems that the villager was primarily interested in the *nkumbi* as a tribal festival; if any subordination of the Pygmies took place, it was incidental.

177 186 881 Similarly any subordination on the part of the Pygmies was incidental and insignificant, though they lost no opportunity for maintaining their individuality when their feelings clashed with those of the villagers. Unlike the latter, they had no interest in the *nkumbi* as such. This lack of interest was manifest from the outset, when the village was in a state of festive turmoil in preparation for the ceremony, and the Pygmy camp was unchanged. This lack of interest was frequently manifest as total disrespect. Apart from the breaking of such touch and food taboos as were imposed by villager custom, and the general burlesquing among the *ganza* as described in the account, there was the attitude of the rest of the Mbuti band—notably the wo.nen and children. The [857] young children in their forest camp found a new game to play. They were the *ganza*, imitating all

[P 253-B]

[p. 253-c]
the major aspects of life in the initiation camp, including some of the ordeals. They not only knew the initiation songs, but were taught them by their mothers, who even more than their uninitiated male children were supposed to be in complete ignorance of such matters. 177 186 881 [857]

When the *ganza* moved to the forest, the instructors did not come with them, and the *ganza* had only occasional visits from one villager who stayed in the nearby Mbuti hunting camp. There were no ordeals during this time, no singing except when visited by the solitary villager, and no other form of instruction by the Pygmies to replace that of the villagers. The boys did not accompany the hunt. It seemed to be, for both children and the adult members of the *ganza*, a holiday camp, free from the rigors of the initiation school. 177 881 [527]

But if the Mbuti showed no respect for the ceremonial or ritual significance of the *nkumbi*, they could scarcely avoid respecting the physical discipline imposed by the various ordeals they had to undergo. This was a frequent topic 177 86 881

of conversation. Both by their conversation and their behavior they showed that they were well aware of the benefit of this training for the children. The older men talked of ordeals that their "fathers" had experienced (apparently without reference to any villager *nkumbi*) in order to make them into men and hunters (both terms were used). They were always critical of any sign of excessive harshness on the part of the villager instructors and protected their children from it. But, on the other hand, the fathers showed no sympathy for a boy who could not endure the normal rigors of camp life and accept the routine ordeals without complaint, and it will be remembered that the boy who became ill himself insisted on returning to his place among the other boys before he had completely recovered (Turnbull, 1957). 177 86 88

It is, at the moment, an open question whether the Mbuti respect the physical discipline of the *nkumbi* because of its effect on the boys, or because of the status it gives their children in the eyes of the villagers, under normal circumstances equating the Mbuti (at least in terms of manliness) with their fellow villager initiates. The fact that no ordeals were practiced in the forest camp is perhaps an indication that the Mbuti do not lay very much stress on the physical and mental training aspect of the *nkumbi*. These are, in any case, benefits that [554]

[p. 253 - D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

P [P. 254-A]
177
881
861
Z
[563]

they could quite well achieve in their own way. Such practical benefits as there may be do not demonstrate why the Mbuti should participate in the villager *nkumbi* any more than does the often alleged subordination of the Mbuti to villager authority and custom. The obvious rejection by the Mbuti of the significance attributed to the *nkumbi* by the villager and the relatively passive acceptance by the villager of this rejection serve only to emphasize the hiatus between the two people. They certainly do not demonstrate that the *nkumbi* serves to draw them closer together or to assert the authority of the villager over the Pygmy.

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Z
181
182
881

This hiatus becomes even more evident when we consider the religious aspect of the *nkumbi*, as far as the Mbuti are concerned. It is a hiatus not only between two ways of living but between two ways of thinking, and it shows that we are dealing with two totally different sets of values. What the *nkumbi* achieves for the village boy bears little resemblance to what it achieves for the Pygmy. Ceremonial, ritual, and magic are ways of interpreting or influencing the supernatural in terms of the natural, and in his forest environment the Pygmy has relatively little need of either. It is not surprising then that his attitude to the ceremonial and ritual of the *nkumbi* differs from that of the villager. To

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

To

Z 182 881 776 778 [825] [532] [535] the villager the masked dancers described in the account of the 1954 *nkumbi* (Turnbull, 1957, 193) represent the *ngosa* bird, indicating the presence of a benevolent spirit. Similarly, the bullroarer represents supernatural power. The various taboos applied to the *ganza* express village subordination to that power which is sufficiently strong to prevent the villagers from staying in the camp over night even though it meant allowing an already unruly *ganza* further scope for getting out of control. The *nkumbi* places the villager initiates in a definite relationship to the supernatural. It is closely con-

Z [769] nected with tribal lore and the ancestor cult.

P 177 881 776 778 829 The Pygmies have no tribal lore and no ancestor cult. To them the masked dancers were the villagers, André and Sabani, and the bullroarer was a piece of wood whirled around on the end of a length of twine. The "*ngosa* bird" and the "voice of the spirit," for the Mbuti, were neither "real" nor did they represent any reality. They were empty and rather ineffective theatrical devices, an opinion evidenced both by conversation among the ganza at night and in their constant burlesque.

[P. 254-B]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 254-C]

conversation among the *ganza* at night and in their constant burlesque.

Schebesta (1948, 508–510) says that, for the archers, the *toré* association has both social and religious functions and that membership is common to both villagers and Pygmies through the *nkumbi* initiation. Among the net hunters the term *molimo* is used instead of the term *toré*, and among the Bira villagers the word has apparently similar usage. Thus the *molimo* horn is an instrument that is sacred to both villagers and Mbuti. The villager *molimo* normally makes itself heard during the *nkumbi*, when the young initiates are introduced to it for the first time. It made no appearance at all during the all-Pygmy 1954 *nkumbi*. Evidently it was unable to appear as there were no villager boys among the *ganza*, and the villager *molimo* has a distinct totemic aspect that excludes the Mbuti. Yet for the Mbuti, in particular, the instrument is associated with their most profound magico-religious concepts, and it is inconceivable that they should regard the *nkumbi* as initiation into their own religious society without the inclusion of their version of the *molimo* horn.

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1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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"Initiation" in its broadest sense implies admission to some form of exclusive association or adoption of a certain system of values. The 1954 *nkumbi* cannot be regarded as initiation for the Mbuti under this definition. Although the circumstances were unusual, in that no villager boys were available to share the *nkumbi* with the Pygmy boys, it is precisely this factor that throws a new light on the more usual joint participation of both groups. If it is not "initiation" for the Mbuti, what is it?

P 881

We seem to be in the presence of an attempt to maintain or establish some kind of common ground between two neighboring peoples who can find no common values, yet who inevitably come into contact with each other. We have seen that the original point of contact was the use of the Mbuti, by warring villagers, as mercenary soldiers, spies, and scouts. While acting in this capacity the Mbuti were necessarily dependent on the villagers for food supplies. The Mbuti were also used by the villagers to hunt elephant and to bring in tusks for the ivory trade. But, with the cessation of tribal warfare and the government control of ivory, these relationships came to an end. The villager no longer had any use for the Pygmy, who in

P Z 177 181
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[P. 254-D]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

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If we look at the situation in reverse, the fact that the Mbuti simultaneously participate in the *nkumbi* and reject its significance indicates the instability of their relationship with the villagers. The villagers would undoubtedly like to assert their superiority but are unable to maintain effective control over the nomadic Mbuti, either as individuals or in bands, during the *nkumbi* or at any other time. The *nkumbi*, however, does at least place the villagers in an overt position of dominance. On the other hand, the Mbuti would like to be completely free from subordination to the villagers, yet they find it as necessary to submit to initiation in villager society as the villagers find it necessary to accept them as candidates. The *nkumbi* undoubtedly gives the villagers an opportunity to drive the first blow in asserting their superiority over the Mbuti, but at the same time it gives the Pygmy status, as well as economic benefits, in any village throughout the region. It also strengthens his own identity as a Pygmy by enabling him to reject the villager system of values in mimetic burlesque. The 1954 *nkumbi* shows the extent to which these particular Mbuti preserve their "in-group" feeling.

[P 255-B]

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4 •
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

tionship—mutual trade. Trade may be an initial step in the direction of the symbiosis described by Schebesta (1941, 263) for the archers and their Lese neighbors. Joint participation in the *nkumbi* indicates no more than a willingness on both sides to acknowledge an unavoidable relationship based, as much as anything, on mere territorial propinquity.

What at first appears to be a conformity by the Mbuti to villager custom now appears as a superficial conformity at best and one that barely conceals a detachment of two ways of life. By his participation in the *nkumbi*, and, we may suspect, in other villager institutions, the Mbuti shows his willingness to accept an outwardly subordinate position in villager society. This acceptance is partly responsible for the popular notion that the relationship is one of master-servant or patron-client. His rejection of the inner significance of the ceremonial shows not only a superficiality in the process of acculturation and assimilation but a conscious effort on the part of the Pygmy to keep his two worlds apart—the sacred world of the forest, with one set of values, and the profane world of the villager, invader of the forest, with another set of values. The Epulu Mbuti, at least, have

[P. 255-D]

[P. 256-A]

177 as yet assumed village values in name only, and
18 only for the duration of their contact outside the forest where their own values do not apply.

177 This interpretation of the function of the
18 *nkumbi* initiation ceremony as providing an outward symbol of the association of two neigh-
12 boring peoples that, for one reason or another,
[881] come into contact and cooperate is very similar to the interpretation by Peristiany (1951, 299) of initiation among the Pokot and Karamajong: "The recognition of a common system of age ranks by these two neighbouring peoples permits them to move with ease in each other's society and allows, during peace-time, the extension of social bonds and the obliteration of cultural frontiers."

[71] In the Ituri such a statement could also apply to relationships not only between Mbuti and villagers but between neighboring village tribes themselves, such as the Ndaka, Bira, and Lese.

177 We indicate above that the *nkumbi* could not
881 be considered as "initiation" by the Mbuti
18 who practice it, as it does not admit them to any exclusive (villager) association or to any exclusive system of values, except possibly on a superficial level. We also suggest that the

177 *nkumbi* offers the Mbuti an opportunity for as-
• 881 serting their individuality at the same time
18 that they are subordinating themselves to the villagers, by asserting an independent system of values. In the *nkumbi*, as in other villager ceremonies practiced by the Mbuti, there is an opposition between the pygmaean forest world and the non-forest world of the villagers. This subject is dealt with in the final section; here a word should be said about the forest values themselves.

575 In the survey we mention two exclusive associations to which the net-hunting Mbuti are admitted—the *molimo* for the men, and the *elima* for the women. As far as our observations go, there is no reason at all for connecting the Mbuti *molimo* association with the *lusumba* or the *molimo* of the neighboring Bira and Ndaka. They may or may not have similar origins, but in the present situation they seem entirely dissociated. We may well suspect that this is also
575 true of the archers' *toré* society. It is certain, at
881 all events, that the *nkumbi* by itself does not initiate Mbuti boys into membership of the *molimo* (by this term I always refer to the Mbuti institution unless otherwise stated). At the end of the 1954 *nkumbi* the boys all reverted

[P. 256-B]

[P.256-C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and 575 even returned to the care and authority of their 881 mothers. None of these boys was allowed to take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. 882 The reason—they were not "hunters," they had 885 not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large 224 enough to be worth distributing among the [575] band, as opposed to the small animals caught by children and that are not worth dividing except within the family). To kill "real animals," usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to be allowed to wander away from his father during the hunt and to try his luck at either end of the semicircle of nets, where animals might escape and be shot with bow and arrow, speared, or caught with the hands.

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on 575 a combination of physical growth and prowess. 885 Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full member; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*; like the *elima* it is a religious association without priests. There is no ritual to be performed; all members play the same part in the meetings of the association with the exception of one who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The choice invariably falls on the best performer present, without regard for age or other qualifications.

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women 575
are members, and participation is compulsory 796
in one's own camp or when visiting another. [885]
Communication with the forest God is again
established by means of songs, special and sa- [533]
cred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. [776]
The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern [778]
to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of puberty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are concerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.) Both associations meet in the forest camp but out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring huts. Young children may be present. The ex- [858]
ception, when the men take part in the meeting of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* 881
initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the ini- 885
tiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere 224
for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," 575
he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[P. 257-D]

[P. 258-A]

881 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I
885 have never witnessed nor been told of any for-
224 mal rite introducing the new hunter to the asso-
575 ciation, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only
881 act that might be regarded as a formal token of
885 initiation is the cutting of three sets of three
304 vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each
575 side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

• 881 The contrast between the more formal *elima* initiation and this informal initiation into the *molimo* requires explanation, and more needs to be known about the function of these associations before any such explanation can be offered. It may be, in part, a consequence of the participation of Pygmy boys in the *nkumbi*; it may be that, as Schebesta (1957, 78) suggests, the *elima* (*elimo*) is of villager origin and has been adopted by the Pygmies. Or it may be that we have underestimated the part played by the young men in the *elima* festival described (p. 216). It is for both girls and boys, equally, a formal occasion recognizing their physical maturity and their prowess—the girls as proficient in womanly art and the boys as proficient in physical strength and endurance.

575 [881] Until further material is available it is impossible to elaborate on initiation among the Mbuti. It is sufficient to show that, among the net hunters at least, religious associations there exist for men and women, each with some form of initiation practiced without the aid or presence of villagers, whatever the origin of the actual ceremonies. The function of these asso-

[P 258-B]

The function of these associations[1] is to regulate the relationship of these Mbuti with their forest world, to maintain the normality of that relationship and to restore it when disturbed, by rousing the God of the Forest from his sleep by song, echoed into the forest by means of the *molimo* horn in the case of formal meetings of the men's association. This god is the source of good and bad, and it is therefore sufficient to waken him. There is no formal supplication phrased in words as such.

The *molimo* and *elima* are distinct from village association with similar names and from whatever association it is into which the *nkumbi* initiates the villagers. Mbuti participation in the *nkumbi*, as in other village ceremonies, is part of the mutual attempt of two peoples forced together by historical reasons and present territorial juxtaposition to regularize their relationship, each to his own satisfaction. Trade is another such expression of their relationship; it is not the basis of it. Further, participation in the *nkumbi* involves an opposition between two sets of values (those of the villagers and those of the Mbuti taking part), as *nkumbi* initiation does not qualify the Mbuti for entry into his own religious association nor accord him any status in his own society. It enables him to move as an adult in villager society and gives the two peoples some common ground involving a superficially subordinate position for the Mbuti.

1, [Molimo and Elima associations --Analyst]

[P. 258-C]

[P.259-A]

533 any major crisis affecting the community as a
182 whole. But, as well as these religious activities, both major economic activities, hunting and gathering, are also consecrated by special types of song. It is inconceivable that the Mbuti, who accompany every important event in their lives with song, should not consecrate the initiation
533 of their boys in this same way. But for the
.881 *nkumbi* they have no music at all. As we have said, in 1954 the *molimo* horn was not heard,
182 and no *molimo* songs were sung. I suggest that other initiations, in which the horn and songs are heard, are in connection with villager institutions to which the village boys are being initiated. The only conclusion we can draw is that for the Mbuti the *nkumbi* is not sufficiently significant in their forest life to merit consecration by forest song.

533 This is closely paralleled by the absence of
182 forest music (songs of the *molimo* and *elima*, hunting-and-gathering songs) when the Mbuti
181 are camped on the edge of a village. When they do, the Mbuti themselves behave as different people. In the forest they feel and observe a
[178] certain restraint. Their songs are related to and emphasize their supreme value—the forest. Their daily activities are dominated by the forest and the hunt and the need for close cooperation.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.274-A]

177 theirs. There is also evidence, but in regrettably
439 little detail, that certain hunting bands main-
184 tain a client-patron relationship by specializing in elephant hunting, bringing the tusks to the villagers, on whom they rely for all vegetable products and on the edge of whose villages they live in permanent camps.

177 However, no matter how great or little the degree of dependence on the villagers, the Mbuti for whom we have any information all seem to maintain a distinct individuality in opposition to the villagers, despite their apparent adoption of villager institutions and even of [881] villager language. With regard to the adoption of villager customs, the 1954 *nkumbi* shows the degree to which this adoption may be a mere superficial conformity and may indeed conceal a formal rejection of villager values. A very careful study should be made of all such institutions held in common, if not practiced jointly.

177 It is indeed at this level that we seem to find
184 some excuse for referring to the Ituri Mbuti as a single people rather than as consisting of a number of widely scattered, semi-independent

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PLATE 38 7

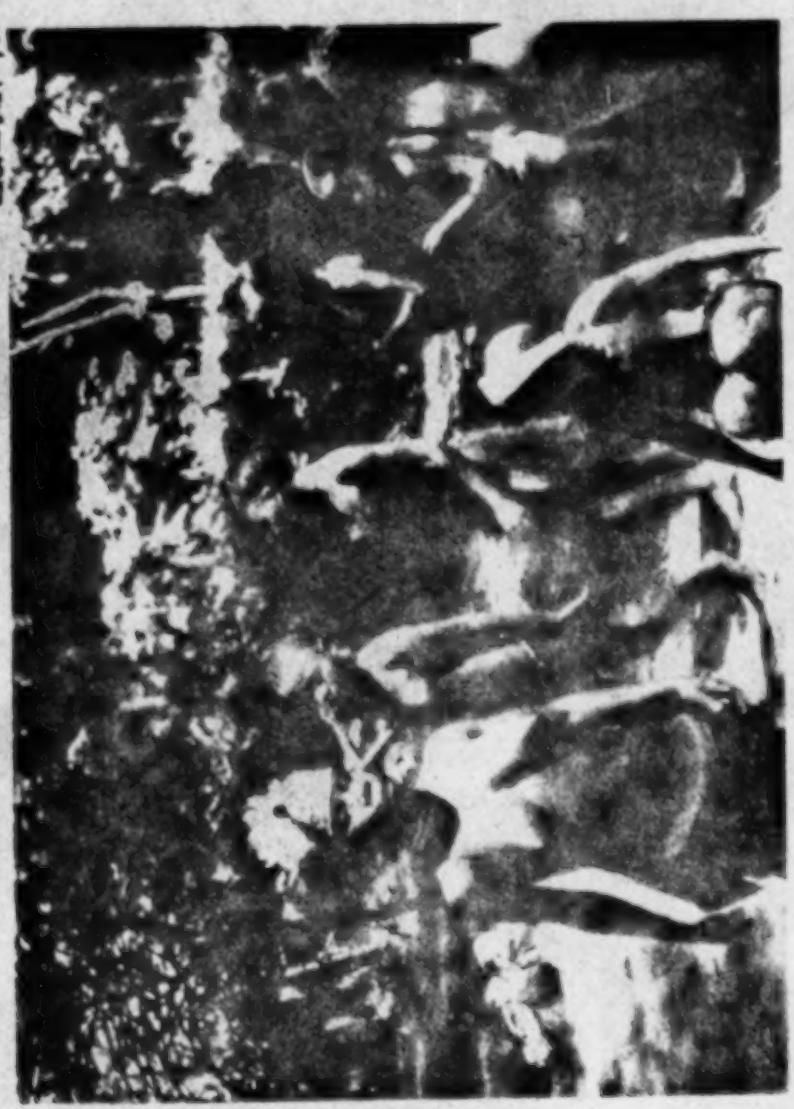
GIRLS' HOOP DANCE, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4.5/ (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



[P309] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

621 falls unhappily apart however, and it looks indeed as if the Mbuti are
*177 in the process of adopting villager institutions wholesale, without adopting the system that would relate them.

• [881] Further evidence in favor of this interesting half-truth of Mbuti dependence is plainly discernible in the adoption by the Mbuti of village ceremonials connected with *rites de passage*, in which they subject themselves completely to villager ritual authority. But again these adopted institutions seem to have little structural relationship to the Mbuti hunting life, divorced as it is from the village context. Once one grants that divorce, then one is left with an apparent vacuum, a lack of internal system that is almost anarchical. Yet there is no anarchy; law and order exist without the villager context as within, and without as in their villager institutions. In default of any clear exposition of internal system, however, it has been assumed by many that the actual situation is one of total Mbuti dependence upon the villagers.

222 The economy of the Mbuti is hunting and gathering, and they are
224 perfectly capable of independent subsistence. Hunger, in absence of village food supplies, is due only to laziness. The alleged economic
224 dependence of the Mbuti will be discussed in the next chapter. Here
476 it is only necessary to stress the possibility of their actual indepen-
+ [177] dence of the village, and point to a dependence upon each other, best seen in the fact that all the hunting techniques involve some measure of co-operation between men, women and children. The net-hunt demands the greatest measure of co-operation; the little I was able to discover about spear-hunts indicates a preference for hunting parties of five or six men; and while archers can hunt successfully in threes, there are among the archers annual beat-hunts (*begbe*) which demand the same high degree of co-operation demanded by the net-hunt, involving the entire band. Some elementary principles of unity can be discerned, then, in these various hunting techniques, but they are not sufficient to fill the gap left by the absence of developed kinship or political systems.

621 In the hunting band, as we have seen, the population is somewhat mercurial and composite. Only when the band fragments into smaller units do we occasionally get a fragment that has some appearance of being a kin group. System still eludes us. Nor do the *sultani* and *capita*
[622] offer any effective replacement for the missing political system. No one individual is effectively a leader; issues are settled by common

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

discussion. The discussion is not entirely haphazard, but once again 621
the structural factor is elusive.

When first we look at the religious life of the Mbuti we feel the 771
pulse beating clearly. The *elima* and the *molimo* are outstandingly 296
evident as institutions connected with crisis, but the moment we try 88 •
to analyze their function the beat becomes less distinct. Here the 765
picture is again confused by the fact that the villagers have similar 177 *
names for ceremonies of their own that are alike enough to lead to the assumption that the Mbuti adopted these institutions into their own disorganized framework. Then the pulse stops altogether.

I suggested earlier (Turnbull, 1956) that part of the answer lay in 121
a vital opposition between the two worlds of the Mbuti, the forest and 177 *
the village. Recognizing that opposition is no less a relationship than 621
any other form of relationship, we can at least theoretically separate the two worlds temporarily, if they are truly in opposition, and study them apart. Using this device we are free to look at the Mbuti in the village context almost as though this were their sole existence, and discern there what system we can. We are also free to examine the same people in the forest context, living in small nomadic hunting bands, virtually independent of the village world. But by looking at the village world first, when we turn to the forest world we shall be able to follow the Mbuti not only as they move from one hunting camp to another, but also when they abandon the forest for a brief spell in the village, seized by a whim, by the desire for relaxation, or by their taste for village foods, wine and tobacco. In this way we shall arrive at a better understanding of both worlds of the Mbuti, and of the actual relationship between them. We shall also, in the process, test our hypothesis of opposition, and, if it be proven, discover the elusive principle that binds together the otherwise apparently lawless, leaderless, un-kin-conscious forest society.

[P. 30 is blank]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Of all the various *rites de passage* practiced by the villagers, and to which they are forced to introduce the Mbuti, none probably is so important as the *nkumbi* initiation of the boys into manhood. Among the Bantu tribes this is practiced with circumcision, among the Sudanic it is without circumcision, though there is a tendency among some Sudanic tribes situated close to the Bantu, such as the Lesé bordering on the Bira, to adopt the custom, one village at a time.

The major purpose of the *nkumbi*, as stated by the tribes that practice it (I refer mainly to the Forest Bira here), is to fit the youths as men, to make them men in the eyes of the ancestors. A boy who does not undergo the *nkumbi* is denied access to the ancestors after death, and during his life has the status of a child. Boys between the ages of eight and twelve, generally between nine and eleven, are eligible for the ceremony, which now takes place once every three years and lasts for two or more months. The traditional time element has been completely upset by the administration, which, together with the missionaries, has tried to discourage the whole institution. But the *nkumbi* initiation has remained as the only way to achieve adult status within the tribe. I have seen an entire *nkumbi* ceremony, including circumcision, held for a boy who died just prior to being initiated.

Effectively the *nkumbi* also unites a few neighboring villages as a single political unit, and affords an opportunity though the system of *karé* blood brotherhood, of cementing specific political bonds. It also effectively unites those tribes who practice circumcision in opposition to those who do not practice it, and it determines certain lines of marriage prohibition.

One such line, of course, divides the circumcised from the uncircumcised, and theoretically marriage between a Bira and a Lesé would be unthinkable. The only cases known to me allegedly happened during war, captive women being taken as wives. But equally theoretically these prohibitions should apply to the Mbuti who, according to the practice of their *kpara*, not having any of their own, either do or do not suffer circumcision at village hands. As we shall see, however, forest territorial organization is no respecter of village tribalism, and band composition is fluid, to say the least. Consequently, in any one band one can by no means be sure that all the men are circumcised, and the question is never raised. Further than that, there is no objection to marriage, among the Mbuti, between a family whose *kpara* circumcises and one whose *kpara* does not. Such marriages would cer-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

tainly not be countenanced by the *kpara* concerned. This is only one indication of the lack of respect with which the Mbuti view the *nkumbi*, and it is important that this be understood at the outset. The structural implications of the *nkumbi* as they apply to the villagers in no way apply to the Mbuti. I had graphic evidence of this when following recently initiated Mbuti youths back to their forest hunting camp at the conclusion of the two-month ceremony. They had just been acclaimed as men by the villagers, and allowed to take their place as men in the village *baraza*, or meeting place. But their first act on entering the hunting camp was to sit on the laps of their mothers as an indication that they still considered themselves as children in the forest world. I might further mention that the Mbuti, who in the forest consecrate every activity of major importance with a special type of song, have no song whatsoever for the occasion of the *nkumbi*. Further arguments are given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1957[2]). Here we are concerned with villager attempts to secure control, and it is only necessary to indicate the two different attitudes to the *nkumbi*, and its evidently different significance for the Mbuti in the forest world.

However the Mbuti might deny the village attitude to the *nkumbi*, and the villagers are aware that such denial does take place, the villagers nonetheless see a number of advantages accruing to them in their admission of the Mbuti to the tribal initiation ceremony.

First, as the *nkumbi* fits a youth to go to the ancestors after death, the ceremony serves as an introduction of the Mbuti to the afterworld of the village. By undergoing the *nkumbi* they equally are fitted to go, after death, to the world of the village ancestors. But it is made plain throughout that the status relationship remains unchanged. Mbuti and village boys are circumcised alternately on the day of the cutting, which opens the ceremony proper. The Mbuti boy is generally sent first—"to clean the knife"—and throughout he is made, in innumerable ways, to recognize that in village eyes he is inferior to the village boys.

KARÉ

The pairs of boys, one Mbuti and one villager, whose blood has been allowed to mingle, are called *karé*. The degree of formality with which the *karé* relationship is solemnized varies considerably from village to village, and depends to some extent upon the proportion of Mbuti

ties to villagers, and villager supernatural sanctions enforce fulfillment.

From the Mbuti point of view, however, the whole *nkumbi* is *mbafu* (stupid) and *bulé* (empty), and so are the sanctions. The initiates and their "fathers" who attend them during the ceremony take every opportunity to mock the procedure (Turnbull, 1957[2]), and as stated earlier the *nkumbi* in no way alters the status of the initiates back in their forest world, where they are still regarded as children. In all the *nkumbi* that I have witnessed in different parts of the forest, among different tribes, with varying proportions of Mbuti/Villager initiates, and under divers degrees of severity of village control, I have not seen one indication of genuine respect or belief on the part of the Mbuti, and not one instance of the initiation having the slightest structural relationship to the Mbuti forest world.

Yet by undergoing the *nkumbi* the Mbuti place themselves in a position of ritual inferiority and subordination to the villagers. They do not have any ritual specialists of their own to perform the *nkumbi*, so are wholly dependent upon the village doctors. As the *nkumbi* only perpetuates the status differential, it gives the Mbuti knowledge of tribal lore but does not grant them access to mastery of the lore. Not being full kin, but only adopted, parallel kin, the Mbuti can never qualify as ritual specialists, and are therefore at once forced by the *nkumbi* into participation in innumerable other tribal rituals, and at the same time denied any measure of ritual control and placed in a position of still greater dependence upon the villagers.

Once again the villagers cannot conceive of life without the necessary ritual observations, and in a sense they feel an obligation to provide these services for the Mbuti, but the Mbuti avoids actual dependence by adopting only the outer form of the institution, not the system. Insofar as we are discussing the village world, however, from the villager's point of view the *nkumbi* places the Mbuti in the greatest possible condition of dependence by creating an obligation to take part in a ritual life in which he will need village ritual specialists. It also provides the villagers with the surest method of control, through supernatural sanctions. The villagers have such belief in these sanctions that they are content to allow the Mbuti to get away with much trickery, convinced that sooner or later the score will be evened and restitution made.

Having drawn the Mbuti into the world of the village supernatural, because it *is* of the village, the villagers feel they have established ultimate if not immediate control.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *barara*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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the first appearance in a girl of menstrual blood. But there the similarity ends.

Be that as it may, the villagers do not take nearly as much interest in the puberty of the Mbuti girls as they do in the puberty of the boys. The Mbuti generally seem to hold part of their *elima* festivals in the forest, and the closing part in the village. In this way they are able to pursue their own way through the festival without interference, claiming a feast at village expense only when the forest festival is virtually ended. Village interest in the *elima* while it is in the forest is not manifest in any practical way, although a particularly fond *kpara's* wife might send out an occasional gift of plantains or manioc. But when the *elima* moves to the village there is invariably some conflict, because the closing phase of the Mbuti *elima* is particularly untraditional in the eyes of the villagers (as well it might be, for in fact it is probably a totally different tradition) and offensive to their tribal lore. In particular in recent years, there has been a tendency for Mbuti girls to imitate the boy's *nkumbi*, of which they are supposed to know almost nothing. They display an intimate knowledge of the most jealously guarded secrets, and there have been, throughout the Ndaka and Bira tribal areas, instances of *elima* girls adopting both the costumes of the boy initiates and some of their behavior.

In 1958 the Epulu band went so far that both the Bira and the Ndaka chiefs and ritual specialists joined in complaint, and threatened the *elima* girls (the two candidates and their companions, known jointly as the *bamelima*) with a death curse if they did not desist. The girls were upset because they claimed that they had merely adopted the boys' costume because it was so much prettier than the traditional costume approved by villagers for village *elima* girls. And was not the whole idea to look pretty? Of course from the village point of view the whole idea was to behave as one defiled, and this is one of several indications of the total difference between the two attitudes to the event of puberty.

We shall see that the Mbuti attitude is that a girl's first menstrual period is an indication of her readiness for motherhood, and is therefore a time for great and public rejoicing (see Turnbull, 1960[1]). It is also a time when boys and girls should get together and think about settling down in marriage, so it is a time for experimentation. The girls are expected, during the last stages of the festival, to look their best at all times, and they paint and decorate and dress themselves to

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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• 881 excellent effect. They flaunt themselves in public, to the increased
832 dismay of the villagers.
*177 The villagers regard the appearance of menstrual blood as a disas-
C ter, and as the inauguration of a time of great danger for the girl,
881 her family and, by extension, the whole tribe. She is considered as
[783] unclean, and is rigorously secluded and abased. Her family has to undertake a series of purification rituals ending in a feast (the part of the ceremony for which the Mbuti solicit "help"). They also have to discover the cause of the blood, which is believed by the Plains Bira and still by a number of the Forest Bira to be due to intercourse. The girl is questioned as to who caused the blood, and she names the youth on whom she has set her heart. He may acknowledge the blame, whether or not he ever had intercourse with her, and can then resolve the unclean situation by marrying her. If his wishes are otherwise he can deny her accusation and she will have to try elsewhere. The girl's parents will guide her accusations as they think necessary, but the actual extent to which the village *elima* leads thus directly
C into marriage seems to vary. Sometimes it is sufficient to secure ad-
783 mission of guilt and payment in lieu of marriage. But the villagers sel-
881 dom try to follow an Mbuti *elima* through its full course; their major
P concern is that the impurity of the *elima* girls should not touch them.
881 The provision of the final feast gives them an opportunity, which
*177 they do not always take, for supervising the ritual purification of the
[296] girls by bathing, the cleansing of the *elima* house, and the ritual disposal of all clothing and bedding and utensils used by the *bamelima*. The latter they do generally supervise, as the Mbuti are notoriously loath to part with perfectly good clothing or bedding for such *bulé* reasons, and will try to avoid having them destroyed.

C If anything, the *elima* sets the villagers and the Mbuti apart, rather
648 than offering any means for drawing them closer together. This is
881 perhaps because while the *nkumbi* involves the village ancestors and
776 is in honor of them, and secures their blessing, the village *elima* in-
768 volves malevolent spirits more than it involves the ancestors. And as
182 far as the villagers are concerned, evil spirits emanate from the forest.
P The *elima* offers no opportunity to the villagers for placing Mbuti
648 girls under the control of the ancestral spirits; at the most, it offers them a responsibility for freeing them from contamination by the evil spirits. They sometimes voice the opinion that the Mbuti are in league with those spirits emanating from the forest, and rigorously avoid any contact with an Mbuti *elima*.

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Mbuti
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The molimo trumpet, which is the Mbuti counterpart of the villager *tete*, may be heard growling in a noncommittal manner, as if uncertain which clan totem to imitate from the diversity of clans undoubtedly represented at the Mbuti *molimo* fire. It seems that the most common sound for the instrument to make under such circumstances is the growl of a leopard, which safely covers all clans, Mbuti and villager.

However, the villagers are not made welcome, and if it were any but the *kpara* or his representative the *molimo* would be abandoned the moment a villager approached. As it is, on the few occasions when I have seen a *kpara* attend, he was not offered any food or any other inducement to stay, the *molimo* trumpet remained out of sight the whole time and only growled indistinctly once or twice; the singing was sporadic and only the young men were active, dancing around the fire.

The Mbuti said that the villagers were afraid and would not in any case be likely to come near; the *kpara* only did it because he felt obliged to. In all cases of which I have any experience, except two instances where a brief *molimo* was held in a village camp for an Mbuti child who died there, the Mbuti *molimo* is held at nighttime in the forest, where interference from the village would be unthinkable. As with the *elima*, however, the closing stages are often held in the village, this being meant to coincide with the end of the official period of mourning and therefore the signal for a feast to be supplied by the villagers.

It does seem significant, nonetheless, that the Mbuti should sing any *molimo* songs in the village camp, for normally they refuse to sing any of their true forest songs when in the village. However, they are sung infrequently, with marked restraint, and widely separated by long snatches of songs that I never heard in the forest or, unfortunately, in the villages. The latter bore a distinct resemblance to certain songs taught during the *nkumbi*, and some were undoubtedly variants on *nkumbi* songs. The only information I could get was they were not "songs of the forest" but were "songs of the village." The villagers confirmed that they heard the Mbuti sometimes singing village *molimo* songs, and surprise was expressed that they would sing anything else, for everything else was *buld*, empty.

The connection between the *molimo*, as performed by the Mbuti in the village, and the *nkumbi* was made all the more evident when on one *molimo* occasion the two members of the *kpara's* family stood up and performed a dance only seen otherwise in the initiation camp.

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On another occasion the *kpara* himself did exactly the same thing. In the first instance the *kpara* was Ndaka, in the second, Bira. The villagers evidently believe that whatever *molimo* ritual the Mbuti have, it was learned from the village, if badly learned and performed with illegitimate variations. As with the *elima*, perhaps also for fear of exposure to the malevolent forest spirits, the villagers do not seek to interfere too much with Mbuti *molimo* celebrations. We shall see that these celebrations are quite divorced from the village *molimo*, regardless of whether or not the origin of the two was common. Also, we shall see that the Mbuti *molimo* has none of the connections that evidently exist between the village *molimo* and the *nkumbi*.

As with the *elima*, the villagers limit the extent of their interest to ensuring the removal, by village-supplied procedure, of the last taints of uncleanliness. This they do, again in conjunction with a feast, turning a blind eye to the fact that as many as a dozen different Mbuti "clans" may be represented at what is supposed to be a closed clan feast.

The extent to which the villagers believe they assert supernatural control over the Mbuti does not coincide at all with the extent to which they effectively do exert such control, for the reason that must now be sufficiently obvious; no matter how many or what manner of village institutions the Mbuti adopt, they are adopted into a preexisting system and no longer have the same interrelationships they do in the village system. The two systems are kept irreconcilably apart by what has in effect been emerging throughout—the existence of two completely different sets of values.

Yet the villagers are not entirely victims of their own *mbafu*, as the Mbuti would have it. There is little else they could do, and the adoption of the Mbuti into one aspect of village social structure would indeed be *bulé* without their adoption into the total structure. The villagers are consistent and logical, and above all it must be remembered that in their own eyes they have achieved what they set out to achieve—control. They believe that ultimate control is theirs because of the force of the supernatural powers on their side, and in point of fact, although it does not work quite the way they think, the concept of supernatural power does give them a small measure of control to the extent that it creates fear.

But what is also achieved is the creation of a myth that completely regularizes the whole situation, as far as the villagers are concerned, affording them an institutionalized means of dealing with every possi-

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

entrance to his hut so that it no longer looked directly at Amabosu's, 361
which would have been taken as indicating extreme intimacy, but 621
instead faced narrowly across to the hut of his wife's uncle (C), 613
Masisi; Masisi's son's wife (D), who was not only kin to Ekianga's 593
young wife but close friends with her, promptly added to her hut, 595
despite her husband's protests, and faced it boldly toward Ekianga. Ekianga's young wife, Kamaikan, responded the next day by facing her hut in the direction of her friend, at the same time deflecting it away from her co-wife's hut, Arobanai (A), next door. Arobanai had on the day of her arrival made an addition facing toward Kamaikan as a conciliatory gesture, but in face of this rebuff she turned the entrance of her hut away again. Meanwhile Masisi's lineal cousin, Manyalibo, made no effort to enter the dispute, but rather turned slightly toward the rest of the camp. Masisi contented himself with completing the entrance to his hut on the second day, leaving it facing the way it was. An extension he built several days later, as did [881] •
Ausu, was merely to provide separate accommodation for young girls who were approaching puberty.

In the rest of the camp similar petty jealousies and hostilities 361
brought about similar clusterings. Njobo (W-1A), for instance, was 157
an unusually dominating personality, and was consequently accorded, 554
or took, the position of *capita*, representing the band in all matters 578
concerning the village. But he was unwise enough to try and assert 621
the same authority in the forest, and the over-all layout of the camp shows clearly how he and his sister's son, Asuku (W-3A), whom he favored, were ostracized. His wife Masamba (X) built my hut for me, [122]
as women sometimes do for adult bachelor kinsmen, to one side, and another hut for strangers on the other side. Maipé (G), the son of another of Njobo's sisters, was the only one to allow his hut to remain facing toward Njobo. After Njobo had left, Nikiabo (H) joined the camp and Masamba built his hut for him, facing toward her own, saying she needed a friend. Makubasi (U), a prominent hunter and a member of the same clan as Njobo, but of a different lineage, turned his hut away on the second day, isolating Njobo in the middle of the clearing. At this, Njobo and his nephew, Asuku, joined their huts together, using only one entrance facing across to Njobo's other nephew, Maipé. When Makubasi's father, Tungana (T), arrived on the third day, he built his hut so that one entrance nominally faced toward Njobo, but it was generally covered and the other entrance faced clearly into the southwestern section of the camp.

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Mbuti
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[P. 108-K]
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14. The *nkumbi* initiation is another means by which villagers attempt to control the Mbuti. The initial dance here, with the sacred *makats* sticks, is led by the traditional doctor, Saboni, at the village of Eboyo. Mbuti and villagers take part jointly in the festivities, but the Mbuti are excluded from all ritual roles.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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[R 108-L]

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15. Village women of Epulu dance to celebrate an approaching nkumbi during which only Mbuti boys will be initiated, owing to lack of village boys of the right age.

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16. A boy, just circumcised, is comforted by an Mbuti hunter. This would be considered a lasting shame by either a village boy or an adult, but the Mbuti see no shame in acknowledging and healing pain.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[881] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

PUBERTY: THE *ELIMA*

At the next crisis in the life cycle, however, it is the band rather than the nuclear family that takes charge. By early childhood the child has already grown away from its family to some extent, and become more a member of an age group cutting across kinship lines. At puberty the boy or girl may not even be living with kin any more, let alone in the nuclear family. But even if they are, the band takes control of the situation. It is an occasion that concerns the band as such, for adolescence leads into marriage, and marriage will inevitably bring about a significant change in the economic structure of the band. A member of the band may leave it, or a new member may join it, or, if the marriage is within the band, then at least there will still be an additional net, and a change in the hunting and gathering pattern and perhaps in interfamily alliances. The process of fission and fusion might also be affected by the political implications of the marriage. The *elima* is best regarded as a premarital festival. It does not necessarily lead directly into a marriage that is marriage in the sense of a final, childbearing union. It is rather a preparation for marriage, an opportunity for the youngsters to find suitable partners. It does not even have to end in betrothal, so there cannot be said to be a functional connection between *elima* and marriage.

The arrival at puberty among boys being somewhat less easy to determine, the signal for an *elima* is the first appearance of menstrual blood in a young girl. This is something that fills the local villagers with horror, and with fear of evil influences against which they take elaborate ritual precautions to protect themselves. These precautions are costly and inconvenient, and the girl who has brought both shame and annoyance to her family is hidden and treated harshly. There are elaborate cleansing ceremonies for the girl and her family. Among the Mbuti, however, the appearance of menstrual blood is a sign that the girl is now a potential mother, and it is consequently a signal for rejoicing and for preparation for motherhood. Thus an integral part of the festival is the selection of suitable potential husbands. Such selection demands that the boys prove their manhood, since it cannot be proven as simply as is the womanhood of the girl. In this sense, then, the *elima* is a joint initiation of boys and girls into adulthood. Having dealt with it in descriptive form elsewhere (Turn-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bull, 1960[1]), I shall keep the description here to those essentials 881
concerned with the structural implications of the *elima*.

The fact that it is not an individual family affair, to be concealed with shame as best possible, is doubly emphasized when two girls in a band, of quite different lineages, "see the blood" within a few days of each other. There will then be a joint *elima*. And there is also the selection by the girl or girls of the *bamelima*, the friends she likes and wants to accompany her for the duration of the festival, living with her in the *elima* hut. They will be drawn from her female age mates, [561]
and may or may not already have had their own *elima*. If they have not yet seen the blood, participation in their friend's *elima* will excuse them from having one of their own when the time comes. If a girl sees the blood, and a close friend thinks she is about to see it as well, the *elima* will be delayed, perhaps for several weeks.

As with birth, this life-cycle crisis does not evoke any sense of need 881
for urgent ritual action, protective or otherwise. Its significance is of 182
a different order. It is regarded as essentially natural and therefore good. Also as with birth, the personal importance of the occasion [778]
leads to an establishment of personal contact with the forest, a reification of the direct bond between the individual and the forest world; but the social importance of puberty for the band is recognized, so the band as such takes certain measures, both social and ritual, to mark the occasion.

The girl or girls with blood are expected to keep to their homes and 881
an extension may be built onto one of their huts, or onto that of any friend or relative who is willing to house the *bamelima*. Every *elima* girl with blood has to choose a personal assistant, and the choice is left entirely to her, and again may fall on a relative, though more often it is a very close friend, of the same age group. They then invite other friends to join them in the *elima* hut, when it is ready. The assistants share such restrictions as are placed upon the *elima* girls, except that they are more free to leave the hut unaccompanied. There are few restrictions anyway, it seems, and they are mainly concerned with maintaining adherence to the schedule of instruction and activities. There are some minor food prohibitions, based on the 881
personal taboos of the *elima* girls and their assistants, which in turn 262
are based on their individual reactions to these foods as young children. If a certain food makes a child sick it may be forbidden to him until puberty, when he may try it again and abandon the taboo if it no longer affects him adversely. Sometimes, but not always, there is 881

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 881 an injunction against eating meat, and this seems to be when the *elima* activities are affecting the hunt and the supply of game.

The rest of the *bamelima* are merely expected to be in attendance, and come and go as they please.

In the very lack of restrictions we can see that the Mbuti do not regard the *bamelima* to be in any ritual condition of danger or impurity. At such times as they are free to be among other band members in the camp they behave perfectly normally, playing with young children, fondling babies, sitting by family hearths, and so forth. But they eat separately and wash separately, so we might say that at least they are in a condition of ritual respect.

881 To begin with, the *bamelima* spend most of their time either inside
864 the hut or else off with an instructress, in the forest. Inside the hut
867 they are taught the songs of the *elima* by any older women who care to take part in the instruction. In the forest, I was told by a number of women, young and old, the girls are instructed in the arts of motherhood. This presumably includes such aspects of sexual life as are still unknown to them, which are probably few, but also use of the various herbs and treatments that a woman must know to insure fertility, an abundance of milk, easy childbirth, and abortion if necessary.

881 Girls say that certain of the *elima* songs are taught them in the
533 forest rather than in the hut, and as the festival progresses less and less time is spent in the hut, and more in the forest. For the festival is said "to rejoice the forest," to make it happy and glad. If the girls are not singing well they are told the forest will be displeased. If they are dejected they are asked if they want the forest to be sad. Everyone is expected to be happy, and as the *bamelima* go through the forest they sing to it. As with so many of the other songs of the Mbuti, the *elima* songs are either wordless, being just plays on vowel sounds, or else the words are slight and without any evident significance, such as "Ibu is a dog," "Let's get leaves," and "Oh, the mud!" Other songs sung by the *bamelima* toward the end of the festival, when they sing in public in the camp, are rather different, making rather more sense and being distinctly spicy in nature.

But the songs that are considered as true *elima* songs and which conform to a musical style of their own, are evidently sacred. When they are sung in the forest, they are sung *to* the forest. A phrase is cast at the forest and an echo is awaited before the girls continue. Even an individual girl, usually the one with blood, will sing in this

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

way to the forest. If the *elima* happens to be in a village camp, as it 881
sometimes is for part of its duration, the girls will still go away off 533
into the forest to sing their songs. The older men and women say that [177]
the festival should be held entirely in the forest, but the younger Mbuti point out that it is an occasion for rejoicing and feasting, and so it is much better to be near a village and eat off the villagers. Even when doing that, however, one is likely to come across broken saplings stuck in the ground alongside a trail many hours from the village camp, showing that the *bamelima* passed by there, "rejoicing the forest." Sometimes they may be heard in their peculiar antiphony with the forest, at other times the saplings appear swiftly and silently a few yards from an Mbuti youth as a sign that the *bamelima* are nearby and should not be disturbed. Sometimes youths, thinking they have left the *bamelima* safely in their hut in a village camp, are hours off in the forest in their usual boisterous, noisy way, and will find themselves attacked and chased by the girls, armed with sticks and whips.

Usually the girls are all together, but every now and then one of the 881
elima girls and her assistant will go off together into the forest, and stay there for half a day or more. At such times the others sit around looking dejected, and complain of being deserted. The older women then say that they should not complain, that it is good for the girl to go away sometimes and "converse with the forest."

As at birth, there is a certain amount of decoration of the body 881
with what might be considered as forest charms, and toward the end 778
of the festival the girls paint each other with a white forest clay. The [302]
personification of the forest, and the frequency with which it is referred to, and the way in which this is done as though its personality were an ordinary matter of fact are another indication of the intense personal importance of the forest in the life of the Mbuti, of its character as a parent, a friend, and a lover, the provider of all things. But it cannot be interpreted as forest worship, for to the Mbuti it is simply a matter of fact.

One thing that is particularly interesting in consideration of the 881
bamelima is that while it is very clearly an age group, it does two 561
things. It does not deny individuality to the *elima* girl, who in fact is 571
constantly displaying it and often causing friction as a result, but it 866
effectively consolidates an age group that might otherwise have been 182
rather lacking in cohesion. Girl's activities are, on the whole, less co-operative in nature than those of boys, and whereas boys are clearly formed into co-operative groups before arriving at puberty, this is not

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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quite so with the girls. But by the end of the festival bonds have been forged between the *bamelima* that will never be broken and that will provide a firm basis for co-operative activity throughout their lives.

The other thing achieved is that there seems to be at least a temporary obliteration of the bonds of the nuclear family. The nuclear family has no particular responsibility toward the festival, though they will generally contribute more food than others and may offer shelter, and it has absolutely no authority. Further, although relations between brother and sister are free at all times, it is worth noting that in the *elima* house the girls sleep with the boys of their choice openly and without shame, though their own brothers may be among the boys sleeping with other girls beside them. It is difficult, however, to determine whether or not sexual intercourse, which is permissible at this time, openly takes place under such conditions. I am told that it does.

Neither do kinship considerations seem to play any important role, and certainly no predetermined role, in the instruction of the girls. The only roles that are distinguishable as such are the provider of the *elima* hut, the mother of the *elima*, the father of the *elima*, the assistants and the rest of the *bamelima*.

Of these, the *bamelima* are without question an age group with no kinship considerations. The assistants are primarily close friends and confidantes of the *elima* girls, and seem likely to be related distantly, but there are no stated preferences concerning this. It is said that the father of the *elima* does not have to be a relative at all; his job is to use force, if necessary, to stop the somewhat violent altercations that break out among the attendant youths or between them and the *bamelima*. It is said that the mother of the *elima* is usually an elderly relative of the parental or grandparental level, and that the provider of the hut can be anyone willing to put up with the noise. Table 7a shows the kin relationship between these various roles and the *elima* girls in an *elima* held among the Epulu Mbuti at the end of 1957 and into the beginning of 1958. It also shows the relationship of those senior girls who took the most prominent part in the instruction of the *bamelima*. Tables 7b–d show the same relationships on three other occasions among other net-hunting bands.

Instruction, as already mentioned, is in song, and in such of the arts of motherhood as are yet unknown to the girls. The instructors, apart from the mother of the *elima*, are senior members of the same generation as the *bamelima*, and mostly married, or else they are el-

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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ders. Like the "mother," their role is also that of chaperone, however, for the second most important activity, after song, is the selection of and sleeping with lovers.

Sexual experimentation is certainly a major element in the *elima*, but it is combined with a very definite move to widen the social horizons of the girls, and to direct their attentions into what the parental and grandparental generations consider proper directions. There are also certain rules about intercourse in the *elima* hut. The senior girls, or instructors, and the "mother" guide the *bamelima* in all this. Their decisions are never questioned, and never discussed by the rest of the band. It is not until the latter stages of the festival that the parental generation takes an active part in the proceedings.

The widening of horizons is achieved by taking the girls to visit neighboring bands. On such visits they may stay for only a day, or for several nights, depending on whether the girls find suitable lovers. It is considered important by everyone that the *elima* house should be a place of what is best translated as enthusiastic lovemaking. At first it is modest in scale, and, depending on the composition of the band, is likely to take place early on and within the ordinary hunting camp. The boys who will enter the *elima* hut will be the younger ones, not likely to be serious suitors. They may enter only if they are invited by a girl, and the girl is forbidden to invite anyone related to her on her father's side or closely related on her mother's side. Effectively that means any descendant of the father's father or of the mother's mother; the children of any of the father's brothers or sisters or half brothers or half sisters, and the children of any of the mother's full brothers or sisters. Invitation is made by the girl, who whips the boy of her choice. The girls come out of their hut at regular intervals, during the day to begin with, armed with pliable young saplings. They seek out and soundly beat whatever boys lawfully take their fancy, if they can catch them.

Any boy so whipped is under an obligation, whether he likes it or not, to enter the *elima* hut later that day. When he does so he is subject to a further beating by the *bamelima*, and even then may not be invited to sleep with the girl who first selected him. Unless she gives him permission, he may not sleep with her. And if she allows him to lie with her, he again has to have her permission before intercourse can take place. The men say that once they lie down with a girl, however, if they want her they take her by surprise, when petting her, and force her to their will.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

• 881 In intercourse the only restriction I could discover was some rather
836 vaguely stated prohibition on a boy holding his partner in his arms.
833 Some adults say that this prevents conception, others say that the
842 girls take contraceptive medicines. Whatever the reason, there is no documented or even reported case of pregnancy arising out of intercourse in an *elima* hut.

881 The *elima* is given wide publicity (unlike the villager practice) and
836 young men from neighboring bands are expected to come and par-
[574] ticipate. If they are whipped during a visit to their band by the *bamelima*, then they are obliged to return the visit. The latter part of the
[584] festival is the time when prospective suitors are sought, though there is still no feeling that betrothal must necessarily result. At this time even the younger married men may enter the *elima* hut, though they will sleep with the senior girls rather than with the *bamelima*. It is nothing unusual for the husband of the provider of the house to do this, nor for an elder brother of one of the *elima* girls themselves. But at this time the younger boys are kept out.

881 Access to the hut may still be had by being whipped, but now there
152 is an additional possibility. In the late afternoons the mothers gather
584 outside the hut, with their carrying baskets, and with a good supply of sticks and stones and any other suitable ammunition. Any youth that wishes to declare his affection for one of the girls is free to attempt to enter the hut, but he must run the gauntlet of the women, who are perfectly capable of beating him soundly and even of throwing him in a river if they do not consider him suitable. Depending upon how well they favor him they will let him pass with anything from token to stiff resistance. If the resistance is stiff the suitor may use his bow and fire fruit peel or small pebbles with it, and fight the women back in this way. When the women become particularly aggressive the youths make a combined attack.

Minor injuries are frequently sustained, and the Mbuti say that in the old days the "war" used to be real, with arrows used instead of peelings. The important thing is that it is still impossible for a youth to enter the *elima* hut, at this stage of the festival, if the older women decide against it for any reason.[9]

881 Once inside he still has to face the girls, and the same conditions as
584 before pertain except that if he is allowed to sleep with a girl and

[583] [9] The drama not only appears like a remarkment of the proverbial "marriage by capture," but some Mbuti say that they used to have to fight and carry off their brides in this manner.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

have intercourse with her, he must then stay in the *elima* hut until the end of the festival, and he will be considered as her betrothed. There is no doubt that the girls are, like their mothers, anxious to find suitable lovers who may become their betrothed, and it would indeed only be a particularly flirtatious girl who did not hope that her *elima* would end in betrothal. During the first weeks the girls have ample opportunity for experimentation, and it may be assumed that such experimentation began even before the festival began. But in the last two weeks they are looking for a future husband, and they take great pains to paint their bodies and make themselves beautiful for their evening appearances outside the *elima* hut.

These occasions are formal presentations of the girls as adults. For the first time they sing the *elima* songs and dance before the entire band, and for the first time the youths who are considered as suitable candidates sit together and join in the singing with the girls. Each youth will try to catch the attention of the girl of his choice, and each girl will try to respond, but the occasion is a serious one, and the mothers, who sit with the girls and separate them from the youths, sharply reprove anyone who is caught flirting. When the singing is over, the girls are shepherded back into their hut, and unless they come out in an attack with their whips, no boy may enter.

The length of the festival is anything from one to two months, and it ends without regard to the successful betrothal or otherwise of the *elima* girls. The girls are taken to a nearby stream in the early hours of one morning, and wash themselves carefully a number of times. I have heard them refer to this as "washing the blood," but this is also a village expression for the ritual purification of a menstruating woman, and it is impossible to be sure of the exact significance of the term for the Mbuti until more material is available. The washing, however, is unlike that of village ritual washing, being completely informal, the *elima* girls washing together with all the others, eating and drinking in between sessions of swimming and splashing and playing in the water. When it is over they return to the camp, rub their bodies with oil, sing and dance in public as much or as little as they like and without adult supervision. They continue to stay together throughout the day as a group, but in the evening they disperse to their individual homesteads. For the next few days this is repeated, without the washing, and then the camp returns to normal.

If a betrothal has been effected, the boy will wait for a suitable opportunity, then make the proper approach to the girl's parents, asking

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no further, except to point again to the obvious potential relationship 439
between hunting technology and village exchange, the net-hunters 224
being more easily able to acquire an excess of meat than the archers. 433
However, it is difficult to ascertain just how far this relationship is 184
effectual, for even the net-hunters maintain minimal exchange with the villagers, and only on the same nonformalized individual basis. There is rather more likelihood among the archers for there to exist a [622]
capita or *sultani* who will convey to his fellow-Mbuti the wishes of [621]
the villagers although he has no authority to take any other action, and this may be seen as being due, in part at least, to the less productive technology of the archers, and in part to the greater prevalence of fragmentation into small sub-bands.

DIVISION OF LABOR

There is little to say about the division of labor in Mbuti society, 462
but most important is the fact that there is no religious belief or ritual 222
practice that relates any activity to any one sex, nor is there any con- 224
secration of those everyday tasks that normally fall into the jurisdiction of one sex or the other. This, of course, is what might be expected from the personal terminology, which differentiates the sexes clearly only at the parental level. Basically men hunt and make hunting [765]
equipment, and organize the *molimo* festivals. The women gather [881]
vegetable foods and other forest produce, build the huts, prepare and cook the food; they organize the *elima* festival. Men make bark cloth, women make baskets. Children take part in all the economic activities. But women help make the nets, and they invariably make the twine from which the nets are made. Among the net-hunters the women, girls and young children act as beaters and are thus an integral part of the hunt, as they are among the archers in the archer *begbe* hunt. Men of both archer and net-hunter bands have no hesitation in gathering mushrooms and other vegetable foods when they have the opportunity. In both groups it is primarily and almost exclusively the men who gather the honey, for women seldom climb trees.

Women take part in the *molimo* and, although it is a small part, it 562
is a highly significant one. The *elima*, though organized by the women [765]
and stemming from the maturation of a girl, is of equal importance to [881]
the male youths who play a vital role in the festival. All in all, sex does [433]
not seem to be of any particular significance in determining the structure of Mbuti economic activity. Of far greater significance is age, 561
433

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

it, the children standing guard at the net or at the fringes of the hunt), 224
nonetheless the nuclear family is divided in the hunt, and both men 621
and women are forced to co-operate with their neighbors, who may 626
or may not be kin. The hunt above all is not an individual affair but 594
involves the band as a whole, as is borne out in the ultimate disposition of the spoils.

That the net-hunt is regarded as a matter of importance to the for- 224
est, regarding the forest in a religious sense, is evidenced by the hunt- 778
ing fire, the song and the dance, rather than by any elaborate ritual, purification, or sexual taboo. The close relationship between the [304]
hunt as an economic activity and the hunt as a religious act is seen in the widespread custom of rubbing ashes from charred forest woods into the skin, sometimes slitting the skin first to achieve permanent tattoo marks. This is stated to secure the protection of the forest.

Whereas I was never able to secure confirmation of Schebesta's de- 224
scription of food offerings being made to the forest, except through 825
villager informants, there is very definitely a strongly felt and stated 152
urge to use every part of the animal, and never to kill more than is [114]
necessary for the band's needs for the day. This in fact may be one [782]
reason why the Mbuti are so reluctant to kill an excess of game and preserve it for exchange with the villagers. There is no expression of joy in the capturing and killing of an animal, though the excitement still runs strongly. The moment of killing is best described as a moment of intense compassion and reverence. The fun that is sometimes subsequently made of the dead animal, particularly by the youths, appears to be almost a nervous reaction, and there is an element of fear in their behavior. On the other hand, a bird caught alive may deliberately be toyed with, its feathers singed off over the fire while it is still fluttering and squawking until it is finally burned or suffocated to death. This again is usually done by youths who take the same nervous pleasure in the act; very rarely a young hunter may absentmindedly do the same thing. Older hunters and elders generally disapprove, but do not interfere.

The respect seems to be not for animal life but for the game as a 224
gift of the forest, and a gift that may be withheld if abused by waste.
It is further considered that good hunting is essential to the success [881]
of either an *elima* or a *molimo* festival, and during such festivals cer- [165]
tain hunts are devoted expressly to supplying the festival with food.

Among the archers, the system of sharing game and the respect for 224
game are comparable in their political and religious connotations: 621

593 578 Everyone was tired of disputes in the camp, and they turned on Kengé and told him it was he who was a bad husband. He promptly said, "I shall tell my mother; I shall tell her everything, and she will come here." His mother was notoriously argumentative, and the thought of having another disputant on their hands was too much. There were unanimous shouts of disapproval, whereupon Kengé said, "So you let the Lesé Mbuti join empty Cephu in our territory, Cephu who always hunts against us and should be turned out completely and forever, yet you do not want your own mother-in-law to come and live with you. What kind of Mbuti are you?" He went inside his hut and after a few muffled cries and sounds of blows, there were other sounds, less offensive, and in a half hour or so Kengé and his wife came out together, making a great show of friendliness, peering into Mbaaka's hut and laughing loudly at them for fighting so much.

578 152 DISPUTES CONCERNING TRIVIA

A headache, a hungry stomach, a painful leg, a leaking hut or a damp forest—almost any kind of discomfort is likely to make an Mbuti irritable, and he will pick a quarrel with ease and readiness so that he can make his heart feel better, as they say. It is known to be bad to keep things concealed, so there is no particular disgrace in voicing suspicions and revealing antagonisms, particularly if it is done quietly. Few, however, managed to make their heart feel better without creating a great deal of noise and making everyone else feel considerably worse.

578 Most such disputes, and there were likely to be several every day, died as they began, in complete indecision. The following are typical instances:

[524] [881] 26. A small girl, playing in imitation of the boy's *nkumbi*, playfully whipped some of the men, including her uncle, Masalito. Masalito was enraged and hit her, which started a fight between his age mates—that is, the young hunters.

[534] [562] 27. Pepei fought another youth with sticks because the other told him to beat the *banja* sticks, and Pepei said he was not a woman to be ordered around. Tungana's wife then beat Pepei, saying that women do not get ordered around, only children, and that is why nobody will marry him.

[593] 28. Kengé beat his sister because she caught cold.

29. A girl returning from the village related how there was an

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial, and will then be maintained even if the Mbuti lineage is removed by a considerable distance from the village of its *kpara*. On the other hand the relationship may be extremely hostile, for if the Mbuti are not dealing with their *kpara*, they are certainly dealing with someone else and this causes a three-way antagonism. The *kpara*, having no political control over the Mbuti and being unable to apply any effective economic sanctions, take refuge in their belief in supernatural sanctions or else employ the local doctor to effect a curse. Their only hope of practical recompense lies in making a case against the villager with whom their Mbuti are dealing.

Insofar as the villages themselves have been tending to become somewhat divided, certain members being sent or simply going elsewhere to work, the situation is aggravated and it is difficult to assess the reasons, precisely, for the noneffectiveness of the interlineage relationship. Again the major immediate cause, though not necessarily the reason, is the fluid and composite nature of the Mbuti band, the periodic division of which may cut right across lineage divisions.

Karé/Karé

Male Mbuti individuals are related formally to male village individuals through the institutional *karé* brotherhood. The *nkumbi* initiations which take place periodically (every three years for the past twenty years or so, in the central Ituri) are not confined to individual villages, but draw candidates from a number of villages within the same major segment of the tribe. Frequently the *kpara* will try to see that members of their own immediate family are made *karé* to their Mbuti, but this is not always possible, and the *karé* relationship is liable to cut across the lineage relationship.

It is essentially a brotherhood pact avowing reciprocal obligations including and centering around economic exchange. But it is a more intimate relationship than can exist between the Mbuti and their *kpara*, particularly as they are related not only in terms of the knife but also in terms of age. During the period of seclusion in the initiation camp, *karé* are always expected to be close to each other, although any attempt of the one to comfort the other will be ridiculed. They are, however, frequently set tasks to perform jointly, or made to perform services for each other. A bond is begun with the knife, and may grow, under these circumstances, into a lasting friendship. It is because of this friendship, and not because of the knife, that an Mbuti may well maintain an exchange relationship with his *karé*

2: Turnbull E-S (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 228-D]

15. Akidinimba celebrates her puberty and her forthcoming marriage during an elima dance.

16. A young Mbuti mother, Epini, with her infant wrapped in a specially chosen piece of bark cloth. She will freely allow other women to handle and even nurse her child, and will pass it around for the men to hold and admire.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Similarly with the *nkumbi*, the Mbuti see submission as a means of acquiring status, which is necessary to them if they are to have any part at all in village society. They also see in it, and in witchcraft, a means of defeating the villagers on their own grounds, by proving their superiority. They can do this in the *nkumbi* by being excessively brave, either physically or by flaunting the taboos and thus exposing themselves to supernatural sanctions. They can achieve the same end similarly by pretending to be better witches than the villagers, and indeed the villagers often believe this to be the case.[1]

Nonetheless, the adoption of an institution, for whatever motive, brings a number of results, some of which will inevitably correspond to those expected and desired in the original context. This is a reality, a practical experience, and as such cannot help but somewhat alter the attitude of the Mbuti. In this way they may begin to partially believe in village magic or witchcraft or supernatural sanctions, at least insofar as such belief is not contradicted by the rest of their experience. This ambivalence is particularly marked when they are in the village, which is full of the unknown for the Mbuti, and is correspondingly much less pronounced in the forest. It is with this in mind that we should examine the magico-religious practices of the Mbuti, where there seems to be so much borrowing.

Magic is best defined, for all the tribes in the Ituri region, as the manipulation of material objects which in itself is believed to be the direct cause of certain results, with no invocation or spiritual intervention. It is essentially a natural and, from the local point of view, scientific procedure, having nothing to do with the supernatural.

The villagers have recourse to magical acts, so defined, for almost any circumstance over which they have no other form of control, yet which does not call for the invocation of supernatural intervention. Fertility of men, women and land may be secured by such processes, as may protection against thieves and adulterers; the weather may be influenced, illness may be cured. If the magic takes the form of an amulet to be worn, it may be secured from the local doctor; if it is something requiring more elaborate manipulation, such manipulation is generally considered a professional secret, and certain individ-

[1] The situation is somewhat analogous to that described by Lévi-Strauss (1955) for the Nambikwara chief who understood the principle of writing as a means of communication, and imitated it in order to heighten his status among his band and to intensify his measure of control. In each case the adoption of the institution was not for its original value, but to strengthen a somewhat precarious position. It is probable that the Nambikwara chief was thinking not only of his relationship with his own band but also of that with the European "band."

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

778 This was not an isolated instance, though such dancing and sing-
535 ing are generally confined to youths and younger married people. The
152 erotic aspect of the relationship between forest and Mbuti is also seen
778 in the very clear individual preferences for certain types of place in
833 which it is found good to the *roho* to have sexual intercourse, such as by a stream, or in dark shade, or in a patch of sunlight or moonlight, or during the hunt, but in the forest rather than in the hut.

771 The perennial certainty of economic sufficiency, the general lack
789 of crisis in their lives, all lead the Mbuti to the conviction that the
[761] forest, regarded as the source of *pepo* and of their whole existence,
[181] is benevolent, and that the natural course of life is good. The absence of magic is not necessarily an indication of technological mastery; in this instance it is simply an indication of the normal absence of crisis. We indicated that such magic as existed was not without its spiritual aspects, and might possibly be better classified as religion.
778 For instance the use of vine and wooden charms on an infant to con-
[789] vey the strength of the forest to the child is not thought to achieve its end directly, by physical transference alone. Physical contact with these materials is considered strengthening, and certainly the juice of the vine in which infants are bathed is thought to have strengthening properties, but these things are also considered "pleasing to the forest" (*babongisa ndura*). This phrase constantly recurs, and shows the belief in the awareness by the forest of its "children" and their needs. Such acts and many others, by physically relating the individual to the forest, are believed to create an added awareness of the Mbuti by the forest. It is not only the strength of the forest that is wanted, but its affection.

THE POWER OF SOUND

778 Birth is attended with an undemonstrative concern to establish
828 this relationship between the forest and the individual, and it is re-
533 inforced at puberty by what might also be considered in some respects
[844] as magic, but which is more essentially religious, and that is song.
[881] The mere attachment of a vine to the wrist or around the waist requires that amount of effort and no more. Song requires continued effort, is more direct and personal, and consequently more powerful—its goal is identical. Song above all else is believed to attract the attention of the forest, and to please it. "Sound is very strong indeed; noise is bad, but song is good" (*S'uti mota ningo'e, akami sinana'e;*

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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imba nde bonga'i). The positive emphasis on *ekimi*,[4] or quiet, is in no way thought of as being in conflict with song, for *ekimi* is cool, and so is song, and both are pleasing to the forest. Song is in no way associated with noise, though both are recognized to be sound. 778 822 533

There is no such thing as secular song among the Mbuti. Songs sung by the Mbuti in the village, apart from being quite different in musical form from those sung in the forest, are spoken of as "empty sound" (*s'uti bobo*) or even as "noise." There are distinct musical forms for distinct occasions of importance in forest life such as hunting, honey gathering, puberty and death. The absence of any specific Mbuti form for village events, including *nkumbi* initiation or village-arranged marriages, is an indication of the lack of importance of these events in the forest life of the Mbuti. 533 [822]

There are, apart from the four major types of song listed above, two other types that are less formalized, but which are considered more in the nature of "sound" than "song." One is the lullaby, which is an individual creation (unlike any other forms of song, all of which require group participation), and the other is the play song, accompanying hoop-jumping, skipping or divers other rhythmic games.

Of the four major types, two concern economic activities and are sung on the appropriate occasion, each involving men and women. The other two are more directly religious in nature, being concerned with puberty and death, though the field of each is somewhat wider than these precise moments in the life cycle. The puberty songs (which have nothing to do with the *nkumbi*, not being sung on that occasion and in no way resembling the village songs that *are* sung at that time) concern primarily the women and youths (male and female), and are first learned and sung at puberty but may be sung at other times similarly critical to growth, birth and marriage. (Normally *elima* songs, or puberty songs, are sung at birth only if there is some special concern over the child's welfare, and at marriage only if it is desired to consecrate an otherwise "empty" marriage taking place in the village. Then not only is an *elima* song sung but leaves are brought in from the forest, and the bridal couple are completely surrounded by them to indicate that they are, in fact, joining together in the forest.) 533 881 [844] [585]

Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or 000

[4] *Ekimi* is the word most frequently used in this band for quiet. Like many other words it is a dialectal form, in this case of the Ngwana word *kimia*. In Kibira the equivalent would be *kobia*. [192]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

533 Death songs are normally sung at the death of an adult, male or
765 female, during the ensuing festival (*molimo*), but some of them may be sung at other times of crisis that threaten life, notably sickness or poor hunting. Certain songs seem to be reserved for actual death, but my impression is that this is a matter of personal attitude, for there are other ways in which a distinction is more clearly made between what are called the lesser and the greater *molimo*, the latter being the festival concerned solely with death.

533 To the same extent that the *elima* songs are of rather more impor-
462 tance to women than men, so are *molimo* songs considered more the
• 881 concern of men. There is, however, no absolute exclusion. On the
765 contrary, the male youths are an integral part of the *elima* festival, which celebrates their puberty just as much as it celebrates that of the girls, and although the actual festival is occasioned by the physical maturation of the girls, who are then taught the *elima* songs, the male youths are needed to sing the chorus to certain of those songs. In the *molimo*, at one point, the roles of the sexes are reversed (as in *ekokomea*), with the women taking over the men's songs, the men sitting back and listening, like women.

533 An examination of Mbuti song form not only reveals areas of con-
182 cern to the Mbuti, such as their food-getting activities, life and death,
181 but it also reveals the concern of the Mbuti for cooperative activity. Each type of song requires a group of people to sing it, and if there is a solo it is sung over a chorus, and the solo is passed around from one individual to another. This is similar to the Mbuti rejection of individual authority and their concern for dispersing leadership as widely as possible. There are certain parts of certain songs that are
[561] sung by youths, hunters or elders, strictly according to age, and song form thus also reinforces Mbuti concern for the age differential as an important element of their social structure. The songs are most frequently in round, or canon, form, and the hunting songs, in order to heighten the need for the closest possible cooperation (the same need that is demanded by the hunt itself), are sometimes sung in *hoquet*.[5]

533 There are certain similarities between the hunting songs and the *molimo* songs, but this is an area that requires a great deal more care-

[5] This is a technique in which each note of the melodic line is taken by a single individual who sings that note alone, at the correct moment. The melodic line is thus literally divided among the participants (sometimes singing in groups of two or three), and the melody can only be reconstituted and heard by the cooperation of all. The complications are heightened by the use of canon, and by the use of a harmonic pattern which is also sung in *hoquet*, and proceeds clockwise as the melodic line proceeds, as always, counterclockwise.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

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[P. 276-G]

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302
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123
224

34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[1811
1965
1973]

*177 578 626 the camp is filled with *akami*—not in search of *ekimi*, but in the hopes of doing as the hunters do, killing noise with more noise.

*177 533 181 5. SONG brings us to the crux of the opposition between Mbuti and villagers, for all song in villages is by definition "empty," even if sung by Mbuti, and even if, as is rarely the case, the song is strictly Mbuti in origin. That is, while in the village the Mbuti no longer have the ultimate safeguard of being able to "rejoice the forest" through song. Even if they tried, it would be *bulé*. Song being directly associated with *ekimi*, it follows, and the Mbuti affirm, that there can be no *ekimi*, or "quiet," in the village. *Ekimi*, as stated, is the ultimate goal *177 181 of the Mbuti, and it is only *ekimi* that can please the forest. Visiting the village, then, would be a treacherous act beyond reconciliation [224] under Mbuti values if it were not for the Mbuti attitude to such [978] visits as being a form of hunt, for hunting is pleasing to the forest, and hunting is also associated with noise and danger, *akami* and *mota*. The rationalization may seem a feeble one, but to the Mbuti it is adequate and convenient.

*177 181 182 439 Thus while the more formal institutions of the band, age levels and territorial affiliation, work internally to achieve stability and externally to directly counteract village attempts to subordinate the Mbuti, so do forest values directly counter village values, maintaining the complete separation of the two peoples. The economic exchange that takes place, while undeniably mutually convenient, may also be in part a mere recognition of territorial propinquity and of mutual opposition, a mechanism for avoiding open hostility, which would otherwise be the only possible relationship.

*177 181 186 The strongly forest-oriented value system of the Mbuti, while operating toward the maintenance of internal order, completely counters the attempts of the villagers to assert their dominance by supernatural sanctions based on village values. But the answer to the question [224] as to why the Mbuti go to the extreme of allowing themselves to be circumcised and initiated by the villagers may be more than that of- [881] fered by the Mbuti hunting metaphor.

*177 181 186 224 The metaphor recalls the technique of a hunter in taking on the appearance (and smell) of his quarry, of rubbing himself with a paste made of the heart and brains and eyes of the animal so that he can feel and think and see like his quarry. It is not a technique widely practiced, though it *is* practiced by elephant hunters, and by some archers, and by elders who are out hunting on their own. It is more

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

widely practiced in the mimetic hunting dances, by which it may be supposed that the dancer is trying, magically, to influence the action and movement of the game. In this light the Mbuti acceptance of the *nkumbi* seems more plausible, as a "magical" means of gaining power over the villagers. It is not entirely unlike the situation described by Beattie (1960, p. 78) for Nyoro reactions to foreign powers such as Europeans, Polish expatriates, and airplanes. The Nyoro attempt was to gain some control over the situation by becoming possessed by the spirits of these foreign powers.

There may also be a certain amount of seepage of village beliefs into the Mbuti subconscious, despite the formidable structural opposition they have raised to all such influences. There is certainly cause to think that the village beliefs of witchcraft and sorcery, confused as they are by the Mbuti, nonetheless have for them a certain sinister ring of conviction.[9]

It is perhaps for that reason that the only plainly discernible symbolism evident in Mbuti ritual is concerned with life. Of all the oppositions between the forest and the village, such as abundance/hunger, unity/disunity, moral/immoral, equal/unequal, cool/hot, song/silence, quiet/noise, the most significant are undoubtedly the last two, for silence and noise are associated ultimately with death. If the Mbuti suspect there are, in the village, supernatural powers with which they should come to terms, it is for purposes of defense. And they see their major defense in the power of their own supernatural, the forest.

Their desire is to counteract the forces of hunger, disunity, immorality, inequality, heat, silence and noise, forces that amount to death for the Mbuti. Their focus of attention is on the preservation and continuation of life. The relatively simple ritual, if it can truly be called that, of the *molimo* festival is supercharged with an emotional concern, a burning desire, for life. As might be expected, it reinforces those aspects of Mbuti society that require constant attention: age divisions are clearly symbolized in the three fires for the three upper age groups; the value of sharing (on nonlineal grounds!) is emphasized in the technical division of the songs, again bringing in division along age lines and demanding close cooperation; the reluctance to share is symbolized at the same time as the friction between youths

[9] Again, a linguistic study might help greatly, not only through separating institutions and concepts that derive from different tribes, but in revealing the location of hidden areas of forest/village opposition. Unfortunately we still lack any published studies of KiNgwana, KiBira and KiLesé, let alone of the divers Mbuti groups.

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

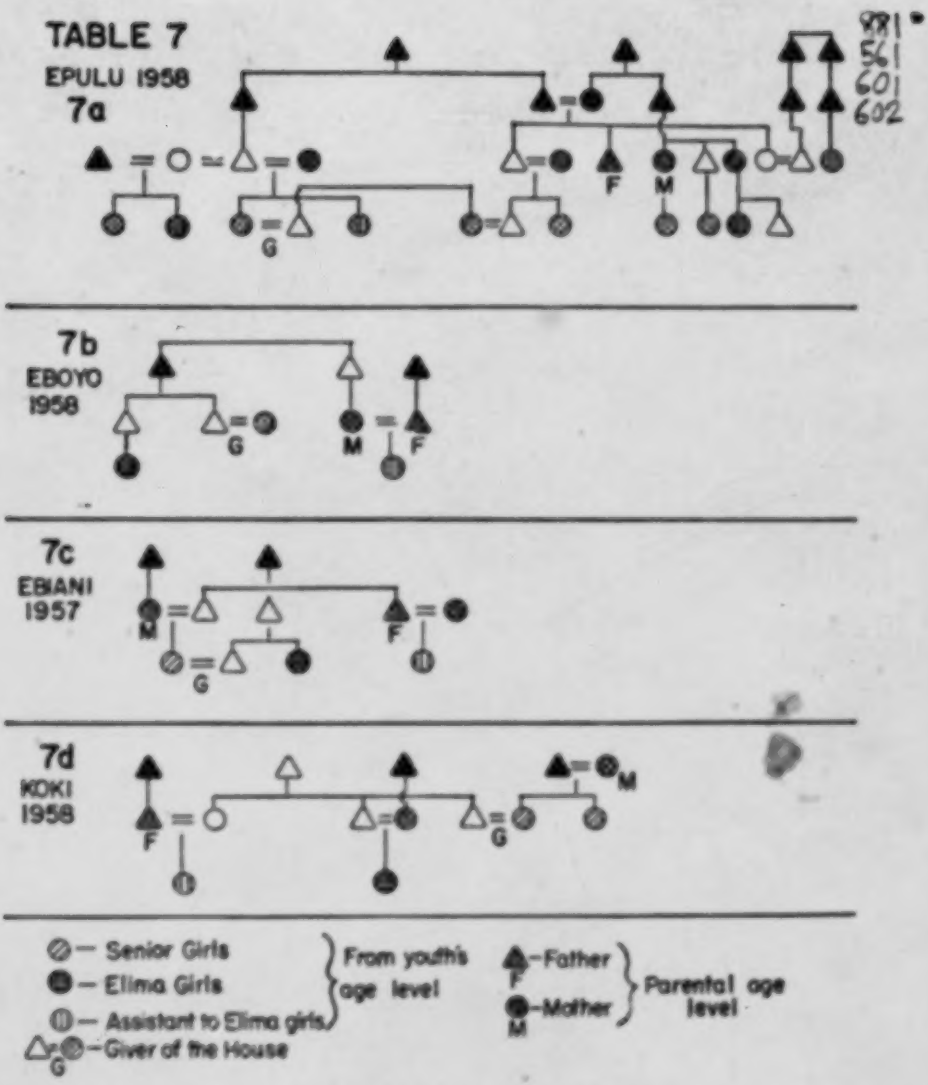

TABLE 7a–d *elima* participation

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

But on my second visit, in 1954, I was provided with a real opportunity for studying the relationship between the Pygmies and their village neighbors. The event was the decision of the local Negro chief to hold a tribal nkumbi initiation festival. This is a festival in which all boys between the ages of about nine and twelve are circumcised, then set apart and kept in an initiation camp where they are taught the secrets of tribal lore, to emerge after two or three months with the privileges and responsibilities of adult status.

The nkumbi is a village custom, but in areas where the practice prevails the Pygmies always send their children to be initiated along with the Negro boys. This has been cited as an example of their dependence on the Negroes and of their lack of an indigenous culture. The Negroes take all the leading roles in the festival, and as no Pygmy belongs to the tribe, none can become a ritual specialist, so the Pygmy boys always have to depend on the Negroes for admission to an initiation, and for the subsequent instruction. An uninitiated male, Pygmy or Negro, young or old, is considered as a child—half a man at best.

Only relatives of the boys undergoing initiation are allowed to live in the camp, though any adult initiated male can visit the camp during the daytime.

But it so happened that on this occasion there were no Negro boys of the right age for initiation, so the only men who could live in the camp and stay there all night were Pygmies. To go against the custom of allowing just relatives to live in the camp would have brought death and disaster. Nevertheless the Negroes went ahead with the festival because it has to be held to avoid offending the tribal ancestors. The Negro men would have liked to stay in the camp all night, as normally instruction goes on even then, the boys being allowed to sleep only for short periods. But custom was too strong, and they had to rely on the Pygmy fathers to maintain order in the camp after dark and not allow the children to have too much sleep.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

123 The Pygmies, however, did not feel bound by the custom, as it
177 was not theirs anyway, and they invited me to stay with them, know-
• 881 ing perfectly well that I would bring with me plenty of tobacco, palm wine, and other luxuries. I was, after all, they said, father of all the children, so I was entitled to stay. The Negroes protested, but there was nothing they could do. On the one hand they felt that I would be punished for my offense by their supernatural sanctions; on the other they themselves hoped to profit by my presence. At least I could be expected to share in the expenses, which otherwise they would have to bear, of initiating the eight Pygmy boys.

And so I entered the camp and saw the initiation through from beginning to end. It was not a particularly comfortable time, as we got very little sleep. The Pygmy fathers were not in the least interested in staying awake simply to keep their children awake and teach them nonsensical songs, so the Negroes used to make periodic raids during the night, shouting and yelling and lashing out with whips made of thorny branches, to wake everyone up. Besides that,
[352] the camp was not very well built and the heavy rains used to soak the ground we slept on; only the boys, sleeping on their rough bed made of split logs, were dry. In the end we all used to climb up there and sit—there was not room for everyone to lie down—cold and miserable, waiting for the dawn to bring another daily round of exhausting singing and dancing.

123 But at the end of it all I knew something about the Pygmies, and they knew something about me, and a bond had been made between us by all the discomforts we had shared together as well as by all the fun. And when the initiation was over and we were off in the forest I learned still more. It was then that I knew for sure that much of what had been written about the Pygmies to date gave just about as false a picture as did the thirteenth-century cartographer who
181 painted them as one-legged troglodytes. In the village, or in the
199 presence of even a single Negro or European, the Pygmies behave

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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Opposite: Asofalinda's eldest daughter being painted with *kengey* juice for a wedding.

Akidinimba (in hat) celebrates her forthcoming wedding with the other girls of the *elima*.

[P 72-G]

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Masalito comforts the young Kasya during the *nkumbi* rites at a Negro village.

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[P 72-I]

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Mbuti

765 791 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which every single member of the group must participate.

765 562 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole concern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

• 881 765 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was married to Ausu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Ausu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima*, and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 574 888 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her husband. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives, but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 882 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He

765
ing in the shadows, until with surprisingly swift and agile strides 533
she was once more in our midst. In her hands she held a long roll of 765
nkusa twine. The men continued singing, and as they sang, the old 533
woman went around knotting a loop around each man's neck, so 824
that in the end we were all tied together. The men made no attempt [284]
to resist; rather, they ignored what was going on. When they were all tied in this way, however, they stopped singing.

Moke spoke—I am not sure whether it was for my benefit or 765
because it was his place to say what he did. He said, "This woman has tied us up. She has bound the men, bound the hunt, and bound the molimo. We can do nothing." Then Manyalibo said that we had to admit we had been bound, and that we should give the woman something as a token of our defeat; then she would let us go. A certain quantity of food and cigarettes was agreed upon, and the old woman solemnly went among us again, untying each man. Nobody attempted to loose himself, but as each man was untied he began to sing once more—the molimo was free. The old woman received her gifts and went back to Cephu's camp, where she and her husband were staying. The couple stayed for another week or two, but she danced only once again. Before she left us she went to every man, giving him her hand to touch as though it were some kind of blessing.

It was not long after this that everyone started talking about when they should bring the molimo to an end. There seemed to be no specific length of time that it should run, and it was just a question of convenience.

There was the matter of the elima to be considered, too, as evi- 881
dently one really was due to be held for two girls, each of whom had reached her first period. The main problem was not the fulfilling of ritual necessities, but rather how to make the most of the festive occasion. There were different schools of thought as to whether 881
the elima should take place in the village or the forest; the younger 177

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

men held out for the village, the older for the forest. All the older men except Tungana, that is. That wily old grandfather thought the village was better as they might be able to make money out of tourists who would pay to see them dance. Tourists had been increasing in number ever since the Animal Station had been established at Epulu, and the Pygmies found tourists even easier to trick than villagers.

It was eventually decided that the elima, which had already begun in Kondabate's hut, should go to the village and take over Ekianga's house, as it was the biggest and he was related to one of the girls anyway. The villagers would give food to the elima. Asofalinda would be in charge. Everyone else would stay a while longer in the forest. Then they would bring the molimo to the village one night and have a final dance there, because the villagers believed that a period of mourning, which is how they regarded the molimo, should end with a ritual feast, and so they would give the Pygmies more food. That would put all the men in a good humor to attend to their part of the elima festivities.

I was a little surprised that they should even think of bringing the molimo to the village. Moke told me not to worry, that no villagers would know anything of what went on in the forest, and if any villagers came to watch they would only see the Pygmies imitating what the villagers do themselves. But he shook his head and added, "Even so, it *is* bad. It is a thing of the forest, and it should end there. Perhaps we shall have to end it twice."

The night before we were due to move back to the village everyone was very quiet. The women prepared the food for the evening meal without talking to one another. Tungana sat outside his hut, hunched forward, his gray old head resting on one hand because he had an abscess on the side of his neck. Moke wandered restlessly from one end of the camp to the other, and Masisi snapped at everyone who gave him an excuse. This was some three months after

St Tumbull E-6 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
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P 179 to verify just how much meat there was, accusing them of having eaten it all themselves. But the Pygmies paid no attention. Some made for their own village and dumped their belongings there. I wandered on with the others who went straight to their patrons to whom they presented the meat they had brought with them. Before long they were sitting down in whatever shade they could find, fanning themselves to keep the flies and mosquitoes away, eating heartily from enamel dishes, drinking dirty village water from enamel mugs.

P 179 361 C 361 After spending some time, rather like the Pygmies, greeting the various villagers, I returned to the Pygmy village and sat in the shade of my veranda looking down the dismal, double row of tumbledown huts. About half a mile away, in the background, the forest raised its tall dark face against the edge of the plantations, dwarfing the leafy plantain trees that were only three times as tall as men, making them look like blades of grass. Ineffectual blades of grass that had, with the help of village-man, usurped the place of the great primeval forest, but which in a year or two would be choked to a final death as the forest claimed its own. Clouds of dust arose as a small, disconsolate group of children played football with a ball presented to them by some fond villager. The dust got into my nostrils and made me feel suddenly bad-tempered. Kenge, who was trying to cook me a meal, cursed the children and told them to go and play somewhere else. But they had no bopi—no cool, clean streams, no vine swings. So they went off to chase the dogs, goats and chickens of the nearest Negro household.

At the far end of the little village stood Ekianga's house, the only one that was not falling to pieces. It straddled the width of the village, bridging the space between the two not very straight rows of smaller huts. The elima girls made a couple of sorties from the single door, dashing around to the back of the house where they could not be seen. Otherwise all was quiet.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

P 765 514 177 the Pygmies came in to eat. The men came in and sat down and ate without ceremony while their patrons watched hungrily. But they were not related to Balekimito, so they could not partake. Women, too, were excluded, according to the village rules of the game, but I saw a number of dishes quietly slipped to one side, and shortly afterward all the women were enjoying their own feast, concealed behind the elima hut.

C 765 563 P 765 177 The villagers asked if everyone had ritually bathed, to wash off the taint of death, and everyone politely said yes. The villagers then asked if the Pygmies had any meat to spare, and the Pygmies equally politely said no. They had given it all to the molimo, they said, and to this there was no answer, for it was a very creditable thing to do, in village eyes. I bought a large quantity of palm wine, however, and this mollified to some extent the strained feelings of the patrons. They knew they were being deceived and cheated, yet they felt they were only doing what was right in trying to impose their beliefs and practices on the forest savages who had no culture of their own. If the forest spirits struck the Pygmies down for not having heeded their patrons, for not having performed all the necessary rituals as they had been told, then it was not the fault of the villagers. They drank their fill and departed.

P 765 512 513 Once the Negroes had gone we all tried to get some sleep, for it was late afternoon and we had had no rest. But for three months the men had sung and danced and feasted every night and for three months the women and children had been sent to bed early, forbidden to come out and take part in the festivities except for the dance of the old woman. Now the molimo was over, and the women took advantage of the fact. After all, an elima had begun, and that was as important to the women as the molimo was to the men. At dusk all the girls of the elima came out of their hut. Their beautiful young bodies shone and glistened with the palm oil that had been carefully rubbed into the skin, making them even more alluring to

P 881

P [832]

MOLIMO: THE DANCE OF DEATH

the young bachelors. And together with the older women they began to sing, in deep contralto tones. The men protested loudly that they were tired and wanted to sleep. But the women just laughed and sang all the louder. The elima had started in earnest. 881 532 533

use of the original name. Such was the case with the molimo, and such was also the case with the elima. Who borrowed from whom is a difficult question, and perhaps not a very important one. The difference that emerges in the process of borrowing is much easier to see and adds much more to our understanding.

To both peoples the elima is concerned with the arrival of a young girl at the age of maturity, her transition from girlhood to the full flowering of womanhood. This coming of age is marked more dramatically for girls than for boys by the physical changes that take place. Both Pygmies and villagers recognize the significance of the first appearance of menstrual blood, and both celebrate it with a festival which they call "elima." But there the similarity ends.

My friend Amina told me a great deal about the elima among the BaBira, and I learned more from older women in different villages that I lived in from time to time. Everywhere, right through to the very edge of the forest, I found the same story among the villagers. Blood of any kind is a terrible and powerful thing, associated with injury and sickness and death. Menstrual blood is even more terrible because of its mysterious and regular recurrence. Its first appearance is considered by the villagers as a calamity—an evil omen. The girl who is defiled by it for the first time is herself in danger, and even more important she has placed the whole family and clan in danger. She is promptly secluded, and only her mother (and, I suspect, one or two other close and senior female relatives) may see her and care for her. She has to be cleansed and purified, and the clan itself has to be protected, by ritual propitiation, from the evil she has brought upon them. At the best, the unfortunate girl is considered a considerable nuisance and expense.

It is generally assumed that the girl was brought into this condition by some kind of illicit intercourse, and her mother demands of her who is responsible. This is the girl's chance to name the boy of her choice, whether or not she has even so much as spoken to

C him. He is then accused and has to make suitable offerings which
881 are necessary not only to help in the protection of the girl and her
584 family, but also for his own protection, since he has been linked with her verbally, however untruthfully. He may then deny the charge, and if the girl's parents think he would make a suitable husband, there may be some litigation. Or they may consider him unsuitable, and let the matter drop. If he likes the girl and accepts the responsibility, this constitutes the first step toward official betrothal. If he disclaims all responsibility, then the girl has to try again; until she has a husband the danger is thought to remain.

C The period of seclusion varies from tribe to tribe, and even from
881 village to village. Sometimes it is just for a week or two; sometimes it lasts a month or more. And sometimes it lasts until the girl is betrothed and can be led from her room of shame to be taken away
C by her husband. At the final wedding ritual she is ceremonially cut
583 off from her family, and told that she is now her husband's respon-
585 sibility and must fend for herself and not come running home every time she gets beaten. The point, of course, is that if she does this her husband can claim back the wealth he will have already paid over in the expectancy of her fidelity and success as a wife and bearer of children. And by the time the disaster occurs her family will almost certainly have spent the money to obtain a bride for one of her brothers.

C The whole affair is a rather shameful one in the eyes of the vil-
881 lagers, as well as a dangerous one. It is something best concealed and not talked about in public. The girl is an object of suspicion, scorn, repulsion, and anger. It is not a happy coming of age.

P For the Pygmies, the people of the forest, it is a very different
• 881 thing. To them blood, in the usual context in which they see it, is
841 equally dreadful. But they recognize it as being the symbol not only
[842] of death, but also of life. And menstrual blood to them means life. Even between a husband and wife it is not a frightening thing,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 PO4 Pygmies PO4
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though there are certain restrictions connected with it. In fact, the 881 841 Pygmies consider that any couple that really wants to have children 842] should "sleep with the moon."

So when a young Pygmy girl begins to flower into maturity, 881 and blood comes to her for the first time, it comes to her as a gift, received with gratitude and rejoicing—rejoicing that the girl is now a potential mother, that she can now proudly and rightfully take a husband. There is no mention of fear or superstition, and everyone is told the good news.

The girl enters seclusion, but not the seclusion of the village girl. She takes with her all her young friends, those who have not yet reached maturity, and some older ones.

In the house of the elima the girls celebrate the happy event together. Together they are taught the arts and crafts of motherhood [861] by an old and respected relative. They learn not only how to live like adults, but how to sing the songs of adult women. Day after day, night after night, the elima house resounds with the throaty contralto of the older women and the high, piping voices of the youngest. It is a time of gladness and happiness, not for the women alone but for the whole people. Pygmies from all around come to pay their respects, the young men standing or sitting about outside the elima house in the hopes of a glimpse of the young beauties inside. And there are special elima songs which they sing to one [533] another, the girls singing a light, cascading melody in intricate harmony, the men replying with a rich, vital chorus. For the Pygmies the elima is one of the happiest, most joyful occasions in their lives.

And so it was with happiness that we all heard that not one but two girls in our camp had been blessed by the moon.

At first it was just Akidinimba, daughter of Manyalibo's sister. 881 Akidinimba was a notorious flirt who considered herself the most 832 beautiful girl in the world. She was just sufficiently plump to be envied by less well-endowed girls, but not so plump that her maidenly

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 figure was lost. She was particularly proud of her breasts, which
832 were certainly the largest in that part of the forest, and she showed them off to advantage, when dancing, by adopting an unusually springy gait. As her breasts bounced up and down the eyes of all the bachelors followed their movement with pleasure. Everyone agreed that Akidinimba's elima would be a lively one.

881 But Manyalibo's niece was in no hurry, so for the first few days she remained in the hut of her cousin, Kondabate, and there were no particular signs of activity visible from the outside.

Then we heard that Kidaya had also been blessed with the blood,
[157] and she went to join Akidinimba. Kidaya was a niece of Ekianga, and she was more modest than the really shameless Akidinimba. Kidaya was handsome rather than pretty, and she had a reputation for being able to beat up even the strongest youths if their advances were not welcome to her. So the elima promised to be exciting as well as lively.

The two girls each chose their personal assistants and called in all their young friends to join them in the hut of Kondabate and her husband, Ausu. Kondabate built on a special extension to accommodate them. This was in Apa Kadiketu, and not long afterward the elima was moved to the village, where it took over Ekianga's house. Mambunia, Masisi's brother, went with them to be "father of the elima," to make sure that they were protected and properly cared for. Asofalinda, Kidaya's aunt, went as "mother of the elima," to look after the personal needs of the girls, to see that they got the right food, and generally to act as chaperone. Mambunia was a bachelor, and Asofalinda a widow.

When we arrived at the village for the close of the molimo festival, the elima was well under way. The girls had already learned most of their songs, and they were now at the stage where they were taking a more active, even an aggressive interest in the eligible bachelors of the neighborhood. In the evenings, when they assembled

outside their hut to sing, they were carefully guarded by their 881
mothers and older sisters. But the girls and their attendants cast sly glances at the young men who always drew close to watch and listen. They whispered and laughed among themselves, and when they 881
stood up to dance they often made it very clear by their gestures 832
which boy had taken their fancy. Sometimes they chose at random simply to annoy a special lover, and boys often stalked away in a huff. That was a mistake.

At any time of the day the girls were likely to emerge from the [411]
elima house armed with long fito whips. If you were close enough you could hear them plotting their strategy behind the door, but there was no escape once they burst out into the open. Any males, young or old, and particularly those who had shown annoyance at being teased, were liable to be chased and whipped by the eager young furies.

I myself was chased once, for a good half-mile down a forest trail, [123]
running as fast as I could. It was considered cowardly to run, but I ran with good reason, for to be whipped establishes an obligation to visit your assailant in the elima house. Once inside there is no need to do anything further, but you are subject to considerable attention if you refuse. And to get into the house, in the first place, requires no small amount of courage and strength. So I ran. Most other bachelors had less reason and no desire to escape, so they contented themselves with giving as good as they got, throwing sticks and stones at the girls, running around the village, dodging behind houses and through fields of sugar cane. The battles never lasted long, but sometimes they came to an abrupt end.

The girls often whipped old men or young boys, and in either case it was generally considered a compliment and did not carry the same obligations that it would have done had they been eligible bachelors. But sometimes they hit too hard, and the old men resented this and shouted, while the boys simply screamed their heads off.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 In the one case Mambunia would come out of his hut in a temper
832 and send all the girls back to their house, and in the other case Asofalinda would run amok among the girls, boxing their ears until they, in turn, cried like the children they had beaten.

881 But the elima beauties did not confine themselves to their own
914 village. After all, most of the men there were relatives and so could not decently be invited into the elima house. Many strangers came to visit from other groups, but sometimes the attendance was disappointing. Then the girls would set out to visit one of their hunting
[123] camps. I followed them on one such escapade, having secured a promise first that I would be given complete immunity. It was a strange procession, the girls all oiled and painted to look their best, wearing grass skirts in imitation of the boys' initiation (an innovation that infuriated the villagers, who felt that their customs were being desecrated, and that caused open hostilities in the end), and carrying stout whips, twice as tall as they were. There were about eight of them in all, led of course by the irrepressible Akidinimba, bouncing her breasts up and down in a determined manner as she marched along the road, past the Station de Chasse, and over the bridge to the far side of the Epulu River. The villagers came out to look as we passed, but from a respectful distance. On other occasions I have seen a party such as this dive into the midst of a group of village men and women, lashing out with all their might—not entirely in the friendly way in which they would whip, say, old Tungana, as a compliment to his virility.

On the far side of the Epulu we climbed up the hill toward Eboyo, the sun beating down on us so that the chatter and laughter of the girls was almost stilled. But just before reaching Eboyo we turned off, following a trail through an old plantation and into the
881 forest. As the trees closed in around and above us, the girls began to
914 sing. They sang loudly and proudly, marching with even more de-
533 termination than before, their heads back, looking at the familiar

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leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest. 881 574 533

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her. 881 574 [487]

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba 881 832

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881 832 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where 881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the 832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The 574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if [361] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men [517] and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing [231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

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others in almost total darkness. It must have been quite an old camp, for all the leaves on the huts were dry and brown. 881 832 574

We crept right up to the nearest hut without being seen, and then Kidaya ran lightly across the clearing and gave the sleeping youth of her choice a sound thwack with her whip. He leaped up, not so much in fear or anger as in surprise and in shame that he should have been caught. He grabbed for his bow and picked up a small stone which he fired back at Kidaya as he ran away. Kidaya laughed with delight. This was a sure sign that her overtures had been accepted. [152]

The whole of the camp was awake before the rest of the girls had had time to whip more than a few boys, and it soon became alive with lashing whips and flying sticks and stones. The women and children crept into the backs of their huts for shelter, while the men ran from rubbish dump to rubbish dump, gathering the banana skins they used as ammunition. When they could not find any, they used whatever came to hand. A slice of banana skin fired from a taut bow at close quarters can be quite painful, and the girls found that the boys were putting up a good fight. So they picked up a few vine baskets that had been left lying around, and using these as shields they advanced on their quarry. [411]

The fight got more and more fierce, and at one time the boys managed to drive the girls right back into the huts. Then they stood at the entrances and fired their pellets of banana skin inside, giving rise to squeals of anguish. But Kidaya was too tough to be done down so easily. She emerged from her shelter without even a basket for protection, and made a dash for the nearest fire. As she bent down to pick up a burning log, her particular boy friend fired a pellet that struck her on her buttocks with a smack. Kidaya spun around and hurled the log with all her might; then she rubbed her backside affectionately and smiled. The other girls also began throwing logs, and soon there was hardly a fire left in the camp, and burning logs were scattered everywhere. 881 832 372 574

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881 everywhere. The men retreated to the outskirts of the clearing and
832 stood uncertainly, peering around trees or over the tops of huts, their
514 bows and banana skins at the ready.

But the girls felt they had achieved their end. Each one had marked her victim, who was bound by the strongest bonds of self-respect to respond to the challenge and brave the elima house itself. Pumba, who had followed at a safe distance, sat disconsolately on a log that Akidinimba had thrown at him in a friendly way, and he did not even look up as we left.

881 The girls sang all the way home; even when they left the forest and made their way back across the Epulu, gleaming orange and gold in the late afternoon light, they sang. They sang so that everyone should know that they were the *Bamelima*, the people of the elima, girls who had been blessed with the blood and were now women.

881 There were occasions when the mood was different. One evening
224 in particular, after a relatively quiet day, nearly all the women of the group gathered together outside the elima house. It was toward the end of the time that had been set, in an arbitrary fashion, for the duration of the festival. The Pygmies felt they had been in the village long enough, and the elima was interfering with their hunting. As much as the young men enjoyed hunting, the attraction of the elima house offered strong competition. If the boys were away too long, due to pressure from their parents, the girls complained that they were not being treated properly. Everyone agreed that this was an insoluble conflict, unless the elima was either brought to an end or moved out to the forest. It was not only the boys that were away from the hunt, but also the women and girls, who would otherwise have been gainfully employed gathering and helping to drive more animals into the men's nets. And the women said they were having far too good a time in the village. So it was decided to bring the elima to an end.

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During this time the older women paid more and more attention 881
to what was going on and gathered almost nightly outside the house to join in the singing. But one evening was different in that almost every woman in the group was there. There were even some women from Cephu's group, which had temporarily detached itself and was now some miles away. They gathered early, before it was fully dark. The bright blue sky was deepening without any of the wild tinges of color that so often come at dusk, and the tiny puffs of cloud that drifted across remained a shining, fluffy white, even when the sky was almost black.

The women brought sticks of fire with them, and some of them cooked and ate their evening meal right there outside the elima house; others just sat around and gossiped, huddling close to the fires from habit, though in the village it was still warm. Inside the house the girls were singing, but the women outside did not join in. The men sat before their huts, watching and waiting. Finally the 881
door opened and the girls trooped out. The younger ones came first, 302
their bodies decorated with modest blobs of white paste made from clay; then came Akidinimba and Kidaya and their attendants, resplendent and magnificent, yet strangely shy. They must have spent hours working on themselves and one another, for they were covered with elaborate patterns skillfully drawn with fingers and thin sticks, also using the white clay. Akidinimba had taken particular trouble to paint her breasts with intricate circles of lines punctuated with blobs, something like a grapevine gone to seed, whereas the more demure Kidaya had concentrated on her buttocks, and these were covered with a hundred carefully painted little stars. Each girl had her favorite style, and each was different. They looked around coyly, to make sure they were being admired, and sat down at the edge of the group of women.

They began singing then, together with the women, much more 881
seriously than they had ever done before. They sang as though they 533

• 881 533 were women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires. 881 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but 885 which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs 533 sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 Akidiniimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She 885 was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as 157 flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat 533 with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped 415 on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya. 881 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. 152 She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing 302

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herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes.

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it.

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov-

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ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend for themselves.

Once a boy has gained access to the elima but he may flirt or even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an opportunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the important thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

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the first light of dawn flecked the sky with gold. They went down to the banks of a forest stream, where it widened out into a silent pool, and bathed themselves in half-hearted imitation of an elaborate village ritual. Then they oiled their bodies and donned oily new bark cloths and returned to dance in the village. They danced in a tight little circle while the women cooked the food. The villagers came to watch approvingly and to see that the food was properly distributed, for only certain people may eat it. They also made sure that all the leaves which had been used as a sleeping mattress in the elima house were thrown away and the house cleaned thoroughly. In this way they satisfied themselves that no harm would come to "their" Pygmies. The ancestors would be appeased by the feast, and the evil spirit that hovered around the unclean girls would be driven away.

The girls found it all rather tedious and boring, and as soon as they were able they broke off from their dancing and went wandering around the village. Akidinimba was in search of Pumba, who had failed her badly in the final ceremony. The others visited from house to house, in the hopes of gifts and compliments. The older women sat around and enjoyed the food for as long as it lasted; then they broke up and went about their business as though nothing had happened.

The men, for some time, had been talking about where they would build the next hunting camp.

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P 177 585 C 563 585 good excuse for a mild flirtation and a great deal of feasting. If two Pygmies want to get married, and they are near a village, then they gladly undergo the village ritual, sanctifying the bond later in their own manner. Everyone is happy; the villagers think the marriage is a success because it was performed according to their customs, while the Pygmy knows it is a success because it followed his as well.

P 881 177 583 C [881] [584] The villagers naturally looked on the elima as a prelude to the marriages of Akidinimba and Kidaya. The Pygmies, however, regarded it in no such light. They wanted to get back to the forest, where the girls could get married in their own time and in their own way. This would involve no more than an exchange of visits between the families concerned, and the groom's presentation to his in-laws of a large antelope, and perhaps some arrows and a bow. But none the less they were tempted by the idea of more feasting. So there was considerable conflict of ideas and ideals, particularly as the villagers had their own ideas as to whom the girls should marry.

P 881 584 The elima had created a crisis in another direction also. Pumba, whom Akidinimba had loved so ardently and beaten so thoroughly to show her affection, had kept his part of the bargain by coming to the elima house during the final week, fighting his way in as a man. But once inside, instead of making love to Akidinimba he paid court to Kidaya. Fortunately for Kidaya, but unfortunately for Pumba, she did not respond, and without her permission Pumba had no way of forcing his attentions further. So he stalked out of the elima house, pursued by shrieks of rage from Akidinimba. He took his friend Kelemoke's hand briefly, then left without a word. He crossed the Epulu and went back to his camp, and he was seen no more.

P 584 Everyone was upset, because they all felt that the sooner Akidinimba got married the better. Besides, Pumba was popular—so much so that some pressure was brought to bear on Kidaya to force her to accept him. But Kidaya had set her heart on a handsome youth named Atete, who was attached to the village of Kazala, several miles

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Village Initiations and Magic

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OF ALL THE WAYS in which the villagers attempt to assert some kind of control over the BaMbuti, the one which is the most significant, and which they consider to be the most effective and binding, is that of subjecting Pygmy boys to the village initiation, known as the nkumbi. This is one custom which, at first glance, does not seem to have any counterpart in the forest life of the Pygmies. Most outside observers have assumed that the very fact of the Pygmies' participation in the nkumbi—with the absence of any such rites of their own—is a sign of their dependence on the village. Some go so far as to say that this participation shows that the Pygmies are devoid of

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any culture of their own. If the facts were what they seem to be these observations might hold water, but the real facts are very different.

During my visit to Epulu in 1954, I had the good fortune to stumble quite accidentally upon fresh information, which almost completely reverses the picture. At that time I was present at an nkumbi, which I have already mentioned briefly in Chapter 1, but which merits more detailed description.

There years had then elapsed since the previous nkumbi, in 1951, and it was time for another. The purpose of the ceremony is not only to fit village boys for adult life, making them full members of the tribe, but also to ensure the continuity between the past, present and future life of the tribe; between the living and the dead. To the villagers the dead, the ancestors, are just as important as the living, and in many ways more so; and only those who are initiated will join the ancestors when they die. Just as it is important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the living, so is it important to have a thriving, populous tribe of the dead. The dead are, in fact, living—but in another world. Regular initiations are essential to ensure the continued growth of that far-off tribe of ancestors. I have even seen a young boy who had been due to enter the nkumbi but who died just before it took place, circumcised and accorded full initiation rites before burial, just as though he were alive. In this way he was able to go to join his fathers.

In 1954 there was a unique situation. There was only one village boy of the right age for initiation (usually between the ages of eight and twelve in this area), and his father was a Christian who refused to allow the boy to participate. Every pressure was brought on the family, but to no avail. There were eight Pygmy boys of suitable age, and normally there would have been at least as many villagers. They would all have been initiated together but in such a way as to make clear the inferior status of the Pygmies. One of the initial acts is the circumcision of the boys, and a Pygmy boy is sent first "to clean the knife."

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the knife." Then follows a village boy, and these two are bound together by an indissoluble bond, the bond of *kare* blood-brotherhood. They are mutually obligated to help and care for each other for the rest of their lives. This of course helps to reinforce practical and economic links between the two people, as a Pygmy theoretically would be unable to refuse meat to his kare and the kare could not refuse any demand for plantains, manioc or rice.

But this year the villagers were faced with the alternative of having no initiation at all, or having one for Pygmy boys alone. As the initiation of a Pygmy gives him only partial rights, since he is not a full member of the tribe, a Pygmy initiate can never take a leading part in the nkumbi; all the cutting and all the formal teaching, and certainly all the ritual acts, can be performed only by a qualified villager. So it meant that the villagers would have to go through all the work and expense purely for the Pygmies. There could be no question of not holding the nkumbi, as this would offend the ancestors. And in any case the villagers decided it was worth while as it helped to assert their authority over the Pygmies. I heard speculative talk more than once about how an initiated Pygmy, when he dies, goes to serve the tribal ancestors just as he served the villagers during his life.

The *makata* sticks were cut and brought out. These are a series of sticks used only at the time of the nkumbi; each one is cut to a different length and tuned to a definite pitch. Some eight or nine men, each with a stick under his left arm, tapping it with a shorter stick held in the right hand, dance around the village playing a complicated but tuneful rhythm, the different notes overlapping and combining. Villagers from the surrounding area congregated at Epulu, some of them from as far as fifty miles away, and dancing and feasting went on for over a week. During that time the boys were collected together, and last-minute appeals were made for young Yusefu, the Christian boy, to be allowed to join. His father settled

the matter by sending him to a mission school the far side of Mombasa.

The boys were not all cut on the same day, but over a period of two weeks. Akobo, the youngest son of Masisi, was the first to be cut, and with him went Masoudi, nephew of Ekianga. They were, at ten or eleven years of age, as brave as any adult, but they were tough children. It was different with little Sansiwake, one of Cephu's nephews. Sansiwake was one of the most beautiful children imaginable, and as beautiful and gentle in character as he was in appearance. He was soft-spoken, and had a voice as musical as his name. His eyes were the dark melting eyes of the *bolobo* antelope, as sensitive and as trusting. On this occasion they were as frightened as those of a young animal caught in a hunting net, struggling for its life. His body was as graceful and as delicate as that of a fawn, and his thoughts were only thoughts of kindness, of concern and love for his mother, Tamasa, whose face was eaten away by yaws, and for his father, Aberi, who was hideously ugly and who constantly brought ridicule on himself and his family.

Sansiwake was the only boy to cry when being taken away from his home. He cried not only for himself, but because his mother was crying bitterly at being parted from her son who was as much a man to her as her husband. Sansiwake was brought to the village, and his head was shaved as the first of a series of ritual acts symbolizing the casting off of an old life. Then Sabani appeared, dressed and painted in a terrifying manner, to smell out his next victim. His face was covered with a mask, his body was daubed with white clay, and his arms and legs were bound with great bundles of raffia so that as he danced he looked half animal and half bird. With him were a number of nkumbi drummers, beating a wild and ear-shattering tattoo, driving all women and uninitiated children into their houses, where they locked and barred the doors. Only little Sansiwake was left outside.

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VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

After Sabani had danced around him, with the drums getting louder and louder, he was picked up and carried by a villager to the stream where the cutting was to take place. Some boys were cut in the initiation camp, others in the center of the village, and some in the stream; it depended largely on the whim of the moment. In the camp there was a scaffold on which the other boys sat while the doctor cut, but down in the stream, a short distance into the forest, Sansiwake had to stand on the rocks, the cold water splashing over his feet. He was held by the arms and legs so that he would not be able to struggle, and his considerate uncle, Masalito, clapped a hand over his mouth so that his screams would not bring him disgrace in the eyes of the villagers. But Sansiwake could not stand the pain; perhaps Sabani was drunk and cut badly. Sansiwake bit Masalito and then screamed his head off, struggling until he almost broke loose. Two days later, when he was just beginning to recover, it was decided that he would have to be cut again, as Sabani had not done as he should. Shortly afterward the weakened and thoroughly dejected boy went down with pneumonia, and would have died if the Pygmies had not broken all the rules of the initiation camp and kept him warm and well fed.

He was the only one to suffer any ill effects, and his behavior would have brought him lasting disgrace had he been a villager. The Pygmies, however, showed only consideration and sympathy for Sansiwake, and criticized the villagers openly for their unnecessary carelessness and brutality. The villagers retorted that Sansiwake's illness was only the penalty for his not having behaved himself properly.

From the moment the boys enter the camp they are meant to stand on their own feet without any help from their relatives, but the older brothers and fathers of the Pygmy boys were constantly comforting and encouraging them, at the risk of being ridiculed themselves. Masalito, in particular, was not afraid of being sneered at by the villagers. One boy, Kaoya, who was cut in the camp, was beaten as he

made his way painfully to join the other boys, all sitting in a line on logs. Immediately after being cut they are made to sit down and join the others in singing one of the many work songs they will have to learn during the coming months. This takes their mind off the pain, which is all the more considerable because after the operation the wound is wrapped in a leaf containing a native medicine that is full of salt. Kaoya was very roughly handled, and Masalito ran up to him and put his arms around him, hugging him tight to give him strength. The villagers howled with laughter, but Masalito was more concerned with Kaoyo than with them.

Not long afterward the boys were made to dance, and then put to rest on a special bed made of split logs, laid side by side on a rough frame that kept them two feet or so off the ground. The boys lay face downward along the length of the logs, their heads resting on pillows made of plantain leaves. Over the bed there was a rough shelter, sloping down to the ground behind, but open all along the front and on two sides. From the roof was hung a sacred banana, which initiates and instructors would set swinging as an understood command for the boys to start singing. The boys were forbidden to touch the banana, being told they would die if they did.

There were all sorts of other taboos, or restrictions. To get wet, particularly by being outside when it rained, was sure to bring death. To eat certain foods was strictly prohibited. The boys had to eat without using their hands directly, spearing the food with sticks. They were forbidden to eat with their initiated relatives. The sound of the bull-roarer, a piece of wood that makes a strange whirring noise when spun around on the end of a cord, was meant to be the voice of a forest demon, and the boys had to show due respect and terror when they heard it.

During the daytime, when the villagers were present, either as instructors or just as visitors, the boys adhered faithfully to all these and many other rules. By their own rules, however, the villagers were

not allowed to sleep in the camp at night. Only the "fathers," that being understood to mean the real fathers and the older brothers of the boys, were allowed to sleep in the "place of the nkumbi." That meant, in this case, only Pygmies. The BaMbuti had different notions. Recognizing that I was anxious to be with them right through the whole period of seclusion, they invited me to join them. After all, they said, I was really the father of all the eight boys. In this way I became one of the *baganza,* the people of the initiation.

The invitation was not intended as a deliberate slight to the villagers; the Pygmies merely thought it would be fun, particularly as they were sure that I would keep them supplied with tobacco and palm wine and other luxuries. From their point of view no harm was being done. From the villagers' point of view, however, this breach of custom was likely to bring disaster not only on me but also on the rest of the baganza. Beyond issuing the gravest warnings, they made no attempt to discourage me and soon came to accept my presence.

So from the first day to the last I was with the nkumbi, day and night; and at night, when all the villagers had left, I learned what the nkumbi really means to the people of the forest. The moment their instructors were gone, and only Pygmies were left, the boys leaped from the bed where they were supposed to be sleeping and joined their fathers around the fire, eating forbidden foods in forbidden company and in a forbidden manner, using their fingers. One boy jumped onto a log and swung his arms around in imitation of someone swinging a bull-roarer, which of course he should never have seen. Others played their favorite game of punch ball with the sacred banana. A shower of rain was an invitation to run outside and wash off all the dirt that had accumulated during the day. The villagers not only forbade the candidates to get wet, even by washing, but they smeared them constantly with white clay, from head to foot, as a sign of their death as children. To the naturally clean Pygmies this was intolerable, and the boys were encouraged by their fathers to

P 881 177 take the first opportunity to wash it off. When the villagers questioned them in the morning, the boys invariably replied that they had been so cold during the night that they had huddled close together, and the clay had been rubbed off in this way. In fact, the men provided blankets for the boys, keeping themselves warm by lying close to the fires. Kenge and I slept at one end of the shelter, half underneath the log bed; most of the other adults slept outside.

C 881 563 P 881 177 Both the boys and their fathers enjoyed the chance to make fun, in a friendly way, of the villagers, but that was not their sole reason for deliberately breaking all the taboos. They behaved as they did because to them the restrictions were not only meaningless but belonged to a hostile world. The villagers hoped that the nkumbi would place the Pygmies directly under the supernatural authority of the village tribal ancestors; the Pygmies naturally took good care that nothing of the sort should happen, proving it to themselves by this conscious flaunting of custom.

C 881 769 The villagers believed that the initiate, Pygmy or otherwise, is everlastingly bound thereafter by all the laws of the tribe, sacred and secular. He is put into direct relationship with the supernatural, whose representatives on earth are the villagers themselves. If any Pygmy initiate offends a villager, therefore, he is also offending the supernatural—the ancestors—and will be duly punished by them. C [753] [752] The villagers live in such fear of the supernatural, with its power to bring down on an offender the curses of leprosy, yaws, dysentery and other diseases or to cause him to be injured by a falling tree, that they cannot conceive of any initiate's daring to offend the ancestors. That is why they believe that the nkumbi gives them ultimate control over their ever-troublesome servants who refuse to behave as servants should.

C 881 563 P 881 177 It is not quite so obvious why the Pygmies subject themselves to what they plainly consider an unnecessarily brutal ritual. The trials of the nkumbi candidate only begin with the actual circumcision. Dur-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

VILLAGE INITIATION AND MAGIC

During the succeeding months—usually two or three now instead of the former six or even twelve—the boys are subjected to one form of mild torture after another. The torture is sometimes mental rather than physical. For instance, one boy, whose father refused point blank to have anything to do with what he called "an empty, savage custom" but allowed his son to enter, was made to ridicule his father almost every daylight hour. The gentle little Sansiwake, who insisted on getting up from the hard wooden bed to rejoin his companions long before he was completely well, was made to pretend that he was big and strong, carrying heavy loads and imitating the performance of acts degrading to any Pygmy, but particularly so to this sensitive child. Each boy was put through some torture of this nature.

The physical ordeals sometimes start out as games but develop into cruel tests of physical endurance. A crouching dance that might be fun for a few minutes becomes agony after half an hour. A mild switching on the underside of the arm with light sticks is of no concern until, after several days, the skin becomes raw. And then the villagers notch the sticks so that they fold over and pinch the skin sharply, often drawing blood. When the boys have become used to being beaten with leafy branches, thorny bushes are substituted.

To the Pygmies this all seems harsh and unnecessary, and as far as their own children are concerned they keep a strict watch over them to see that the villagers do not go to the length that they sometimes do with village children, even if this brings them into some contempt. But to the villager this toughening-up process is essential and does not come naturally in the course of village life. The child has to be fitted for adult life, and this is what the nkumbi sets out to achieve. In a few months a boy becomes a man, tough and strong, physically and mentally. The process is not a pleasant one, but it is the only way in which, under tribal conditions, the goal can be achieved.

The Pygmy can understand and appreciate this, but the very nature of his own nomadic hunting and gathering existence provides

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

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881 563 866 861 P 881 177 866 861

all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles develop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games. Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

P 881 885 177

The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

P 881 882 177

There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence toward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children. P 881 88C 177

Far from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples. C 563 P 177

The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his first real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima. P 881 885

During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sansiwake—Aberi the ugly, Aberi who was so often the laughingstock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sansiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor. C 563 P 156 177

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could 000

Z 186 188 563 581 P 581

ever, a one-way process; no Negress could endure the pygmy way of living, and none of them ever marry pygmies.

The interplay between Negroes and pygmies may be illustrated by a number of examples in which they disagree on historical facts. The Negroes say that the pygmies once went naked, like animals. The pygmies hotly deny this, and assert that they always wore loin cloths. The Negroes admit that they themselves were once cannibals, but say that the pygmies ate more human flesh than they did. This too the pygmies deny; they claim that they never ate human flesh except when the Negroes gave it to them.

P Z 186 266 291 173

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Z 563 881 P 177 881

In addition to the exchange of food and, formerly, protection, which form the basis for Negro-pygmy interaction, there is another activity which helps to cement their relationship. The Negroes have a circumcision school, of the usual Negro variety. This school is held about once in four or five years. There is no specific interval; it is probable that they wait until there are enough boys ready to form a class of the right size. These boys are anywhere from nine to fourteen years of age. Now the pygmies associated with these Negroes may send their boys through this same school with the sons of their hosts. Thus, the pygmy boys are away from home several months, are in close association with the Negro boys, and are taught the same secrets that the Negro boys learn. At the end they are all circumcised together, and their parents come to the Negro village to dance and get drunk with the parents of the Negro boys.

Z P 561

The pygmies are thus age-graded like the Negroes. Each class has its own cheer, or song, as in American colleges. Each class also has its own name, such as "Hurricane" or "great army worm," depending on some event

[P. 325-A]

855 There is a
597 great deal of swapping children, fostering, and adoption. This takes place especially between sisters and between women who are friendly and work together. When a woman dies, her sister
[768] will normally take over her children, keeping the girls until they are ready for marriage. The boys join their father when they are old enough to hunt.

881 Among the pygmies living in my immediate neighborhood, there is no separate pygmy initiation ceremony. Girls are not publicly initiated at all, and as mentioned above, the boys go through the Negro bush school with the sons of their patrons. (See Negro-pygmy relations; p. 325.)

585 A marriage within the camp creates no disturbance in the relations of the group as a whole, and little between the individuals in particular, but an intercamp marriage does produce crises in the lives of those close to the principals, as well as of the principals themselves, for such a marriage requires ceremony.

585 Schebesta[8] describes one of the lat-
628 ter, in which the two groups of kin, complete with brides but not with grooms, met in the forest away from either camp. They set up their huts near each other, but in separate bivouacs, and feasted and danced *separately* for three days. Then the two groups came together and the elder men of each group brought the two brides face to face and gave them advice—to keep the camp full of food, to be polite and friendly, to be particularly thoughtful of old people and children, to live in peace and bear many offspring. After this excellent advice, each girl was led by the kinfolk of her new husband to the camp in which she was to live, and there she joined her new husband. She brought along with her a few girls of her own group to ease the strain of so

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 134–135.

[P 340-A]

[ARCHERS]

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

858 Only when children approach the age of
593 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the
[861] same age (and older). During this period there is no formal training (Schebesta, 1948, 415 ff.), but boys and girls alike learn all there is to be learned by simple emulation and by assisting their parents and elders in various tasks.

• 882 At puberty the boys break completely away
883 from their mothers who have no more to do with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[NET HUNTERS]

[P. 216-A]

857 One of their favorite sports is fishing, for which they use small wooden floats with a piece of vine attached, similar to that described by Burrows (1898). Later they split into groups according to sex as well as age. The boys, until they are allowed to take part in the hunt itself, carry out imitation hunts around the camp.
881 Even at this age, however, and after under-
882 going the *nkumbi* initiation, they are still under
593 the authority of their mothers. Unlike the information given by Schebesta for the archers, the boys in a net-hunting band do not break completely away from their mothers until they become full hunters, which may be as much as two or more years after their *nkumbi*.

868 Education is through imitation, and both boys and girls have miniature hunting-and-gathering utensils and may, in addition, make miniature replicas of any adult possession (Fig. 45).

[P. 256 - C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and 575
even returned to the care and authority of their 881
mothers. None of these boys was allowed to
take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. 882
The reason—they were not "hunters," they had 885
not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large 224
enough to be worth distributing among the [575]
band, as opposed to the small animals caught by children and that are not worth dividing except within the family). To kill "real animals," usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to be allowed to wander away from his father during the hunt and to try his luck at either end of the semicircle of nets, where animals might escape and be shot with bow and arrow, speared, or caught with the hands.

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on 575
a combination of physical growth and prowess. 885
Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full member; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*; like the *elima* it is a religious association without priests. There is no ritual to be performed; all members play the same part in the meetings of the association with the exception of one who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The choice invariably falls on the best performer present, without regard for age or other qualifications.

PLATE 28 [1]

855 PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

851 a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

882 b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities
885 of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married.
202 Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

[1],/Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

.1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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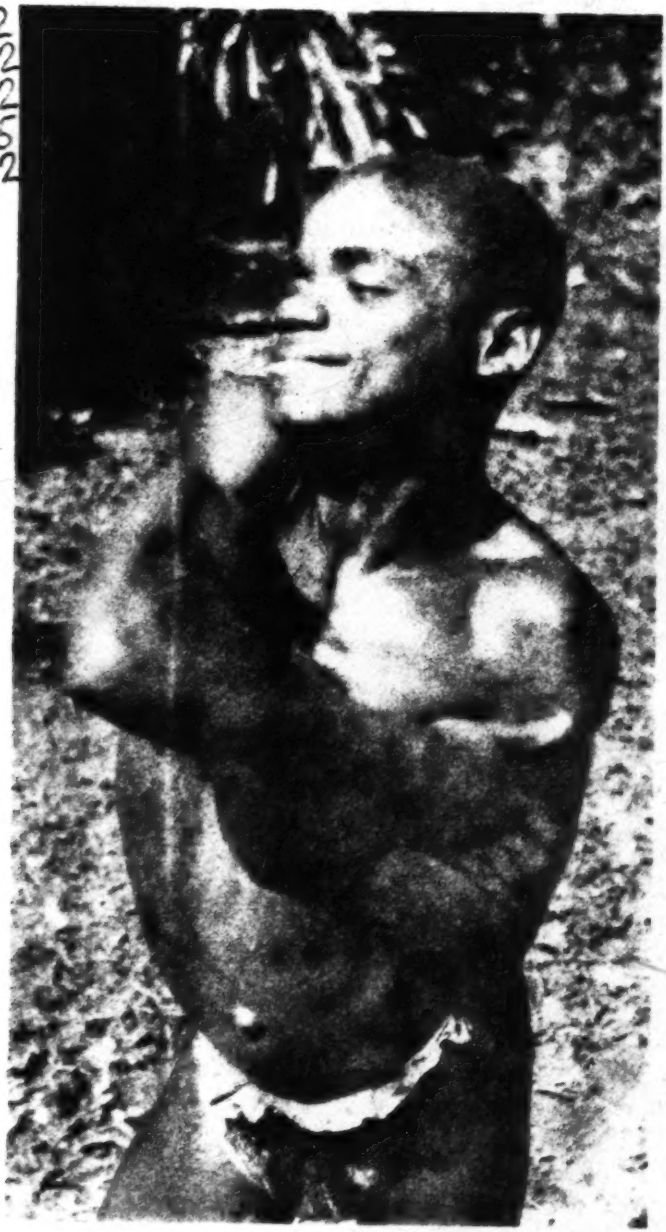

/Plate 28-B/

/Caption appears on p.288/

[P.289-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P.276-F]

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32. Masisi stops on his way to the hunt to try for a monkey in the treetops. For net-hunters the bow and arrow is only an incidental means of food-getting. As seen here, poisoned arrows are preferred to those with metal tips provided by the villagers.

224
41
[882]

33. Two youths, armed with spears, carry their fathers' hunting nets. They will not have nets of their own until they are married but may, on occasion, take the place of their fathers on the hunt.

would come from Cephu's camp, for the amount of interest that Cephu showed in the molimo was a topic for constant discussion and criticism. Masimongo, who had relatives in Cephu's camp, always upheld him when he did not appear himself or when his little group made a poor showing. But Manyalibo allowed no such excuses, and his voice carried much more weight. He said, good conservative that he was, that all men should take part in the molimo regardless of what camp they belonged to, if they were anywhere near at all. Then he went through the mime showing what would have happened in the old days, to anyone who did not attend and was found sleeping. I thought momentarily of Kenge.

But the molimo was not only a matter of singing late into the night. Each morning, too, there was activity, though of a different nature. The evenings were serious, the older men taking the lead in the singing and leaving the dancing largely to the younger men. Sometimes there was a lot of horseplay, but the older men, like Moke, kept an eye on what was going on and held the youngsters in check. Often the molimo fire was made into two fires, the older men sitting at one and the youngsters at the other, and then all the dancing went on at the youths' fire while the elders sat at theirs and just sang, and watched their sons with dreamy eyes.

But in the mornings the youths came into their own completely. Before the first glimmer of light filtered through into the camp, those of us who had managed to get to sleep were waked by a violent and raucous trumpeting from just outside the camp. This brought cries of protest from the older men. Some of them appeared sleepily at the entrance to their huts and shouted, "Animal! Go away and keep quiet and let me sleep!" but to no avail. From the far end of the camp, near the path leading to Cephu's clearing, a wild cavalcade of youths swept into view, shouting and yelling, clustered so thickly that it was impossible to see the trumpet they were carrying. But it was there, with Amabosu blowing it. It blasted and shrilled and

765 growled and bellowed, and it rampaged around the camp, overturn-
• 882 ing any of the crude chairs that had been left outside, scattering the
534 remains of fires in all directions, and beating on the roofs of huts to
533 wake everyone up. Sometimes the youths seemed to divide at random into two sides and have a sort of tug of war with the trumpet, some trying to lead it in one direction, some in the other. It was not a real contest of strength, only acting. I wondered if perhaps this represented the original struggle for possession of the molimo, a struggle which some say was between Pygmies and animals, or others say was between men and women.

765 Ekianga took a prominent part in these morning affrays. He used
688 to lead the youths, always holding two spears, one under each arm,
536 pointing down at the ground as though he were looking for any sleeping person who should have been taking part in the activity. Sometimes he acted it out, stopping as though he saw an offender. Then he danced about and finally jabbed the spear blades at the earth.

765 I said to Kenge that this was what would happen to him if he
688 went off and took my bed and blanket again before the evening
183 singing had finished. Kenge laughed loudly and shouted across the
115 camp what I had said. But then he became serious and said that he
123 had been singing all the time until Moke had first said he wanted to go to sleep. "When the old men want to sleep it is all right for us to sleep," he said. Then he added laconically, "And of course if we are tired it is all right for us to go to sleep, naturally." He thought the conversation not very interesting, so he gave an animal call and ran with great leaps and bounds, like the antelope he was named for, across the camp to join in the tug of war.

765 If anyone had given offense the previous day, usually by being
578 too argumentative, the youths in the morning rampage paid particular attention to the offender's hut. Cephu's camp of course came in for the most attention, and although Cephu complained loudly

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

C 881 563 866 861 all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles develop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games. P 881 177 866 861 Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

P 881 885 177 The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their major reason for allowing themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

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3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children. P 881 882 177

Far from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples. C 563 P 177

The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his first real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima. P 881 885

During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sansiwake—Aberi the ugly, Aberi who was so often the laughingstock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sansiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor. C 563 P 156 177

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could 000

[ARCHERS]

[P.179-A] ADOLESCENCE

858 Only when children approach the age of
593 puberty does the very close family solidarity begin to weaken. Girls fall more under the influence of their mothers; boys, under that of their lineage. At this age also, the sexes are segregated for the first time. Young boys of different families cease following their mothers and sisters and group themselves to organize hunts for rats, mice, and other small slow game in the neighborhood of the camp. Tree climbing is also a favorite sport among the boys. But while the boys become more alienated from their mothers, the young girls continue to be as closely attached to them as ever, though, like the boys, they tend to group together with others of the
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At puberty the boys break completely away
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883 with them, writes Schebesta (1948, 424), than cook their meals. The adolescent girls develop their flirtatious ways, the boys develop their ability as hunters, and thus both prepare themselves for married life.

PLATE 31 $\frac{2}{4}$

MANUFACTURE OF BARKCLOTH, STRIPPING,
EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

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287
412
883
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Barkcloth manufacture is predominantly the work of youths or young hunters. The first step, after the strip of bark is cut from a vine, is the stripping of the outer bark. Here a youth uses his leg as a platform for support and works with a village-made machete. In the absence of a metal blade, it is said by the Mbuti that they use slivers of bamboo or sharp stones as knives.

1,/Plate 31 appears on page 295--Analyst/

[P.294]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

142
362
227
412
883
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177

/Plate 31/
[P.295] /Caption appears on p. 294/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

bers of each age level may be *apua'i* to each other doubly underlines the importance of this age grouping as a structural principle of their society, because it not only effectively allies members of the same age group, but it cuts across any unilineal descent pattern. Even though, if pressed, any one *apua'i* can and will trace his relationship to almost any other, through either cognatic or affinal lines, among themselves this is never done. The functions of the age group, also, have little to do with kinship.

The age group forms the next unit above the nuclear family, each having its own functions and its own sphere of authority. Above the age group one might consider the band to be divided into alliances of age groups, though their function would be less easy to define. However, such alliances do take place, generally in major disputes, where youths and children might ally against hunters and elders. Characteristically, disputes concerning premarital sexual activity, betrothal and *bopi* (playground) activity are the major occasions for such alliances. But the same element may be seen at work during the religious *molimo* festival, where the group of adult men that sing around a fire at night may divide the hearth into two or three fires. The unmarried youths nearly always have one fire for themselves around which they dance their erotic dances; the hunters (the younger married men) may have a fire of their own, or they may join the *mangesé*, the elders, men who are no longer as active in the hunt as they used to be.

Young married couples are held responsible for reproduction, but only to a limited extent for the rearing and education of their children, for beyond the age of three or four a child becomes the responsibility of the band as a whole. As an economic unit the family is divided into the appropriate age groups as a co-operative part of the total band. Effectively much of its economic activity is directly for its own individual benefit, but there is nearly always some sharing even when there is no necessity for sharing, to emphasize the communal rights to forest produce. As a political unit the family only has internal jurisdiction of the most minimal kind. The punishment of a wife or a child, or the complaint of a child about its parents, quickly becomes a matter for communal discussion. As a religious unit the family is of little significance indeed. But every nuclear family is expected to participate in religious festivals, as symbolized when the *molimo* hearth is made up by taking embers from every family hearth, and when a camp is moved each family carefully takes an ember from

594 its own hearth to kindle its own fire in the new camp. The responsi-
621 bility of members of a nuclear family in times of crisis, such as birth, puberty, marriage and death, does not differ much from the responsibility of the band as a whole, the difference being one of degree or intensity.

561 The age group functions as a major institution of education, in-
86 structing the group junior to it in its ways, preparing it for advance to the next, their own, level. Thus the care and education of children rests largely with youths and the oldest of the elders. Youths and hunters depend on each other in the joint hunting and gathering activities, the youths learning from their mothers and fathers all they will soon need to know as hunters themselves. Hunters gradually associate more and more with the *mangesé* (literally, "the great ones") around the evening fires, to listen to the talk of the elders and, in time, to participate.

561 As an economic unit the age group is of supreme importance. Chil-
857 dren scavenge and help supply their own needs through fishing, trap-
883 ping, snaring and any other forms of collecting or hunting within
[476] their means. In this they may at times be helped by the youths. The youths are of vital importance to the hunt, the girls acting as beaters with their mothers, and also collecting, while the boys stand guard at the extremities of the circle of nets, having assisted in setting up the nets. Youths may also be expected to perform a number of chores such as fetching wood and water into the camp. The hunters are the prime unit responsible for the sustenance of the band; the *mangesé* are absolved from such responsibilities and may expect to be fed, housed and clothed by the younger age groups.

561 Politically each age group has informal jurisdiction over its mem-
626 bers, utilizing ridicule and ostracism, sometimes driving a member
627 to seek acceptance in the lower age level, or justification by the upper. For a lower age level to ridicule or ostracize a member of a higher level is a supreme condemnation and a most powerful sanction. Fur-
[765] ther, it will be seen that part of the *molimo* festival is a morning tour of the camp by the youths, carrying the *molimo* trumpet and disguised by leaves and branches, at which time they single out the hut of any troublemaker, however young or old, and threaten to tear it to pieces. Even if there is no such troublemaker, the youths will go from hut to hut stripping a few leaves off the roof of each, causing other minor damage, simply representing the accepted principle of authority, of law and order.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [283] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 732 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

gone there would have been enough beaters. As usual the women 224
were loud in their complaint, and two of the hunters who had stayed 46
behind with their nets now joined the side of Pepei and said that they 626
had not gone because the women made so much noise, all the game 578
was scared away and the hunt would have been empty anyway. Even Cephu had meat (a highly dramatic statement, for Cephu was usually meatless, or considered so), and the neighboring Lesé pygmies had meat, and everyone knew what poor hunters they were. But we were all starving because everyone was lazy.

The discussion went on for about an hour, it being made an excuse to raise all manner of minor sources of discontent. The hunt did not [535]
go off again, but in the afternoon there was a big hunting dance, and [482]
the next day the women made a special show of setting out, carrying their husbands' nets and spears, at least until they were out of the camp.

9. While many of the disputes concerning food arise out of gen- 578
eral shortage or dissatisfaction, usually owing to poor hunting, and [261]
are made occasion for bringing up almost any topic, they are more often made occasion for criticizing specific groups. Thus children will [857]
find themselves criticized for making too much noise in their playground, or for splashing too loudly in the stream and so frightening the game away. Youths are accused of idling and playing with girls on [883]
the fringes of the hunt instead of guarding the edges against escaping game. Women are blamed for being lazy or inefficient as beaters, men for relying too much on women "who have other work to do." Elders are blamed for not keeping the camp quiet while the hunt is away, and always the whole camp is blamed for causing poor hunting by not singing and dancing properly.

There are innumerable petty squabbles over division of food, but 626
these are always settled by those concerned. Never once have I seen 578
such a squabble become an affair for the whole band to discuss. The 224
only cases of disputes concerning food that have centered around specific individuals, and have not been mere expressions of marital disharmony, have concerned hunting "crimes." These are few and far between, and rather than accuse someone of being a poor hunter it is more often just pointed out that his net is always empty. There was one occasion, however, on which Cephu set his net up inside the hunting circle, therefore in a better position to catch the game being driven in by the beaters. A full description of this is given elsewhere (Turnbull, 1961, Chapter 5). Its essentials are as follows:

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

 836

time. They sleep together every night. Why do they not make up their 578
minds and get married? Then Madyadya can have Appiamomba's 835
sister for wife and there will be no more noise." 61

The next day the issue was taken up by the elders, who gathered together and called on Appiamomba and Mebapepé to say what they wanted. The question of relationship was quickly dismissed by Tungana saying that nobody knew whether Kayo and Ebundu were brothers or not; who was alive to know, so what did it matter? It was "completely far away." The only question remaining was one of intent, and all the elders agreed that the children had been troubling their parents and spoiling the hunt with their noise, and that they must make up their minds and either get married or stop playing around. Appiamomba seemed unsure and said he would ask Mebapepé in his own time. Mebapepé, under pressure, denied that she loved Appiamomba and said she did not want to marry him at all, or indeed have anything else to do with him. She burst into tears and [152] ran to a friend's house.

This relieved the tension somewhat, but Tungana brought up the 578
fact that there were far too many young people around who should be 579
married, and he started naming them. Each in turn began to state his 152
case, but various jealousies quickly came to the surface, and fighting 883
broke out among the youths and their girl friends. Tungana and Moké [582]
shrugged their shoulders and retired to their huts, sitting outside and watching with interest. The parents mostly left the scene completely, Manyalibo loudly complaining that the noise would kill him completely. Ekianga remained and tried to restore order, but quickly became involved himself. He shouted for Kengé to get a stick and beat some of the youths away. Kengé shouted back, "Later," and ran to join the other uninvolved youths on a hillock, to get a better view.

By evening the fight had ended, and everyone was too exhausted 578
to renew any discussion. Moké and Tungana suggested it might be 833
good to break camp and go and visit the village for a few days. Kengé 834
said he thought this was an excellent idea, for then all the girls could 177*
sleep with the village men and that would keep them quiet for a time. [829]
He diverted the conversation to a discussion of village sex techniques, and the camp quickly regained its good humor. The next day half the band left for the village, the rest going further off into the forest. Without exception, the five young couples in question were divided by this move, though nobody referred to the fact.

17. A recently married Mbuti girl, while in the village, slept with a 0

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P. 276-G]

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34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

[881]
[885]
[593]

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

The children were running about in the semi-darkness, laughing and playing, without a care in the world; only a few of the older children, eleven or twelve years of age, helped their parents. The older girls carried an extra basket bulging with plantation foods, or else they carried a baby brother or sister on one hip, bending their heads every now and again to reassure their charge with a kiss full of the warm affection of children. Some of the older boys carried their fathers' hunting nets, proudly, leaving the more experienced hunters free to set off in pursuit of any game they might come across on the way.

Fires blazed in front of all the huts, and those who had not already eaten were quickly swallowing what they could before setting off. Two of Ekianga's wives, Arobanai and Loku, were already helping each other, the one supporting the basket on the other's back while the tump line around the forehead was tested for comfort and strength. In the forest, people cannot carry loads on their heads as they do in open country, because of overhanging branches and the frequent obstacles that have to be climbed over or crawled under. So a tump line is used by the Pygmies—a strip of bark a few inches wide, wound around the bundle and passed over the head. The women support this tump line by the forehead, sometimes easing the strain with their hands, but always with the head down, stooping to take more of the load on the back. The men, if they have to carry a load, generally let the tump line lie across the chest and over each shoulder, just to be different from the women.

I went over to where a group of men were drinking *liko,* a brew of forest berries and nuts and herbs, bitter, but warm and stimulating. They suggested that I should go on ahead with Kenge and a couple of other youths. The women would take all day to get there anyway, they said, even though some had already left. They would stop on the way and collect mushrooms and roots for the evening meal.

Only Ekianga sat silent, outside his hut, watching his third and youngest wife, Kamaikan, cooking his breakfast. He ignored his two

the molimo had begun, and we were in a camp much closer to the village than we had been at Apa Lelo . . . Only about two hours' walk away. Cephu, as usual, had his camp at a distance, but rather farther removed than usual, and we saw less of him than ever. The next morning we found that he had abandoned his camp the night before and gone to join a hunting group farther to the west; he wanted no part of returning to the village. 361

Even the children were depressed and sat around in silent little groups fitfully playing with spinning tops made from slices of forest nuts. Every now and again one of them got in the way of an adult and was severely smacked. His cries brought only a sterner cuffing, and by nightfall the camp was filled with wailing children and bad-tempered adults. Only the youths seemed cheerful. For them the village meant tobacco, palm wine, the wild erotic dancing the Pygmies love to perform for the villagers, and a relaxation from the tensions of the forest. They would no longer be hunting, so they would be free from the restrictions that way of life imposed. They would no longer be in the forest, so they would be free from its ever-present authority. If the villagers thought the BaMbuti then came under their authority, that was their mistake. 857 152 883 177 152

While the youths dreamed of the fun they were going to have, particularly with the girls in the elima house, all the adults were silent. Kenge, who although he was older still liked to associate with the youths, stood boastfully in the middle of a group of admirers and talked of all the village girls he was going to sleep with. And not only one a night, but two, three, perhaps even thirty. "And I am going to drink palm wine until there is no more to drink. I am going to steal all the palm wine there is in the village and drink it all myself, to make me strong. But I won't get drunk, so when they come to me and say, 'Kenge, why have you drunken all our palm wine?' I shall just say, 'You committer of incest' "—Kenge had a very descriptive word for this—" 'if I had drunk all your palm wine 883 177 521 273 [836]

883 179 52 [273] would I be able to stand?' And I shall give them money to go and buy themselves beer."

"And where will you get the money?" asked young Kaoya, trying hard to believe that his idol was telling the truth.

"Their wives will pay me for sleeping with them, of course!" answered Kenge, and he went into a dubious pantomime illustrating just how he was going to do this.

554 52 [152] Manyalibo, who had been more morose than anyone else, and who was lying on his hunting net at the kumamolimo, propped himself up and shouted across the camp. "You, Teleabo Kenge, you speak of the great man you are going to be when you get to the village. How is it that you cannot be such a man here in the forest? Why do you spend all your time with children? Why do you leave the molimo [765] at night and go to sleep like a suckling baby? How long have you been out of your mother's stomach? Come here at once and beat the banja for the molimo."

765 This is one of the few occasions on which Kenge did not answer back. He hesitated a second, then called out, "I am coming, Father." He went running over, picked up the banja, and started beating them for all he was worth. He called out to all the men to listen to him, not to be so lazy, to come to the kumamolimo and sing. Was not he, Teleabo Kenge, beating the banja? And was this not the last night of the molimo in the forest?

765 533 [535] The singing that night was perhaps the best it had ever been. The molimo sang the most wistful songs, and the men answered it with love. When some of the youngsters began to dance Moke shook his head and told them to leave that for the village. Tonight was for singing. And just before dawn, when the molimo was about to leave the fireside, it sang to each of us in turn. It caressed the melody with love, and passed over our heads, one by one. As it left, Moke came around the group and stood a moment in front of each of us. His hands fluttered lightly around our bodies, occasionally touch-

857 868 them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a [883] supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and 883 will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up 561 into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then 868 teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these 882 swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

882 As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense [232] of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although [836] they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor [584] by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

224 After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his 884 mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will 885 add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting 561 prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with [422] additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared be- [581] tween the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern 88 the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to 561 say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

[NET HUNTERS]

881 mony the boys returned to their hunting band and resumed their previous status.

885 Among the net hunters the Mbuti boys do
[575] not participate fully in the proceedings of the *molimo* society until they have proved their prowess as hunters. Putnam does not mention any such elaborate ceremony as that described by Schebesta for the archers, to mark the killing of his first game by a youth, but such an event is simply received among the net hunters with much acclaim and, if possible, feasting and
[304] dancing. It may also be accompanied by the cutting of the tattoo marks on the boy's forehead.

881 It seems that with the net hunters the *nkūmbi*
177 serves merely to give status in villager society.
17 The Mbuti have different forms of initiation
[554] into the religious associations of their own men and women; the *molimo* and *elima*, respectively. They are, at least, forms of initiation practiced

[P. 219 - B]

[P. 256-C]

to their previous status in the Pygmy camp and 575
even returned to the care and authority of their 881
mothers. None of these boys was allowed to 882
take part in subsequent meetings of the *molimo*. 885
The reason—they were not "hunters," they had 224
not killed "real animals" (i.e., animals large [575]
enough to be worth distributing among the band, as opposed to the small animals caught by children and that are not worth dividing except within the family). To kill "real animals," usually antelope, a boy must be old enough to be allowed to wander away from his father during the hunt and to try his luck at either end of the semicircle of nets, where animals might escape and be shot with bow and arrow, speared, or caught with the hands.

Entry into the *molimo* therefore depends on 575
a combination of physical growth and prowess. 885
Boys seem to qualify by the time they reach the age of 14. Once a member, one is a full member; there is no hierarchy within the *molimo*; like the *elima* it is a religious association without priests. There is no ritual to be performed; all members play the same part in the meetings of the association with the exception of one who is delegated to play the *molimo* horn. The choice invariably falls on the best performer present, without regard for age or other qualifications.

[P. 257-A]

789 For the net hunters, the *molimo* is their only
575 means of dealing with the unknown, with situa-
796 tions for which they have no practical, immedi-
ately effective remedy. Individuals may and do
indulge in the spontaneous practice of sympa-
thetic magic, but this is informal and unsys-
tematized. The *molimo* (and the *elima* to a
lesser extent) may be considered "magical" in
that the meeting of the association in proper
circumstances is believed to restore normality
to a situation that has in some way deviated.
[562] The "proper circumstances" to which I refer
(858) seem to be the non-participation of women and
children, the attendance of all adult male mem-
[885] bers of the band, the use of special songs and
(533) the *molimo* horn, persistence in nocturnal meet-
ings of the association, and constant reiteration
of the songs until normality is restored. As far
[784] as is known, although certainty is lacking, the
meeting of the association, which may last for
a month, is not accompanied by any taboos on
hunting or gathering, eating, or sexual activity.
[562] Some doubt exists also as to the position of
women with regard to the *molimo*.

With the *elima* it is similar. All adult women 575
are members, and participation is compulsory 796
in one's own camp or when visiting another. [885]
Communication with the forest God is again
established by means of songs, special and sa- [533]
cred to the *elima*. However, the men take part. [776]
The *elima* meets on occasions of major concern [778]
to womenfolk—birth, arrival at the age of pu-
berty, marriage, and death. Thus at birth and
death, both the *elima* and the *molimo* are con-
cerned. (As mentioned, however, the occasion
of birth is little marked by ritual of any kind.)
Both associations meet in the forest camp but
out of sight of each other. The *elima* meets in
the large *elima* hut or in a cluster of neighboring
huts. Young children may be present. The ex- [858]
ception, when the men take part in the meeting
of the *elima*, is during the initiation of a girl.

In the survey we give an account of *elima* 881
initiation (p. 216). If the *nkumbi* is not the ini- 885
tiation into the *molimo*, we must look elsewhere 224
for this. When a boy kills his first "real animal," 575
he is immediately acclaimed as a hunter, and

[P. 257-D]

[P. 258-A]

881 hunters are *de facto* members of the *molimo*. I
885 have never witnessed nor been told of any for-
224 mal rite introducing the new hunter to the asso-
575 ciation, and I do not believe that there is any such rite. The boy already knows all the *molimo* songs and has probably been allowed, for the past year or so, to sit with the men during the informal meetings of the association. The only
881 act that might be regarded as a formal token of
885 initiation is the cutting of three sets of three
304 vertical slits in the flesh of the forehead, each
575 side of the eyes or above the eyebrows, and above the nose. The flesh is gouged out with an arrow, and a black paste is rubbed in. The wound heals smoothly, leaving black streaks under the skin. The operation is performed without any formality by one of the "great hunters," that is, one who has killed buffalo or elephant. The initiate, if he can be called such, becomes the immediate object of interest to the womenfolk, as he is now considered marriageable. But the marks themselves do not qualify him for membership in the *molimo*, nor does their absence debar him from taking part. All that seems to be required is public recognition of his having killed "real game," marked by the kind of feasting and dancing that always follows a particularly successful hunt.

PLATE 26 [1]

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat [292] is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [301] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

[1], /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[P 284]

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 26-B/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

1: Turnbull E-4, 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 28 [1]

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Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

a. An Mbuti hunter and child. Every child has a father in every hunter, even in such a case as this, in which the child's mother was a member of the band until she married a villager, who fathered the boy. Such children are brought up in the village, as villagers, and never become members of an Mbuti band, however much affection they might receive when the hunters visit the village.

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b. A youth, shortly to become a hunter. He will already be assuming the responsibilities of adulthood, though he is unlikely to own a hunting net of his own until he is married. Elbow clapping is a major means of signaling through the forest. By flexing the elbow against the side of the chest the sound box is enlarged or compressed, causing a variation in pitch, which, when combined with rhythmic variations, allows for the sending of reasonably complex messages. The result of a hunt can be quickly relayed back to the camp in this way.

1,/Plate 28 appears on page 289--Analyst/

[P.288]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 28-B/

/Caption appears on p.288/

[P.289-B]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

them. Youths join the older children at this game, but never in a supervisory capacity.

Youths may also join the children on their swings in the *bopi*, and will almost certainly build their swings for them, climbing high up into adjacent trees to drape a long liana between them. They then teach the younger children the wild somersaulting games on these swings that are particularly characteristic of the honey season. On the other side the youths equally often join the hunters but, again, always as a separate group, sometimes participating fully, but still as youths. And as youths they continue the process already begun in childhood, of growing more away from their nuclear families and together as an age group. Their hunting and scavenging abilities are greater, and they sometimes even maintain a self-sufficient food economy. As youths they are allowed to stay up at night, instead of retiring with their mothers, and they build their own fire near the hunters' fire and cook their own food and sing and dance, sometimes with the hunters and elders, sometimes separately.

As youths they are also given increasing responsibility, especially in the economic life of the band. They may listen to the discussions of the hunters and elders, but even if they make comments, as they do, they are not readily listened to unless it is a matter pertaining to their age group. Then they are required to be able to voice their opinions and cite precedents. They are expected to show an adult sense of responsibility in matters concerning sex and marriage, and although they may flirt quite openly and even audaciously, they never "play house," and not until after the *elima* will a girl again show her favor by cooking for a boy. Then it is tantamount to an admission of betrothal.

After marriage a boy acquires a net. It may be made for him by his mother, or his father may give him part of his net to which he will add, with his wife's help. He has already demonstrated his hunting prowess or he would not be married, but now he is a full hunter with additional responsibilities. Whereas economic activity is shared between the hunters and youths, it is the hunters who ultimately make the decisions concerning camp life, and about the hunt. Where to go for the daily hunt, when to move camp, to what region, how to deal with threats of physical danger, and how to surmount physical problems; such are the questions the hunter has to face. They all concern the band as a whole. Nonphysical dangers and problems—that is to say, moral, psychological and spiritual issues, those that affect the

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders.

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men.

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the

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Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship. 58 621 602

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels. 561 621 [571]

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation. 881 885 581 561

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition. 888 561

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual 621 613 561 621 [582] [591] [181]

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Mbuti

[P 276-G]

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34. A youth, recently initiated, is still considered far from manhood in the forest. Here he helps an older brother set up the net.

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123 It began to rain, and Njobo decided that he was not going to stay
304 and get wet, so he left. Moke was on the point of doing the same when Kolongo returned. Obviously anxious to get the whole thing
[152] over with as little ceremony as possible and return to his warm dry hut, he rubbed the black ash-paste hard into the cuts until it filled them and congealed the blood that still flowed. And there it is today, ash made from the plants of the forest, a part of the forest that is a part of the flesh, carried by every self-respecting Pygmy male. And as long as it is with me it will always call me back.

The women thought it a great joke when I finally got back to camp, wet and still rather shaky. They crowded around to have a
[152] look and burst into shrieks of laughter. They said that now I was a
[885] real man with the marks of a hunter, so I would have to get married and then I would never be able to leave. Moke looked slyly at me. He had not explained that the marks had quite that significance.

123 It was later that evening when the men were singing that I heard
533 the molimo. By then I had learned to speak the language quite well,
534 and I had heard them discussing whether or not to bring the molimo out; there was some opposition on the grounds that it was "a thing of the forest," and not of the village, but old Moke said it was good for me to hear it before I left, as it would surely not let me stay long away but would bring me safely back.

First I heard it call out of the night from the other side of the Nepussi River, where three years earlier I had helped Pat Putnam build a dam. The dam was still there, though breached by continuous flooding. The hospital where Pat had given his life lay just beyond, now an overgrown jungle, only a few crumbling vine-covered walls left standing, the rest lost in a wilderness of undergrowth. Somewhere over there, in the darkness, the molimo now called; it sounded like someone singing but it was not a human voice. It was a deep, gentle, lowing sound, sometimes breaking off into a quiet falsetto, sometimes growling like a leopard. As the men sang

765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly to Masimongo and Masisi, that the molimo had already sung to me
[885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lelo, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Ausu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was
[487] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

881 533 *were* women. They sang right through the evening and now and then stood up and danced in a bashful circle around one of the fires. 881 They sang songs whose words had no particular significance, but 885 which in themselves were of the greatest significance, being songs 533 sung only by adult women. That was why so many of the mothers and grandmothers had assembled, to welcome their daughters into their midst again, no longer as children, but as friends and partners in adult life. Some of the women looked sad, for they knew that [591] this meant that the girls would soon get married, and then they would almost certainly leave to join their husbands in other camps.

881 Akidinimba was very different from her usual boisterous self. She 885 was still self-assured, and she bounced her breasts up and down as 157 flagrantly as ever, but perhaps she was subdued by the thought that she was no longer the leader of a group of young girls, but only a young and inexperienced member of womanhood, with all the responsibilities this entailed.

881 Kidaya too was thoughtful. While the others sang Kidaya sat 533 with her back to them, fondling a large clay cooking pot. She tapped 415 on it with her fingers, keeping time to the music. Then she drew it close and held the mouth of the pot against her stomach, bending her head down to listen to the effect. It evidently pleased her, because she continued the experiment by taking hold of her breasts and forcing them into the mouth of the pot, squirming around until she was comfortable. Then she moved her body rhythmically, producing a variety of curious sounds, not only in the tone of the drumming of her hands, but by making sucking noises as the air was forced in and out. When she tired of that she put the pot between her knees, and sang quietly into the mouth of it, getting a deep reverberating effect. This sounded so much like the molimo that the men started, and one of the women turned and said something sharply to Kidaya. 881 Kidaya herself was a little startled and put the pot away from her. 152 She relapsed into a thoughtful mood, slowly and deliberately rubbing 302

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

herself with her hands, wiping off all the beautiful decorations so laboriously painted on her body by her friends. When the singing ended and the girls retired for the night, Akidinimba was still as decorative as when she first appeared, but Kidaya was just a mass of streaked and dirty gray. And there were tears in her eyes.

During the last week the elima battles reached their highest pitch, both sides making the most of the opportunity while it lasted. The elima was, on the surface, a pretty happy-go-lucky affair, and what went on inside the hut was best left to the imagination. But in fact it all had a very definite purpose, and was closely supervised by the watchful eyes of Asofalinda and Mambunia. For the Pygmies, the elima is not just a puberty rite for girls; it is a celebration of adulthood, and just as much for boys as for girls. For Akidinimba and Kidaya certain physical changes had taken place which marked them as women, but for boys there are no such self-evident changes. They have to prove their manhood. Village boys do this by entering the initiation schools, but even though Pygmies enter the same schools, it is for a different purpose, quite unconnected with adulthood as they see it. For them the elima serves the purpose, or at least a part of it.

In the elima, the boy has to show considerable courage to fight his way into the house, after he has been invited. In the last week the women maintain constant guard outside, and they are well supplied with all sorts of ammunition. If they want to keep any particular boy away from their daughters they are perfectly capable of doing it. And when a boy finally succeeds in breaking his way through he still has to face a possible beating from the girls inside. If he has not been invited by having been beaten beforehand, he will certainly have to go through it now.

As well as this, in order to prove himself a man, the boy has to kill "a real animal." That is to say, not a small one, such as a child might kill, but one of the larger antelopes, or even a buffalo, so prov-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 ing that he is not only capable of feeding his own family but also able
885 to help feed the older members of the group who can no longer fend
224 for themselves.

881 Once a boy has gained access to the elima hut he may flirt or
836 even sleep with the girl who invited him. The elima gives an oppor-
584 tunity for boys and girls to get to know each other intimately, and such friendships often end in marriage. On the other hand, it gives two lovers a chance to discover that they are unsuited to each other
881 before becoming betrothed officially. From what I was told, by older
836 men and women as well as by the bachelors who took part in this elima, it is even possible to have intercourse, but with certain restrictions. These restrictions must be effective in preventing conception, because nowhere have I ever heard of a girl becoming pregnant in an elima house. A boy may sleep with a girl only if she consents. The tacit consent of her mother has already been given by his having been allowed to gain access to the elima house. If he sleeps with her then he must not leave the house and has to stay there until the festival is over, subject to the same restrictions as the girls. But he may decide on just a mild flirtation. Or he may—and this is considered a master move—simply turn around and leave the house without having paid the slightest attention to any of the girls. Whatever happens, there are always young women, such as Kondabate, to keep an eye on their younger companions and see that they do not get into trouble.

881 The conclusion of this particular elima was an anticlimax. The
777 Pygmies are not a ritualistically minded people; to them the im-
182 portant thing about any festival is that they should openly express their emotions and accept the realities of whatever situation the
765 festival marks. Instead of living in constant fear of the spirits of the
533 dead, performing elaborate rituals to remove the souls of the departed as far away as possible and as quickly as possible, the Pygmies sing
881 in their memory for months on end, during the molimo. And so,
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3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

during the elima, they sing to celebrate the blessing of potential motherhood conferred on the fortunate girl or girls. The month or two that the festival lasts gives them time to adapt themselves to the new situation, but they have no need for elaborate ritual acts. When the girls appeared that night and sat down with the women, and sang with them before all the camp, that was a formal public acknowledgment of their new status as women. And yet the elima dragged on for several days afterward.

Part of the reason, of course, was that if they ended with a feast, in the tradition of the villagers, the villagers would be so pleased that they would probably contribute most of the food. And so it was in this case. For all other practical purposes the elima had come to an end the night they sang together. But the girls had another reason; they wanted to placate the villagers. Sabani in particular had been extremely upset about the nonorthodox way this elima had been conducted. He, and many others, felt it was wrong for the girls to go wandering about from village to village, sometimes sleeping overnight in camps several miles away. This was unheard of. It was, to the villagers, as though a colony of lepers were wandering at large. But even more they resented the liberties the girls took with village custom. There is a certain dress that village elima girls are meant to wear, because the special leaves of which it is made have the magical power of protection; other dress is ineffective and invites disaster. The Pygmy girls, however, found that the ineffective leaves were far more attractive. As they themselves said, "This plant makes such pretty skirts; why should we make ourselves ugly with that plant? This is a time to rejoice." They also liked to imitate the village boys' initiation, and this so infuriated, and worried, the village traditionalists that they threatened to invoke the most powerful curses on all the girls. And so the girls put on a traditional ending, village style, to appease them.

On a Sunday morning they came out of their house as soon as

3: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
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881 all the toughening up and education that are needed. Children begin
563 climbing trees sometimes before they can walk. Their muscles de-
866 velop, and they overcome fear in a number of daring tree games.
861 P Adult activities are learned from an early age by observation and
881 imitation, for the Pygmies live an open life. Their life is as open
177 inside their tiny one-room leaf huts as it is in the middle of a forest
866 clearing, and so the children have no need of the sex instruction
861 which forms so large a part of the teaching given to village boys during the nkumbi.

P The Pygmies themselves say that the toughening-up effect of the
881 nkumbi is salutary, though they openly deplore and frequently reject
• 885 its severity. And when this particular nkumbi was over, the change
177 in every one of the eight boys was plain to see. But this is not their *major reason for allowing* themselves to be subjected to village initiation, nor is there any question of their being subjected by force. They enter the nkumbi voluntarily because they are a proud people. They live necessarily in contact with the villagers and spend a number of weeks every year either in a village or among villagers. The latter regard any adult who is not initiated as a child; he is treated with no more respect, accorded no more privileges, and he cannot take part in any adult activities. By entering the nkumbi the Pygmies prove their adulthood to the villagers the only way they can. When the initiation was over even Sansiwake had the right to enter any adult baraza and take part in the proceedings. This is what the Pygmies want from the nkumbi, and what they get—the status of adults in village eyes.

P There are many things in their behavior to show that the nkumbi
881 means no more than this to them, quite apart from their deliberate
882 lack of respect for the laws of the nkumbi and their irreverence to-
177 ward everything that is sacred to the villager. When this particular nkumbi was over and everyone returned to the forest, the same boys who had been walking freely among the men of the village, as men, went straight back to their mothers. They became children once more

and were accorded none of the privileges of the adult forest Pygmy. Above all, they were not allowed to take part in the singing of the men's molimo songs. They may have become adults in the village, but in the forest they were still children. P 881 88C 177

Far from illustrating the dependence of the Pygmies upon the villagers, the nkumbi illustrates better than anything else the complete opposition of the forest to the village. The Pygmies in the forest consciously and energetically reject all village values. When they are in the village they temporarily adopt its values and customs, not wanting to desecrate their sacred forest values by bringing them into the village. That is why they never sing their sacred songs in the village the way they do in the forest, and why they refuse to consecrate the nkumbi with special music, although every other event of importance in their lives is marked in this way. There is an unbridgeable gulf between the two worlds of the two peoples. C 563 P 177

The Pygmies have their own way of growing naturally into adulthood. A boy proves himself capable of supporting a family when he kills his first real game, and proves himself a man when he participates in the elima. P 881 885

During the whole nkumbi there was only one Pygmy who showed the slightest fear of the consequences of the blatant disregard everyone else showed for the laws of the villagers. That was Aberi, father of Sansiwake—Aberi the ugly, Aberi who was so often the laughingstock of his fellows. It was not that he was afraid of the villagers as people, for after his son's illness he often used to walk right among the instructors and drag his Sansiwake away if he felt they were being too severe with him. And he was as outspoken as any against any mistreatment of the children by the villagers. He particularly criticized Sabani for causing his son's illness. Sabani and the other instructors told Aberi it was a terrible thing to do to criticize the nkumbi doctor. C 563 P 156 177

Not long afterward Aberi became ill. He was so ill that he could 000

[NET HUNTERS]

[p.222-A]

595 Polygyny exists but is almost as incon-
587 siderable as among the archers. It sometimes
[586] comes about through the very informality of divorce. A husband who has been deserted, having made every effort to retrieve his wife, seeks another. After remarrying in this way, he may find that he still misses his old companion and will try to woo her back, or she may return of her own accord. There is no information as to the relationship between the two wives, except that they have separate huts and that there is no open friction.

Widowhood

589 Information on widowhood, though not given in detail by Putnam, seems to correspond to the general information given by Schebesta for the archers. Widows tend to remain in their late husbands' band and are cared for by their children unless they remarry.
589 Aged widowers are similarly provided for. But
• 887 even widows and widowers too old to remarry can play a useful economic role by attending to various chores in camp when the entire band is out hunting, helping in the constant manufacture of *nkusa* twine and barkcloth, and by looking after small children.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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/Plate 29-B/

/Caption appears on p.290/

[P. 291-B]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 29 1/A

A Hunting Camp, Epulu District, Central Ituri

361 184 571 a. A hunting camp is always near a stream, usually in a natural clearing. A small archer camp is often circular, but larger camps, such as those of the net hunters or of archers during communal hunts, are more often irregular, reflecting not clan or lineage divisions so much as personal preferences, friendships, and hostilities that have little to do with kinship considerations.

621 602 887 b. A family group, such as this considered itself to be, may well consist, as this does, of people linked not only by affinal connections but by the strongest bonds of friendship. The elder in the center is a widower, living with the hunter to his right, whose child he holds. Their relationship is that of distant affines, as is the elder's relationship with the other hunter, to his left (with wife and child) with whom he also sometimes lived. He thus formed a link between these two families, forming an effective subunit within the camp.

1/A, /Plate 29 appears on page 291--Analyst/

[P. 290]

584 small it will wish a boy to stay or a girl to bring her husband to live
591 with her. If the band is large, however, it will prefer to lose a member.
621 If the marriage is within the band, and the band is large, the couple may still go to join another band, the choice of which being determined by size again, more than by any other consideration. The presence of friends or relatives and knowledge of the territory are important but secondary considerations. This question of residence falls primarily upon the hunters to decide; the elders have little to say.

DEATH

761 In death, the final crisis of the life cycle, we again see a lack of em-
602 phasis on kinship, though once more perhaps we should bear in mind
[177] that the contact between the Mbuti and the villagers has undoubtedly affected not only kinship and ritual terminology, but also kinship relations and ritual practice. Be that as it may, in the present context, death is of immediate concern to both the nuclear family and the
761 whole band. For the nuclear family, and for other members of the
152 family who have during their lives been close to the deceased person, it is an occasion for grief. This grief is freely expressed by young and old together, and may at times become apparently uncontrollable. In the same way that the Mbuti are given to excessive bursts of laughter, often developing into near hysteria, so when they weep they do so
761 with what amounts almost to violence. Children of the deceased,
763 without regard to age or sex, begin weeping the moment they hear
152 the news of death, or as soon as a sick person indicates that he is not going to live much longer. If news of sickness or death reaches a relative some distance away, the relative will shout and yell rather than weep, and will continue this way until he reaches the camp where the sick person is lying. Immediately on entering the camp he will burst into tears, and wailing loudly will enter the hut and throw himself on the ground at the bedside of the dying person. Sometimes a close relative will injure himself with self-inflicted knife wounds, or by tying a halter around his neck and trying to strangle himself. Others pay little attention to these demonstrations of grief and I have never seen
[889] any serious injury result. Elders look on, however, with some disapproval, and will intervene if there is any danger of such injury.

763 The rest of the adults in the band will sit around outside their huts,
152 watching the wailers run in and out of the sick person's hut, and while they themselves are likely to be serious and upset they are also likely

to make jokes at any excess of zeal on the part of any mourner. Young 763
children continue playing as though nothing were going on; youths 152
sit morosely by themselves, or wander off into the forest on foraging expeditions.

The moment death occurs there is a renewed burst of wailing, then 764
the camp begins to quiet down. In the forest the practice is to scratch 768
a shallow hole in the floor of the hut and bury the deceased person [152]
there, pulling the hut down over the grave. The camp is then abandoned, nothing being left to indicate the grave site, nothing being buried with the body except maybe a few very personal belongings such as bark cloth, bracelet or necklace. All other property is divided before the camp is abandoned. If death takes place in a village, then [177]*
the Mbuti leave the funeral arrangements in the hands of the villagers.

If death occurs suddenly, the same procedure applies except that 764
the period of wailing is shorter. In either case burial takes place the 152
same day, if enough daylight is left, or as early as possible the following day. During burial, either in the village or in the forest, there is likely to be a final outburst of wailing from the relatives, particularly female, and some may try to throw themselves into the grave. In the village the eldest son is the chief mourner, and is supported by either a friend or another relative, younger or older.

In the village the entire band takes part in the burial procession, 764
and those who dig the grave, under villager supervision, are youths and 177*
not necessarily connected in any way with the deceased, other than 152
by band membership. They laugh and joke, sometimes even when the
body is being lowered into the grave. Mbuti elders only take exception [287] •
to this if they see that it is annoying the villagers. On the other hand if the formal wailing becomes too loud and enthusiastic, as the villagers like it to be, the elders object strongly. Particularly do they object to excessive demonstrations of grief from anyone who is not a close relative. Their main objective, it seems, is to restore "quiet" to the camp as soon as possible. The moment burial is over only the genuine sobbing of the immediate family is permitted in the forest, and this may be heard coming from their huts at any time of the day or night, never in public. In the village, however, there is still an obligatory mourning period, and about three times each day, for about two or three days, sporadic formal wailing breaks out in the village camp.

If a child dies the grief is less widespread, and in the case of a very 766
small child the camp may not even be abandoned; only one hut will 768
be pulled down and deserted. The child may even be buried within

561 [433] although once again the general pattern in no way implies an invariable rule.

[854] Infants sometimes accompany their mother on her activities, or are left in camp in the charge of youths or elders of either sex.

561 857 Children who do not stay in the *bopi* to play or to imitate adult activities accompany their parents according to sex; however, boys who cannot do much more than walk will, on the hunt, be more likely to accompany their mother. Children up to the age of puberty frequently prepare meals for themselves, not only in the process of "playing house" but also when together as a group. They go together to the streams to fish or crab, to the forest to gather and maybe to hunt for small or slow game, and together they cook and eat these foods. Older children may also co-operate in building a bachelor hut, though more often they will occupy one that has been abandoned, if they want one at all. But even before puberty they are beginning to help on the hunt, the girls with the beating and the boys with guarding the extremities of the nets.

561 883 After puberty the activities of youths are temporarily closer to those of their parents, causing some friction and disaffection, particularly between fathers and sons. The sibling groups, however, are reunited; youths now have activities and responsibilities comparable to those of their older married brothers and sisters. It is the younger married couples and the older youths who are primarily responsible for hunting and gathering, not only for food but also for the other material necessities of life, such as saplings and leaves for the huts, bark for clothing, wood for the fires. It is also this age group that manufac- [463] tures, without any other form of specialization, the entire limited range of artifacts that constitutes Mbuti material culture.

561 887 589 The older couples, widows and widowers, retire with regret but without shame or stigma from communal life, and to the end they will act in divers useful ways, in particular looking after children left in the camp while the rest of the band is off on the hunt. Older people [213] also spend a great deal of their time making the twine used in hunting nets, plaiting vine belts and preparing food. They can expect to be fed by the rest of the band, regardless of its kinship composition, and at the same time they are free to undertake whatever individual hunting and gathering they can. The sick or crippled enjoy similar status, be- 732 734 ing also unable to keep up with the rigors of the hunt. That such people are regarded as a potential danger to society is seen in the legends of old and crippled people who die or who disappear or who

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the
others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and 517
discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls 521
they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up 512
showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lul- [533]
laby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when [854]
I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was 512
properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, [887]
sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of [224]
the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat [965]
to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women [313]
were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the [314]
camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make 352
one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks them- [284]
selves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some [513]
Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

593 At this, old Sau, who had been sitting on the ground throughout,
595 with Kamaikan's baby on her lap, handed the baby to her weeping
578 daughter-in-law and slowly got to her feet. Her son and Ekianga
606 were now both armed with stout sticks, about four inches thick and
607 three feet long, and they were lashing out with no reservations. Sau
887 hobbled up to them and calmly pushed her way between; then she turned and put her head against Ekianga's stomach and her backside against her son's legs, and forced them apart. They continued trying to fight each other around the old lady, reaching out far so as not to hit her, but it was just too difficult. Ekianga was the first to throw away his weapon, which he did over Sau's head, with all his might. But Amabosu ducked and it missed him. Amabosu then threw his club on the ground and led his mother back to his hut. His wife meanwhile had been joined by Kamaikan, and they both were playing happily with the baby.

621 This incident illustrates one of the most remarkable features of
626 Pygmy life—the way everything settles itself with apparent lack
578 of organization. Co-operation is the key to Pygmy society; you can
181 expect it and you can demand it, and you have to give it. If your wife nags you at night so that you cannot sleep, you merely have to raise your voice and call on your friends and relatives to help you. Your wife will do the same, so whether you like it or not the whole camp becomes involved. At this point someone—very often an older person with too many relatives and friends to be accused of being partisan—steps in with the familiar remark that everyone is making too much noise, or else diverts the issue onto a totally different track so that people forget the origin of the argument and give it up.

621 Issues other than disputes are settled the same way, without leader-
626 ship appearing from any particular individual. If it is a matter involv-
578 ing the hunt, every adult male discusses it until there is agreement.

THE PLAY WORLD OF THE BAMBUTI

At
an early age boys and girls are "playing house." They solemnly collect the sticks and leaves, and while the girl is building a miniature house the boy prowls around with his bow and arrow. He will eventually find a stray plantain or an ear of corn which he will shoot at and proudly carry back. With equal solemnity it is cooked and eaten, and the two may even sleep the sleep of innocence in the hut they have made. 857

They will also play at hunting, the boys stretching out their little bits of net while the girls beat the ground with bunches of leaves and drive some poor tired old frog in toward the boys. If they can't find a frog they go and awaken one of their grandparents and ask him to play at being an antelope. He is then pursued all over the camp, twisting and dodging among the huts and the trees, until finally the young hunters trap their quarry in the net, and with shouts of delight pounce on him, beating him lovingly with their little fists. Then they roll over and over in a tangle with the net until they are exhausted. 857 224 [887] [603]

For children, life is one long frolic interspersed with a healthy sprinkle of spankings and slappings. Sometimes these seem unduly severe, but it is all part of their training. And one day they find that the games they have been playing are not games any longer, but the real thing, for they have become adults. Their hunting is now real hunting; their tree climbing is in earnest search of inaccessible honey; their acrobatics on the swings are repeated almost daily, in other forms, in the pursuit of elusive game, or in avoiding the malicious forest buffalo. It happens so gradually that they hardly notice the change at first, for even when they are proud and famous hunters their life is still full of fun and laughter. 861 857

While the children are playing about in their bopi, safely out of the way, yet close enough not to be able to fall into any real danger, 512

THE ARCHERS (AFTER SCHEBESTA)

[P.167-A] THE SOCIAL UNIT

621 THE MOST IMPORTANT SOCIAL UNIT is formed by the economic association of individual families as hunting bands (*Lokalgruppen;* Schebesta, 1948, 304 ff.; 1952, 210) which vary in size. Schebesta (1952, 208) gives the range as between two and 12 huts, averaging six huts per
621 band. They are said, in effect, to be patrilineages, but Schebesta stresses the importance of
613 the economic rather than the lineal ties; in his German publications he uses the term "*Sippe,*" in French "*Parentele.*" In German, he distinguishes the *Sippe* from the *Grossfamilie*, the latter being more properly the lineage regarded in its kinship context. The elder, who occupies
621 considerable prestige and has considerable per-
613 sonal authority over the *Grossfamilie*, is only
• 888 *primus inter pares* for the *Sippe* (Schebesta, 1948, 290). The prerogative of the elder depends on age, and these *avi-tiri*, or old ones, according to Schebesta, are endowed with the authority and dignity of the ancestors. Their power is limited by custom and tradition.

[ARCHERS]

[P.186-A]

622 leadership among the Mbuti except very rarely.
622 He himself discusses the lineage elders ("*Sip-*
613 *penälliesten*," Schebesta, 1948, 332, 559) and
.888 states that lineage authority lies with these
648 elders alone. Under villager influence these elders may assume the characteristics of a chief (cf. the "Sultani" of the Pygmies, mentioned by Geil, 1905). Encouraged in this by the villagers, who see a way of extending their authority, the lineage elders may appear to become headmen or chieftains of Mbuti bands, representing the band to the village chief.

622 As mentioned above, the authority of the
613 elder derives from his age, by virtue of which he
888 represents the lineage ancestors. Any offense
[769] against the elder is an offense against the lineage. He takes precedence in all matters: the best part of the game is his, whether or not he took part in the hunt; he presides at various ritual offerings; he is responsible for settling disputes with other bands or with villagers; he leads at the head of the dance. Succession by age is strictly observed. This much Schebesta (1952, 221–223) reports, but without citing examples in sufficient detail to enable us to make a valid comparison between different groups or bands.

[P. 186-C] [ARCHERS]

Schebesta (1948, 633) argues that, as the representative of the lineage, the elder is also the guarantor of its law and is responsible for the respect of collective and private property. In the case of theft, the lineage thus offended demands satisfaction from the elder. Elders of different lineages settle disputes between them and must explain the settlement and plead reason with their own lineage. In disputes with villagers, it is the elder who accepts the responsibility for the wrongdoings of any individual member of his lineage, and the lineage must provide any agreed compensation. This transfer of responsibility from individual to lineage does not, however, diminish individual responsibility; if anything, it increases the responsibility as the injury to the lineage would probably be considered a worse offense than the one originally committed.

888 613 685 621 [421]

Individuals use the lineage in this way to affirm their rights against offenses such as theft and adultery. The band, as a whole, will take arms to defend its collective property and punish any violation of territory. Murder and homicide are followed by feud, which is directed by the elder, leaving, however, a large measure of initiative to the individuals involved. No examples, however, are given by Schebesta.

613 68 [621] [628] [888]

[NET HUNTERS]

173 [p.228-A]
534 animal and since then no woman has been al-
825 lowed to see it.
562 Local villagers, who claim also to have the
171 *molimo*, are critical of the occasional joking at-
177 titude of the Mbuti and say that they, the vil-
534 lagers, call it out only when someone important has died.

POLITICAL LIFE

Authority

622 Putnam goes further than Schebesta with re-
• 888 gard to the existence or non-existence of chief-
tainship among the Mbuti. Primarily of the net
[623] hunters he writes, ". . . there are no chiefs, councils, or any other formal governing bodies in a pygmy camp" (Putnam, 1948, 334). There is respect, he says, for age and experience (*not* for "elders"); the opinions of the old and the wise are generally heeded. Any individual who shows disrespect for an old man, or who refuses to comply with any reasonable request, is abused by the others. Old men who are eccentrics are ignored.

[NET HUNTERS]

621 888 At the same time every man in the band has a full say in any discussion. There may well not be the placid acceptance of the "elder's" decision described by Schebesta (1952, 221 ff.). For one thing, among the net hunters the old men themselves may disagree. But again, unfortunately, we do not have details as to the subjects most or least open to dispute, so can give only a general account.

623 554 Additional information on this point comes from the notes of Anne Putnam, in which a loose form of council of five or six of the older men is reported. Each one of these is said by Mrs. Putnam to have some specific sphere of authority such as the regulation of hunting activities, settlement of interpersonal and other disputes, but further details are not given. No evidence is offered that they act in council rather than simply in their individual capacities. In the particular band to which Mrs. Putnam refers, however, five or six of the older men included the most experienced hunters in the whole band, so that only the aged and infirm, the children, and the younger and less experienced hunters would *not* be members of the "council." According to Putnam, the Mbuti re- [157] spect experience as well as age, so that an individual's experience in a particular field increases his authority in that field. Thus the "council"

[P. 228-B]

[NET HUNTERS]

There is no record of any form of execution, though it has been known for the aged and infirm, too sick to care for themselves, or for those suspected of being possessed of supernatural powers, to disappear or to die of some strange sickness, under unusual circumstances. It was Putnam's opinion that such deaths might have been occasioned deliberately, but he had no means of verification. 761 888 734 754 [114]

INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE

Exact Knowledge

COUNTING

Putnam mentions the use of finger signs in counting and the Mbuti habit of counting in pairs. Despite this simplicity, however, they are able to assess quantity accurately and speedily, as witnessed by their dexterity in their favorite gambling game in which beans are thrown onto a mat. The success of the throw depends on whether or not a combination of four results. The Pygmy knows at a glance whether he has to throw in an extra bean or slip one out in order to make the necessary adjustment. If there is disagreement, the beans are checked in pairs of pairs. 802 802 525

Medicine

Putnam frequently tried to copy the preparation of poisons used by the net hunters on 278 411
[P 231-D]

[NET HUNTERS]

There seems to be a very vague belief in a malign force similar to the *uda* described by Schebesta (1948, 527 ff.), and for which the net hunters use the villager term, *ulozi*. It is generally associated with very old people and with cripples who, not through any malevolence but rather because of their condition, may cause death. If someone is thought to be possessed of *ulozi*, he may be put to death. The Putnam material records the Mbuti as beating one old woman accused of being a *lozi*. She was prevented from being beaten to death by Putnam's putting forward an effective argument as to why she could not possess *ulozi*. This same old woman, however, died two years later following an epidemic in a camp where she was staying, and where two Pygmies died. The old woman died when the camp was broken, before they reached the new camp, and no explanation was given. She certainly had not contracted the disease. Putnam mentions other instances of the disappearance of people, particularly the aged and crippled. 761 754 888 [192]

In legend the *lozi* are accredited with being the most gluttonous cannibals, devouring corpses in the middle of the night. Apparently, if a Pygmy wakes up and sees a *lozi* feasting on one of his comrades, that person will merely become sick. If the *lozi* is not seen at his (or her) 761 754 266 [773]

[P. 240-D]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P-264-C]

As might be expected, cleverness is frequently 539
associated with smallness. In several legends 828
the whole purport is the superiority (in this 825
respect) of small animals over large. It is not [186]
difficult to identify the smaller, clever animal as the Pygmy, nor the larger, more clumsy, and stupid animal as the villager. Already we are on the fringe of a borderline world. The animal and the human worlds are related with regard to this quality of cleverness, or trickery, a quality that seems to be essentially animal rather than Pygmy. By cultivating this quality, by imitation, the Pygmy is able to establish a relatively satisfactory relationship between the two worlds. But "cleverness" also brings the Pygmy into relationship with the spiritual world. It is through cleverness, for instance, that he is able to thwart the trickery of the forest *satani*.

Old age, with its greater store of experience, 539
connotes cleverness to the Pygmy. Old people 828
are regarded as possessing a special abundance 577
of this quality, which automatically associates 888.
them more closely with the animal and spiritual

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

worlds. A number of legends deal with the cleverness of old people. There are old aunts and old grandmothers who eat children left in their care, and old men and women are frequently deserted by the Pygmies when they move camp (in their legends). Yet these old people can use their powers for good, if so inclined, as in the legend of the old woman with yaws who tried to save three young Pygmies from being killed and eaten by a tricky old man. Also, of course, it is the old people who have the most success in dealing with the *satani*. But (discussion of this aspect of old age is given in the next section) the legends do reveal quite clearly that old age, when accompanied by disability, is regarded with loathing by the Pygmies as, indeed, is disability by itself. In the legends, old people and cripples are given every chance to prove that they are still useful members of society. The old cripple who is deserted but who can kill a *satani* and rejoin his hunting group is welcomed back. But another old cripple who cannot move at all when he is deserted, although he kills two *satani* who attack him, is left to die. Old women seem particularly suspect, and I cite here an example of sanctioned matricide. I might add that I have never known this to occur and that, in my experience, the Mbuti take great care of their old people. At the same time I must admit to having seen no complete cripples and to having heard disquieting stories

539 828 577 888 539 828 577 888 732 [776] [682] 539 577 888 732

[P 264-D]

[p. 265-A]

539 about cripples that just happened to disappear
577 or who suddenly just "died completely."

• 888 There was once a Pygmy named Butuwa. He was
732 in the forest, and was sleeping with his wife, children, and old mother. His mother had no legs. In the middle of the night Butuwa said to his wife: "Mother is sleeping soundly; get the children together and let's go away." So they quietly picked up their belongings, and, together with their children, they crept away. They walked and walked and walked.

Early in the morning the old woman woke up. She said: "Where is everybody? Oh! They are a bad family, they have gone off and left their legless old mother to die. I will follow them." So saying, she stood on her head and walked and walked and walked until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She was very angry with them for having deserted her, and told them how bad they were to have left her alone in the forest. That night they all went to sleep together.

In the middle of the night the Pygmy said to his wife: "Now mother is really asleep; get the children together and let's go away." So they collected the children, picked up their belongings, and stole away. They walked and walked and walked.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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Early in the morning the old woman woke up, and she was very, very angry to find that her family had deserted her again. So she stood on her head and she walked and walked and walked, until she caught up with them, walking on her head. She told her son how bad he was. She was very cross indeed. Her son went off into the forest and gathered some honey. And then he got a very bad worm and put it in the honey. He returned to the camp, and said: "Don't be angry with me, mother. Look, I have brought you some fine honey." And the legless old mother ate up the honey, worm and all. And the worm ate up the legless old mother's stomach, and the legless old mother died.

Butuwa left and went to another camp where they had relations. When they got to the camp, their relations asked: "What news; where is your mother?" "Oh! She died," said Butuwa. "That's too bad," said the others.

Basi

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825

3. Legends Dealing with Relationships to the Supernatural

Above, we see animals appearing in connection with the quality of cleverness and how an excess of this quality can break through the flimsy barrier between the natural and the supernatural world. Here we consider the large number of legends in the collection in which animals appear with almost exclusive reference to their supernatural quality. Some legends

[P. 265-B]

[P.270-A]

538 promptly deserted as being unsafe company. So
181 we might gather that in daily life normality is
183 the ideal, and, when the supernatural (including animals, regarded as possessed of supernatural powers), is dealt with, cleverness is dominant.

538 From the second section of legends we can
888 finally glean some information from the treatment of old age. Two things emerge: first, old age is associated with extra cleverness, approaching trickery; second, we find Pygmy realism emerging again when old age is accompanied by disability. Either way, old age is a dangerous condition. In this particular band it is perhaps significant that the leaders of the group are not old, but are the active—the "great hunters."

538 Animals, like food, enter into the majority of
825 legends, and in some cases they seem to be regarded merely as animals. But more often the trickery of the animal is emphasized and, consequently, its association with the supernatural. In the third kind of legends, those dealing with the supernatural, we find animals in almost every one.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 26 [1]

Pygmy Physical Types, Epulu District, Central Ituri

888 142 a. An Mbuti elder. Too old to be a successful hunter, he can be sure of food and shelter, provided by the younger generation of hunters, for as long as he lives. The genet skin hat [292] is not a formal indication of status, but, effectively, only elders are likely to wear hats of any kind.

142 885 576 [604] [201] b. An Mbuti hunter, upon whom, together with his wife, falls the main burden of providing for young and old. He will address the elders as "mother" and "father," regardless of actual kinship considerations, and he will have toward them all the same obligations that he has toward his biological parents. The hand gesture, a snapping of the fingers onto the palm, is used in conversation as an indication of speed or sudden activity.

[1], /Plate 26 appears on page 285--Analyst/

[p 284]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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142
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302

/Plate 26-A/

/Caption appears on p. 284/

[P. 285-A]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

PLATE 27 [1]

PYGMY PHYSICAL TYPES, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

688 30 177 a. An old Mbuti woman, probably around 60 years of age. She enjoys the respect and affection of her entire band. The pendant charm around her neck is of village origin, a gift from the Arabisé tribe of Ngwana cultivators. For them it is magic; for her it is purely decorative.

854 b. An Mbuti mother and child are close throughout life, but never more so than during the infancy of the child. Wrapped in a specially prepared piece of barkcloth, symbolic of the protection afforded the Mbuti by the forest, the infant is seldom out of its mother's arms. When it is, however, any woman or older girl may take the mother's place, holding, fondling, and even nursing the child.

1/Plate 27 appears on page 287--Analyst/

[P 286]

1: Turnbull E-4.5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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302

/Plate 27-A/

/Caption appears on p.286/

[P. 287-A]

Youths also have considerable say in the settling of any dispute 561
concerning betrothal, though ultimately it is the *mangesé* who decide 627
such matters. The hunters control all activities concerning the hunt
and the movement of camp. The *mangesé* act as general arbiters and [587]
are effectively a court of final appeal, their age entitling them to un-
questioning respect. Particularly in matters concerning betrothal 561
are the *mangesé* consulted, for their genealogical memory can be [582]
stretched to suit the occasion. And in the *molimo* festival, as in the [765]
elima, they share the honors with the youths: the hunters have to do
most of the work, supplying the food and cooking it for the nightly
or daily feasting, but the singing and dancing, which are central to
the festivals, are led by the *mangesé* and the youths.

In matters concerning relationship with other bands, the band as 621
a whole, rather than any age group or association of age groups, de- 628
cides the issue. On such occasions even children will sit by and take 561
part.

We have already mentioned some of the religious functions of the 621
age groups, in association with their political functions, and it will 561
be seen that the two are closely interconnected. It might just be 765
pointed out here that in a *molimo* festival held for the death of an
Mbuti, age-group and band membership take precedence over family
membership. The youths will lead the dancing, and the leading youth [535]
will lead because he is the best dancer, not because he is related to
the dead person. Similarly with the singing led by the *mangesé*. The [533]
molimo horn may be supplied by anyone. The person who sings into
it is generally a youth, though sometimes a young hunter, again re-
gardless of kinship but on account of his renown and ability as a
singer.

Considering the very clear roles of the age groups, and their com- 621
prehensive nature, it is plain that any unilineal system of descent 611
would be highly disruptive. The loose laws of marriage and adoption, 561
which are permissive rather than prescriptive, preferential or pro-
hibitive, and the nonlineal nature of band composition allow for the
flexibility that is obviously necessary to maintain the proper balance
of recruitment into each age group.

Although a bilateral recognition of descent does exist and is some- 621
times utilized to provide the necessary balance of power, it can still 611
hardly be dignified by the term "lineage system." Owing to the non- [594]
lineal, territorial nature of band composition, and the frequency of
sister exchange, nuclear families may divide or remain united, re-
gardless of lineage, depending upon the context.

nuclear family often before the band—these are more the concern of the elders. As we are here considering the normal run of daily life we are leaving aside special occasions such as the *elima* and *molimo* festivals, which are primarily religious in nature, but in which the hunters and youths play their own distinct parts together with the elders. 88 561

The hunters are generally in the middle of any dispute that occurs, but in a serious dispute it is more likely to be an elder that will be able to effect a settlement. It is, however, the disputes of the hunters that establish the lines along which fission and fusion will take place, and the elders have little influence over this process, nor do they even seem to wish to influence it. They content themselves by using the respect that is accorded them to maintain some kind of balance between the band factions. It is the hunters who initiate both fission and fusion, and who are thus responsible for the composition of the band. Relationships with neighboring bands and with the villagers, insofar as they are determined by band movement, are also largely in their hands, and in this sense the hunters may be considered the political leaders of the band. In this the women are almost, if not fully, the equals of the men. 88 561 627 554 [562]

The hunter's life is the most active and arduous, and this may in part be responsible for his somewhat disputatious nature. In elderhood there is a chance to relax. There is no shame in an elder having his children bring him back food, and in any case he may be needed to keep an eye on the camp while the hunt is away. It is an age group to which a man or a woman resigns himself with some reluctance, but in which he soon finds considerable satisfaction. He is able to intervene in disputes without fear of physical violence, for one thing, and often does so with enjoyment. The elder is undoubtedly the arbiter, though by no means the only source of solution. From his position of immunity he is able to interfere in the most private and domestic affairs of anyone. Whereas a hunter solves his problems empirically, answering facts with facts, the elder solves those that face him with considered opinion, drawing from a lifetime of experience. A hunter would be laughed at if he could not support an opinion with fact. An elder is never expected to do so, and is consequently admirably fitted to deal with moral and spiritual matters. It is, however, opinion that he offers, not judgment. He will concern himself in questions of the upbringing of children, of their puberty and of their marriage. At any time of major crisis the elder will play the resolving part, though the 888 [157] 888 627 578 [885]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1968) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

888 hunter may initiate the action. Thus the *elima* and the *molimo*, which
627 are crisis festivals, are initiated by the hunters, but it is the elders who
578 control them and give them their spiritual quality. It is the elders who
[821] act not only as arbiters between the members of the band, but be-
[765] tween the band and the forest, between this life and the next. Even in the most ordinary run of everyday life there is seldom a day that does not demand from one elder or another, man or woman, some opinion that will be couched in terms like "such and such is good for (or pleasing to) the forest," or "this makes my spirit (*roho*) feel good."

621 The greatest departures from daily life occur when the band visits
+177 the village, or when a villager visits the band. In either case it is as
512 though the whole social structure of the Mbuti were suddenly changed. A single individual becomes, all at once, a chief. Age groups break up and nuclear families come to the fore. The only central fire will be that of the "chief." But as this is not part of the forest world, exceptions occur within the forest context only rarely. There is sel-
621 dom any disaster such as the invasion of a camp by elephant, though
931 it happens sometimes. Hunting is generally more than adequate
512 throughout the year. But though hunger does sometimes come to the Mbuti, starvation is unknown. Sickness is not uncommon, but is rarely serious. Throughout the year daily life goes its usual way interrupted only by major, inevitable crises of the life cycle.

844 BIRTH

Birth is the first crisis of life, and among the Mbuti it is, as else-
[165] where, not without its attendant dangers. Though no statistics are available, it is the opinion of villagers and Mbuti, and of many Europeans, doctors and otherwise, who know both communities, that infant mortality is appreciably less among the Mbuti, and sterility
[164] less common. This may be due to the fact that their relative isolation has defended the Mbuti against the venereal diseases widespread among the villagers. Be that as it may, there is no doubt that the Mbuti evidently feel less need for concern at childbirth. This applies
844 to both the nuclear family and to the band. There is absolutely no
621 formal recognition on the part of the band, and only the barest of interest. Considering the fluid and nonlineal composition of the band this is not surprising, particularly since, for this type of band, birth is only one form of recruitment, and by no means the most sure or

2: Tumbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa F01

1. Band/Village: *capita*/Chief
2. Lineage/Lineage: Lineage elder/*Kpara*
3. Individual/Individual: *Karé*/*Karé*

We shall deal with each in turn to determine the formal nature of the relationship, and the degree to which it is effective.

Capita/Chief

The relationship of the band as a whole to the village as a whole would be a simple and effective one if the band were, as the villagers claim it should be, a unilineal entity based on the principle of patrilineal descent. However, as we have seen, the band is generally composite, and in any case its composition is constantly changing. Sheer territorial propinquity, however, encourages a relationship of economic exchange between these two units, regardless of the composition of either. Generally speaking there is no need for the village to relate to the band as a whole, food exchange being more easily effected at an interfamilial or interpersonal level. However, under the foreign economic pressures mentioned earlier, at certain times villages found it necessary to have the massed help of all the Mbuti they could muster. In such a case the village Chief summoned the Mbuti *capita* and made his wishes known. The *capita* relayed these wishes to the band, which then did whatever it thought expedient, after general discussion.

The *capita* seems to assume more importance as an institution in the villages of the archer area, to the east of the Epulu. However, even there the villagers themselves admit that the institution is foreign to the Mbuti. I have not once heard it claimed otherwise, by Mbuti or villagers. Among the archers, as among the net-hunters, old men and women are accorded respect, but they have no authority and their area of influence is limited in accordance with their age, and does not include the village. Such elders, then, have no more say than any other Mbuti concerning village matters pertaining to the band as a whole. But village affairs do not fall within the province of any age group, and the *capita* finds himself having to deal separately with each family, if indeed he takes that much trouble at all. Sometimes he may do so if a villager accompanies him to the camp in the hopes of adding strength to the village argument. I have seen this happen among the archers as among the net-hunters, in each case with a direct plea for all Mbuti to go to the village to help with the cotton harvest.

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

Usually the *capita* first made a plea from midcamp, and was listened to silently, but without respect and without reply. He then went from family to family, and from each family, despite the presence of the villager, received an emphatic and final negative answer. If the villager is not present on such an occasion, either the *capita* will act the clown as he delivers his message, or both he and his message will be ridiculed by others; there is, if anything, a greater chance of his achieving something for the village under such circumstances.

Respect for age is not conveyed upon the *capita* when acting in that capacity. Not only is he ridiculed, but if he persists in his efforts on behalf of the village, even his juniors, family members or otherwise, will combine to "shut his teeth." In areas where the occasional wealthy tourist passes by, the Mbuti regard him as they regard villagers, as animals to be eaten, and the *capita* fills the same role, but generally with more success for the rewards are usually more immediate and satisfying to all concerned. In other respects the situation is parallel to that of the village.

The difficulty is no less, even if the Mbuti are already in the village. If the villagers try to exert pressure on them as a band through the *capita*/Chief relationship, this precipitates an immediate return to the forest because the men will not even discuss the matter in the village. Their return may just be for purposes of discussion, but it may also lead to the return of the entire band. The men seem to regard it primarily as their province, the village, in a sense, being a hunting area calling for skill and courage, rather than a gathering area, and they explain their action in these terms, allowing that their wives could come if they really had something to say.

The band/village relationship, then, is not to be considered as highly effective, though there are times when the Mbuti find it expedient to act in concert in this way.

Lineage Elders/Kpara

The relationship of an Mbuti lineage to a village lineage is a little more effective, for while a band cannot be recognized as a unilineal entity, there are within it divers lineal units. One or more of these may well occupy a hereditary relationship with a village lineage, the head of which would be the *kpara*. They have no name for the head of their lineage except "old man," the term by which the villagers also refer to him.

As stated earlier, this relationship may be exceptionally cordial,

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

elsewhere. If this is taken to indicate a lack of concern not only for kinship but also for social stability, it can also be regarded, precisely because of the freedom it allows, as a further mechanism by which the constant flux so characteristic of the band is maintained. That this flux itself has a function will be seen in the final chapter, when we deal again with the Mbuti/Villager relationship.

The different functions of each age level have been described (pp. 110, 111, 112 *seq.*), and the organizational value of making the horizontal distinction in the composite band is self-evident. Each age level is cooperative in activity, certain activities (such as the hunt) calling for cooperation between two or three age levels still preserving the distinction by allocating different roles to each. Interpersonal relations are determined primarily by age level, and authority has also been seen to be diffused through the different levels.

The transition from childhood to youth is marked for boys and girls alike by participation in the *elima*. Adulthood is conveyed by the act of marriage, which carries with it the right to own a net. The rare bachelor who proves himself as a great hunter and still does not marry may, by combined virtue of his age and his skill, own a net, but the accepted qualification is that of marriage, emphasizing another major Mbuti concern, that of procreation.

Transition from adulthood to elderhood is less clear-cut and more filled with tension, for though an elder enjoys many privileges and has, set aside for him as such, certain vital roles in the social organization, he misses the excitement of the hunt, the pride and satisfaction of rearing a family, and he certainly recognizes that this is the final transition.

The nonlineal (or cognatic) band, then, divided horizontally into age levels rather than vertically into lineages, effects an absolute unity throughout each level, whereas it would otherwise be divided into as many sections as there were lineages. Its persistence and continuity are seen in terms of territory. There may well be a tendency for certain lineages to remain within the same territory for successive generations, but such association is incidental rather than structurally determined. The demography and internal organization, while allowing for marriage within the band, make it essential for much marriage exchange to take place between different and preferably not adjacent bands. Since the residence of the newlywed couple is determined by immediate economic considerations, such as the relative size and composition of the two bands, territory is obviously not an individual

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

[P 276-K]

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39. The musical bow, apart from the wooden clappers used during the molimo and during the honey season, is the only musical instrument that seems to be original to the Mbuti. Even this is slightly used, the one here simply being a hunting bow tapped by an arrow, the mouth acting as the resonator. An extremely musical people, the Mbuti are, unlike the villagers, vocal rather than instrumental.

40. Bakhimito, the old lady who "died well," and for whom the exceptionally long molimo festival was held. The charm around her neck, stolen from the villagers, would have been regarded by the Arabized Ngwana as powerful magic. For her it was a mere ornament.

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[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]

usually are. Both Manyalibo and his wife were great humorists, and they made use of the powers of ridicule to break up some of the more serious disputes, because there is nothing that upsets a Pygmy more than being laughed at.

The oldest member of the group, a member of the same family though even more distantly related, was old Tungana, who had so many children and grandchildren that neither he nor his wife could remember all their names. Strangely enough, he was a progressive Pygmy, and whereas Manyalibo was constantly decrying the Pygmy plantation in his deep bass voice, Tungana thought it was fine. He also thought living near the village was a good thing as there was so much good food to be had for the stealing. And wasn't stealing easier than hunting? I think the truth was that poor old Tungana was getting too old to follow the hunting band with ease, and he was afraid of being abandoned. In fact, he often remained behind in the village when the rest were far off in the forest, and one of his many sons would come in every few days bringing the old couple gifts of meat and forest fruits.

Moke was another of the elders. He claimed a fictional relationship with Tungana because it made him feel at home, since he had no real relatives in the group other than his own children. Moke was the greatest traditionalist of all, and when the Pygmy plantations were mentioned in front of him he just laughed dryly to himself and smiled his toothless smile, saying he had not tasted any Pygmy bananas yet, but if any grew then he would be glad to eat them. It was Moke who had come with Kolongo and Njobo to cut the marks on my forehead three years earlier. Kolongo had been as much of a traditionalist as Moke, as indeed were all his family, particularly the wizened old mother, Balekimito, and his oldest sister, Asofalinda, who was now a widow and thoroughly enjoying her freedom. Moke had thought of her as a companion for his old age, but Asofalinda liked life as it was, so Moke was still a widower and she a widow.

THE GOOD DEATH OF BALEKIMITO

156

About a year after I had left the last time, Kolongo had been killed by a crocodile, and his mother had been so upset she had left the group and her entire family, and gone back to her old village. Her other son, Ekianga, remained as head of the family. It was a different clan but related by marriage to Njobo and Masisi and Manyalibo.

Ekianga was anything but a traditionalist in some ways, though in others he was as conservative as the rest of his relatives. His most [595] untraditional act was to have three wives. He was a very great hunter, and as vain as could be, and he liked imitating the ways of the outside world, where it is a sign of wealth to have many wives. The Pygmies say that one is enough to manage, and judging by Ekianga's constant domestic difficulties they are right. He was hairy, broad-chested, and powerful almost to the point of ugliness, and from somewhere he had learned how to put on a perfect toothpaste smile. He always built his huts a different shape from everyone else's, [342] and in the Pygmy camp near the village his house was the biggest and the smartest of them all, sheltering his entire ménage.

His youngest wife was a beautiful girl called Kamaikan. She was [142] even lighter than most Pygmies, yellowish-brown, instead of the more usual coffee-brown. Her brother and mother also lived with the 156 same hunting group, and there was constant friction, for on marrying 596 her Ekianga had given a "sister"—actually a fairly distant relative— 583 to her brother, Amabosu, in exchange. This exchange is made with 578 the full consent of all parties, but none the less it leads to a division of loyalties, and Amabosu was a very temperamental Pygmy. He was 156 a fine hunter, but he was particularly renowned as the best singer and best drummer and best dancer in the area; for these qualities alone his prestige was enormous. His skinny old mother, Sau, was 156 not without fame of her own. Old and infirm people, amongst the 888 Pygmies, are regarded, not exactly with suspicion or mistrust, but with apprehension. In a vigorous community of this kind where mobility is essential, cripples and infirm people can be a great handi-

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

156 888 cap and may even endanger the safety of the group. Hence there are numerous legends of old people's being left to die if they cannot keep up with the group as it moves from camp to camp. Like old Tungana, Sau knew this, and although she was still healthy she made sure everyone knew it by taking the most vigorous and unexpected part in any dispute, her sharp acid voice betraying a certain bitterness at the way she was treated. For not only was Sau old, she was also almost alone, with only her son and daughter near her, while everyone else had brothers, sisters, cousins, parents, children and grandchildren.

The Negroes said that Sau was a witch and should be killed or [154] driven away. I used to look at her, squatting over the fire outside her hut, knees hunched up to her chin, staring silently into the middle of the camp. She certainly seemed sinister, as she gazed without blinking, taking in everything that was going on, not moving hour after hour. Her son Amabosu, the great singer, had those same staring eyes, and at times looked even more like a witch than his [123] mother did. This family nearly always built their hut next to mine, and I came to be very fond of them.

621 If these names are confusing to the reader, they at least help to 578 give a picture of the apparent confusion created in any Pygmy camp [583] by the complicated network of intermarriage and sister-exchange. Essentially a camp is a happy-go-lucky, friendly place, but it is also full of all sorts of little tensions that can suddenly become magnified out of all proportion and lead to full-scale disputes.

621 This particular group was a rather large one, consisting of the two main families—that of Njobo and Masisi, Tungana and Manyalibo; and that of Ekianga and his relatives, including Sau and Amabosu. But to add to the tensions there was a third group which was constantly trying to attach itself. It was intermarried heavily with the other two, as often happens in an attempt to strengthen bonds and establish an unbreakable relationship.

more than a hundred feet up. "That is where it sleeps," he said. 765
"It is safe there. It sleeps there until it is needed." 534 123

I asked when it was needed, but Maipe had said all he was going to say. He looked up at the tree for a last time, then motioned with his head that we should be on our way. Kenge whispered to me that 765
when we got back he would ask Moke to tell me more. It was better 534 123
for old men to talk about these things. 554

That same night, just before the singing started, Moke was sitting 881
outside his hut, whittling away at a new bow he was making, and 115 [322]
talking to himself because there was nobody else for him to talk to. [411]
Kenge had spoken to him when we got back to the camp at dusk, but I did not expect anything to come of it, and Kenge had said nothing to me. Moke looked up and stared in my direction, then he looked back at his bow and continued whittling away with a rough stone. But he spoke a little louder, so that I would hear.

"Ebamunyama," he said, using the name I had been given, "*pi-ka'i so.*" ("Come here.") [551]

He spoke as if he was addressing the bow, and when I got to him he still did not look up but just told me to sit down. Talking to the bow in his soft old voice, he said that he had been told I was asking about the molimo, and that this was a good thing and he would tell me whatever he could.

He went on to tell that the Pygmies call out their molimo whenever things seem to be going wrong. "It may be that the hunting is bad," he said, "or that someone is ill, or, as now, that someone has died. These are not good things, and we like things to be good. So we call out the molimo and it makes them good, as they should be."

Kind, quiet old Moke, all alone and without a wife to look after 115
him, still working away at his bow, occasionally looking along the [157]
shank to make sure he was keeping the line true—he told me many things that evening. But, most important, he told me, or rather

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 771 magical act but a way of emphasizing that this is something in which every single member of the group must participate.

765 562 At first I had thought that the molimo was virtually the sole concern of the men. In the evenings, when the singing first started, there were sometimes a few girls who stood nearby and danced among themselves as we sang, but they were soon sent to join the rest of the women and children in their huts—certainly long before the molimo made its appearance. But one day I felt that something different was going on.

881 765 I had noticed that Kondabate, Manyalibo's daughter, who was married to Ausu, was building an extension at the back of her hut. She and Ausu had no children, and when I asked her why she was enlarging her home she said there was going to be an *elima*, and that all the girls would stay in her hut, under her care. An elima is a celebration that takes place when a girl reaches maturity, as marked by the first appearance of menstrual blood. At such a time she enters a special hut with her girl friends and stays there for a month. But I had heard none of the usual discussion about the event, and I felt this could not be the full answer.

765 574 888 Then, that afternoon, an old, old woman arrived with her husband. They stopped first in Cephu's camp, where they had relatives, but then came on into the main camp, where they were received with the greatest respect. The husband sat down at the kumamolimo and was offered food; the old woman disappeared into Kondabate's house. She stayed there until evening, but all I could hear from inside were occasional snatches of song. It was plain that there were several girls in there as well, and it sounded as though they were either being taught new songs or else rehearsing songs they already knew. They never sang more than a few bars at a time, and I was continually being startled, thinking that I heard something resembling one of the molimo songs.

765 888 That evening the old man joined us for the molimo singing. He

was given special recognition by Moke, who offered him his chair 765
and then sat on the ground beside him. Old Tungana seemed to 888
know him well too. The elders—the *mangese*, the Great Ones— 765
formed a tight cluster of their own, apart from the hunters. The 561
hunters formed their own group, and the youths theirs. The youths 562
and a few of the hunters danced, and we were surrounded by women 535
and girls who watched and joined the songs with handclaps. The girls formed their own dance circles, but they seemed to be dancing with much more purpose than on other nights, and they were allowed to stay up much later. Then they were sent to bed, and the singing began in earnest. All the girls who had danced went into Kondabate's hut, and as they opened the leaf door to enter I saw that the old woman was sitting inside, hunched up over the fire, her eyes as bright as the coals, wide and unblinking.

The singing went on particularly late that night, and it was only 765
an hour after Moke's usual statement that he was tired that we were awakened by the blasting of both molimo trumpets as they entered the camp. I got up hurriedly and saw that Kenge was already gone. At the door of my hut someone ran up in the dusk and pushed me [923]
back, telling me not to come out, it was too dangerous. Just as he said this, there was a tremendous blow on top of the hut, and the molimo swept by. It was surrounded by at least twenty youths, all, as far as I could see, carrying long branches with which they beat on the roofs and walls of every hut. They continued this for an hour, the trumpets blaring angrily, the youths making loud hunting cries. As the forest grew lighter I could see that all the youths were decorated with leafy branches stuck in their belts, so that it looked as though each trumpet was surrounded by a little forest of its own.

Quite a number of huts had been damaged, but there was no word 765
of protest. Ekianga danced up and down with a spear under each arm 535
and ran rings around the trumpets. I was more impressed than ever 481
by the high-stepping gait that he and everyone else used. They did

62 **Government.**—There are no chiefs,
571 councils, or any other formal govern-
561 ing bodies in a pygmy camp. In mak-
ing any decisions concerning the whole
camp, two factors are involved. The
[888] first of these is respect for older people.

561 A pygmy will always, in addressing
571 a man of an older age group in any
576 formal situation, call him "senior"; he
888 will listen respectfully to an older man
and will always obey any reasonable
orders he may give. If a younger man
[626] shows disrespect, the other members
of the camp will gang up on him and
berate him. This respect for age, and
for the opinions of wise old men, is the
basis of pygmy government.

623 Secondly, while the opinions of most
571 of the old men are respected, every
561 man in the camp is entitled to state his
[888] own views on any subject. Thus, during the evening talking time, the pygmies will discuss whether to move camp, where to move it, and why; or whether to go net hunting, and where to hunt. The discussion has no leader and may go on for several evenings. Finally the men who are shouting out different opinions will come to an agreement and the decision will be acted upon.

623 In general it is the older and more
571 experienced men who make the deci-
561 sion, but as some of the old men are
888 considered eccentrics and freaks, little
[828] attention is paid to them. Rather, it is
an oligarchy of the more respected
among the old men, a body with no
formal membership or specific compo-
[562] sition. In their decisions the pungent
remarks of the women also have a considerable influence.

594 **Pygmy Social Organization**

Families and their extensions.—The smallest normal social unit in a pygmy camp is the individual biological
[P. 334-B]